

Exit or Activism CONF: Exit or Activism CONF: Exit or Activism

Maja & Reuben Fowkes

Symposium on Sustainability and Contemporary Art: Exit or Activism

Central European University Budapest

29 February 2008

www.translocal.org/sustainability

This symposium investigates the current state of thinking about sustainability in the light of the continuing mutations of post-Fordist global capitalism and its devastating effects on the environment, society and the individual. The axis of discussion will revolve around the strategic possibilities for resistance offered by tactical withdrawal versus relentless activism through contemporary art. On the one hand, the dilemma gives rise to a conscious decision to slow down, decline to participate, to seek a way out, or 'exit' as envisioned by Paulo Virno, or on the other, there is a passion to overcome political exhaustion and confront head on rampant injustice, environmental degradation and lack of liberty.

SPEAKERS

Heath Bunting is a co-founder of both net.art and sport-art movements and is banned for life from entering the USA for his anti-GM work. He is currently preparing works examining borders and identity to be shown at both the Institute of Contemporary Arts London and Tate Modern in 2008.

Emanuel Danesch is based in Vienna. As a poly-media artist in the broadest sense his projects and documentary films cover issues of cultural, economical and political transformation. At the symposium he will present his new film *LiveSafelyinEurope*.

Maja and Reuben Fowkes are curators and art historians who deal with issues of memory, ecology and translocal exchange. They have curated and written extensively on the issue of contemporary art and sustainability.

Ivan Ladislav Galeta is an artist and head of the multi-media department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. He is a noted avant-

garde film maker, conceptual artist and explorer of sustainable practices. He will present his NOART EARTH DAY project at the symposium.

Gene Ray is a critic and theorist living in Berlin and working at the intersections of art and radical politics. He is a member of the Radical Culture Research Collective, author of *Terror and the Sublime in Art and Critical Theory* (2005) and editor of *Joseph Beuys: Mapping the Legacy* (2000). His presentation is entitled 'Exit, Radical Culture and the Re-Composition of Struggle.'

Tamara Steger is director of the Centre for Environmental Policy and Law at CEU and a specialist in environmental justice and sustainable development. Her paper is entitled 'Fin de Siecle to Stuckism: Reclusiveness and Social Activism for Sustainability'.

Yanina Taneva is Art For Social Change Programme Manager at The Red House - Center for culture and Debate, Sofia. Her paper is entitled: 'Does Concrete Blossom Environmentally-Conscious Art in Present-day Bulgaria as Political Statement'

Alan Watt is a lecturer in environmental philosophy and the development of environmental thought at the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at Central European University. He will speak on 'Sustainability as a Political Ideal'.

ART PROGRAMME

REHAB Exhibition
Labor Gallery
29 February - March 26 2008

REHAB is a refuge where we can hide when we want a break from contemporary lifestyles and the damaging influence they have on our mental and physical well-being. In a system in which we're constantly obliged to be socially responsible, in the moments when we want a rest from continuous pressure to conform to social norms, REHAB is an emergency exit. REHAB is also a state of mind, a decision to press pause and unwind, a refusal of ideological conditioning and a rejection of the slavery of political engagement, a shrugging off of the burden of social responsibility and responsible socialising. REHAB purifies us and offers a chance to refresh and recharge our creative energies.

The participating artists are Ivan Ladislav Galeta (HR), Csaba Nemes (HU), Amanda Dunsmore (IRL), Rudolf Pacsika (HU), Denis Kraskovic (HR)

and Balázs Beöthy (HU). The curators are Maja and Reuben Fowkes. For more information see the gallery website: <http://www.labor.c3.hu/>

Amanda Dunsmore presentation: Billy's Museum
Intermedia Department - Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts
Thursday 28 February 6-7.30pm

Emmanuel Danesch - Film Screening "Livesafelyineurope"
Kisterem Gallery 8pm 29 February 2008

BOOKING

For booking information and to reserve your place at the symposium please email Alan Watt <watt@ceu.hu>. Please note that although there is no booking fee, reservation is required.

VENUE

Central European University Auditorium
1015 Budapest, Nádor utca 9
tel: (+36 1) 327 3000

ORGANISERS

The symposium is organised by Maja and Reuben Fowkes with Alan Watt, Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy, Dessislava Gavrilova, Centre for Arts and Culture CEU, and co-ordinated by Lilla Földy.

The art and sustainability programme is devised by Maja and Reuben Fowkes - www.translocal.org

Reference:

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