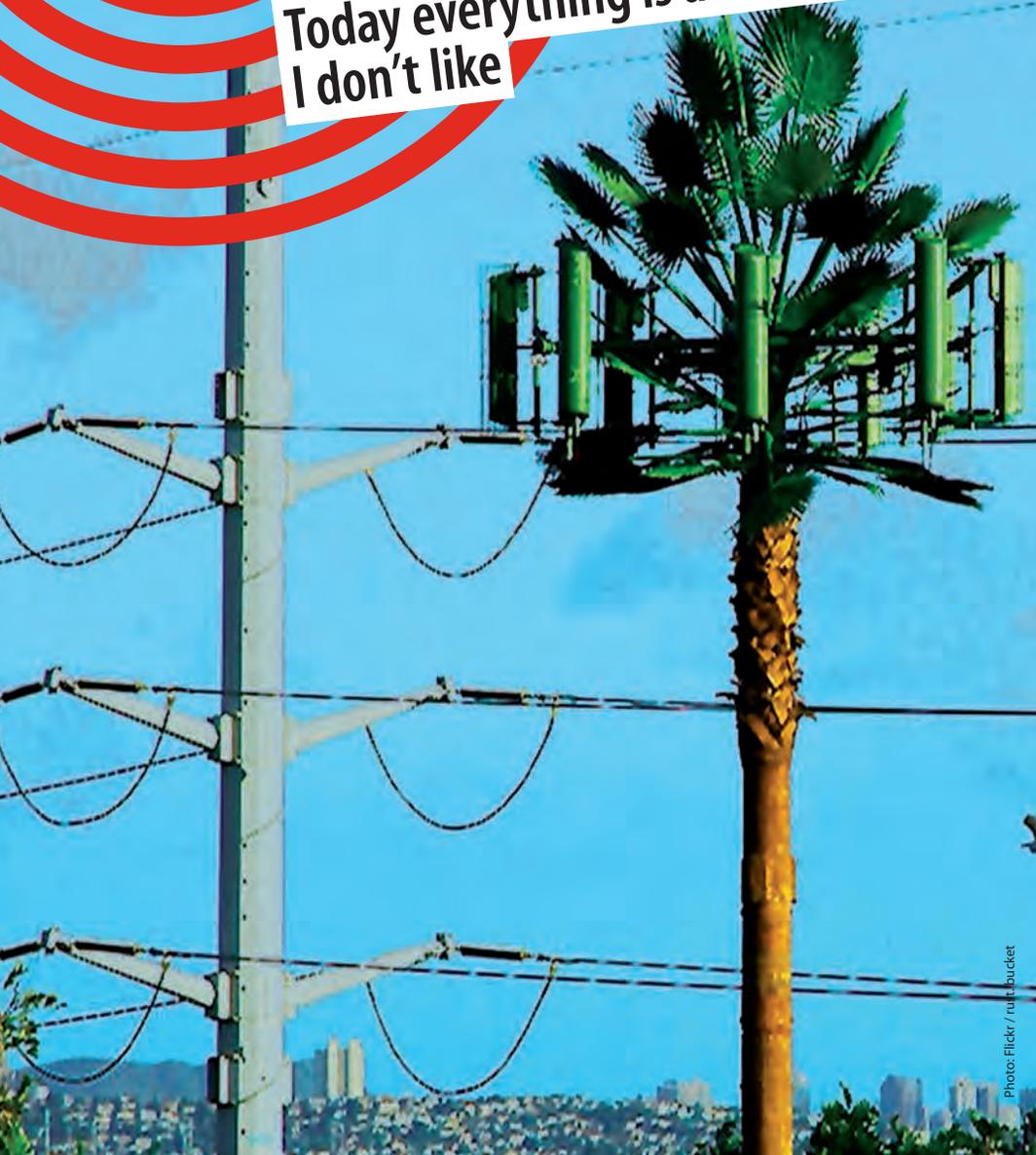www.steirischerherbst.at
26/09–19/10/2014
info@steirischerherbst.at

