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Infrastructures of Producing, Transporting and Logistics

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Infrastructures of Producing, Transporting and Logistics in Transnational Perspective.
edited by Burcu Dogramaci & Ursula Ströbele.

Based on the workshop "Infrastructures of Producing, Transporting and Logistics in Transnational Perspective" (Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich 2021, https://www.zikg.eu/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/2021/online-workshop-infrastructures-of-producing-transporting-and-logistics-in-transnational-perspective) we are preparing a publication and kindly invite for proposals. Our book will include shorter essays, longer articles as well as visual essays, taking specific case studies, artistic practices and archive materials as a starting point. We especially welcome contributions from researchers outside of Western Europe and North America.

The workshop and the publications are both part of the ongoing research project "(Un)Mapping Infrastructures. Transnational Perspectives in Modern and Contemporary Art" with members from Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, and Switzerland. Taking a transnational perspective, the goal of this group is to question these infrastructures since the modern era, as well as to examine their possible alternatives. It asks about blind spots of the previous art historiography, multi-perspectivity, and interweaving stories, moving our understanding of modern art production beyond the dominant canon and narrative in order to map and survey how technical, political, and economic conditions shaped the cultural field.

The original meaning of "infrastructure" (from the Latin infra, and structura) refers to a substructure or ground, and to static constructions which establish important lines of connection and guarantee supply. Applied to the arts, the term here may be said to designate institutions such as museums, exhibition venues, private collections, funding institutions, publishers, and here especially studios, academies and other production sites but also transport systems, logistics, and further institutions, practices and situated knowledge that contribute to relevant discourses and networks.

The book will be structured in four main chapters:

Chapter I: Mobile Studios
Over the centuries, artists have frequently drawn inspiration from traveling and embarking on research trips to remote regions searching for specific motifs and territories, working in situ for specific exhibition projects and in residencies worldwide or finding themselves compelled to

leave their home country due to political or religious persecution. The chapter mobile studios seeks to explore these different reasons, working practices, trails and infrastructures that are expressed in artistic nomadism, mobility, exile or forced migration, translocation but also loss of artworks, materials, and tools. Academies, workshops and art schools beyond the traditional institutions in a global context, such as the Académie Lhote, École Municipale des Beaux-Arts in Casablanca, the Feminist Arts Program at CalArts, Black Mountain College or the Pond Farm represent vital sites of education, production and collaboration, as well as shared or transferred knowledge and time-based studio practices that are also considered here.

Chapter II: Performing the Making

This chapter is dedicated to the making of modern and contemporary art, looking at the relationship between art making, the time and place of making, local traditions and contemporary conditions. While in many cases art is still made behind the closed doors of the studio, there are also many examples in the history of the 20th century of cooperative and publicly visible, transparent and interactive art production in workshops, communities, actions and happenings. In these cases, the gesture of production often becomes an action that is exhibited at the same time. We are interested in all forms of art production that understand (performative) making as part of the work, e.g. networked (analogue/digital), cooperative and participatory art. This includes medialisations such as textual and visual documentations of art production, screening and broadcasting or artworks with animals, for which artists initiate the crucial preconditions of the setting and then leave it to the partially auto-generative work to 'act' on its own. But also artistic positions which have recently been named as pioneering, especially for contemporary art and design in Africa (Making Africa, exh. Vitra Design Museum, 2015; Flow of Forms/Forms of Flow, ed. Kerstin Pinther/Alexandra Weigand, 2018).

Chapter III: The Accompanied Object

In order to be seen and received, works of art have to leave the place where they were created and find their way to institutions. Or they leave their collections to be exhibited in other places. Objects are packed/crated, made safe for travel, shipped by a transport company and often accompanied by couriers. Infrastructures thus enable the global mobility of objects, challenged by borders and duty restrictions. Although the accompanied change of location has presumably been one of the constants of art and its history since the beginning, the topic of transporting art in the modern and contemporary periods has only recently come into the focus of research. At the same time, attention has already been paid for some time to looted art or art objects seized under National Socialism or looted objects in contemporary times e.g. Russia's war against Ukraine. This chapter deals with the conditions and practices of transporting art works. The techniques, actors and modes of action that enable the mobility of objects will be examined. The specificity of individual genres will also be considered, i.e. how are sculptures and paintings transported, what challenges do installations pose, and what about the transport of immaterial works? Additionally, to what extent is mobility already being considered in art production? And do works exist that are conceived themselves from the outset as transportable and thus placeless, as constantly accompanied traveling objects?

Chapter IV: Invisible and Overlooked Structures of Production

In a global world where growth, speed and circulation increases value, the flow of goods and digital data has become currency itself and mainly determines the market systems. Today, trade has

moved from objects to immaterial production of data and continuous information exchange. These inherent supply chains and forced mobility are mainly provided by decentralized technologies, e.g. clouds, deep-sea data and fiber optic cables, server farms in 'unknown' places and other modes of publicly invisible and overlooked infrastructures. This chapter focuses not only on digital art, using the various possibilities of the Internet, social media platforms and other interfaces, but also on analogue art forms such as fax art, mail art or concept art, that leave behind established object aesthetics in favor of innovative forms of collective authorship. Questions of accessibility, algorithmic governmentality, control and power relations also need to be addressed here.

If you like to contribute, please send a proposal/abstract (max. 2.000 characters), a short CV and contact address in one pdf until 10.04.2024 to Prof. Dr. Burcu Dogramaci (burcu.dogramaci@lmu.de) and Prof. Dr. Ursula Ströbele (ursula.stroebele@hbk-bs.de).
We welcome short essays (15.000 characters), articles (30.000-40.000) and visual essays (10.000 characters) including footnotes and blank spaces. Publication language is English. Please indicate in your proposal whether you like to deliver an essay, article or visual essay and to which chapter you like to contribute.

Time schedule / deadlines
Submitting proposals: 10.04.2024
Notifications: 18.05.2024
Submitting contributions: 15.11.2024 (followed by a peer review process)