Academy of Asociality
Today everything is about sharing.
I don't like

Photo: Flickr / rultbucket

Academy of Asociality

Today everything is about sharing. I don't like

G *Theory / Discourse / Workshop*

V *Graz*

Nothing has shaped our notion and practice of sharing as strongly as the Internet. We are constantly being asked to share and to communicate, and we do – emphatically. We share opinions, information, photos, links, software, cars and couches through social platforms; current locations, personal routines, and health data through smartphones or simply by logging on to the Internet. From creative commons to social media to shareconomy: sharing is the imperative of our age. Share little and you lose your status; share nothing and you become suspicious, after all, you must have something to hide. Even Edward Snowden's revelations have changed little about that. But for all the pleasure of this new sharing, one thing tends to get overlooked: we do not share the conditions in which our electronic must-haves are manufactured, nor the profits that can be made with them. Resources from Congo, processing in China, taxes where they are least expensive – places where future technologies use the old-fashioned exploitation and we benefit as lucky share holders. In short, sharing is highly appreciated – unless I have to do without something.

The "Academy of Asociality" investigates and propagates strategies for "de-sharing" in this context. Based loosely on Henry David Thoreau – the inspiration for Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" – it encourages people to renounce all involuntary participation, to opt out of processes and systems that are impenetrable – and which I so rightly mistrust – as Facebook's T&Cs. But what can I do when sharing becomes (s)caring? Where do I go if "I prefer not to"? Thoreau's hut in the woods is no longer an option. Do we have to get smaller than a pixel to vanish in the system, as proposed in a video by Hito Steyerl? Are stateless communities out on the ocean a solution, as advocated by PayPal founder Peter Thiel? Can secrecy teach us how to resist sharing without not participating? Is individualisation without desolidarisation conceivable? What happened to anarchism as a daily practice? And if this wasn't enough, we need to find what needs to happen for us to share not only in the digital sphere, but also in the physical world, where sharing has to do with giving up things even if it hurts.

Sat 11/10

11.00
Welcome

11.05 – 11.25
CMMN SNS PRJCT (the first 20 minutes)
Artistic intervention by Martin Schick &
Viviane Pavillon (for Laura Kalauz)

11.25 – 11.40
Introduction by Christiane Kühl *(English)*

11.45 – 13.00
**Do you want to let this thing into your life?
Exercises in Resocialisation**
Keynote by Harald Welzer *(English)*

13.00 – 14.00
Lunch Break

14.00
Start of the expeditions
Meeting point: Bus stop Paulustor /
Maria-Theresia-Allee / 8010 Graz

14.30 – 16.30
Expeditions *(German / English)*
Know-Center Graz with Nathan Andrew Fain
diethARdT-collection with Thomas Wolkinger
Justizanstalt Karlau with Leo Kühberger
Palais Wildenstein with Heimo Halbrainer

17.00 – 17.45
Expedition reports and discussion

18.00 – 19.00
**The Significance of Secrecy and the Power of
Creative Indifference**
Lecture by Alice Lagaay *(English)*

Sun 12/10

11.00 – 12.15
„Ein neues Produkt" / "A New Product"
Film by Harun Farocki, 2012, 36 min. *(German
language with English subtitles)*
Talk with Nina Möntmann and Claus Philipp
(German)

12.25 – 13.25
**Participation, Sharing, Being Shared. Codes
and Scripts of the Ambivalent**
Presentation by Alexander Tuchaček *(German)*
[Insight Workshop]

**To Share is to (s)care: Networks of Reputation
and Machines of Repetition**
Lecture by Nishant Shah *(English)*

13.30 – 14.30
Lunch Break

14.30 – 14.55
**"Life and Times" – Sharing the Personal, on
Stage and off**
Presentation by Nature Theater of Oklahoma
(English)
[Insight Workshop]

15.00 – 15.25
Researching the Militant Image
Presentation by Urban Subjects *(English)*
[Insight Workshop]

15.40 – 16.40
**Utopian Communities. Refusal, Participation
and Anarchistic Practice**
Presentation by Francis Cape *(English)*
[Insight Workshop]

Seasteading – Floating Dis-associations
Lecture by Christoph Engemann *(English)*

16.55 – 17.55
The Power of Sharing
Lecture by Inke Arns *(English)*

If a Lion could Speak …
Lecture by Sean Cubitt *(English)*

18.10 – 19.00
What's left to share?
Panel and final discussion with all participants
Hosted by Tobi Müller
(English and German language)

All sessions will be followed by Q & A's
ALWAYS ON – installation by Nathan Andrew Fain

Expeditions

Know-Center Graz

In the research area of Social Computing, Know-Center Graz
focuses on the extraction and utilisation of data from social
networks. The aim is to provide relevant information for
companies. **Stefanie Lindstaedt**, managing director and scientific
director, gives a tour of Austria's leading Research Centre for
Data-driven Business and Big Data Analytics, hacker and IT
specialist **Nathan Andrew Fain** accompanies the expedition.

diethARdT-collection

The diethARdT collection comprises some 2,000 contemporary
artworks, including the largest Beuys collection in Austria,
Viennese Actionists (Brus, Nitsch, Muehl), works by West,
Wurm, Kippenberger, and others. This afternoon, **Reinhard
Diethardt** shares his enjoyment of art as well as stories from
thirty years of collecting. The journalist **Thomas Wolkinger**
accompanies the tour of the private museum in the former
soup-kitchen.

Justizanstalt Karlau

With 500 inmates, Karlau Prison is Austria's third-largest
prison. The extension from the 19th century was designed on
the basis of Bentham's panopticon. Today the guard towers
are unmanned, replaced by surveillance cameras. Cultural
anthropologist, historian and activist **Leo Kühberger** gives a tour
of the prison – a place of total segregation for people with
whom society does not want to share common ground.

Palais Wildenstein

The festival centre is based this year at Palais Wildenstein.
A commemorative plaque recalls the Sisters of Mercy who
worked at the provincial hospital housed there until 1924.
There is no hint whatsoever that this was the central site
of Nazi terror in Graz from 1938 to 1945. **Heimo Halbrainer**,
historian and director of CLIO – Verein für Geschichts- und
Bildungsarbeit, speaks about the history of the place and why
it is not shared.

Abstracts and Participants

Martin Schick & Viviane Pavillon: CMMN SNS PRJCT

We've thought things through, discussed a great deal, analysed a few things and even understood some things in all their complexity. In practice, this is of surprisingly little help. Everyday life is governed by agreements that we have reached in secrecy, according to criteria that we are generally not even aware of. Or that we bend as suits us. Welcome to CMMN SNS PRJCT.

Martin Schick is a performer and choreographer with a focus on cultural politics and paradoxes in the economy. He developed CMMN SNS PRJCT in 2011 with the Argentinian performer Laura Kalauz. Actor **Viviane Pavillon** saw CMMN SNS PRJCT in 2013 at the Theater Arsenic in Lausanne as a member of the audience and purchased a performing licence for 100 CHF during the show.

Harald Welzer: Do you want to let this thing into your life? Exercises in Resocialisation

It takes practice if a life that is led at the cost of others is not to lead to an awkward state of mind. In fact our imperial lifestyle - with its horizontal costs to people in the other parts of the world, and its vertical costs to the next generations - arouses little concern, because buying things and using infrastructures retain all the characteristics of being a natural part of everyday life, regardless of its disastrous effects. It is important to develop a gymnastic programme of practised resistance against this daily exercise in asociality.

Harald Welzer is a sociologist and social psychologist as well as co-founder/director of Futurzwei. Stiftung für Zukunftsfähigkeit. He has published many books on history/memory, democracy and climate, most recently: "Selbst denken. Eine Anleitung zum Widerstand".

Photos: Christiane Kühl

Alice Lagaay: The Significance of Secrecy and the Power of Creative Indifference

Secrecy is nothing less than a subject constituting phenomenon; a practice, an acquired skill that helps shape a person as a discrete individual. This accounts for its absolute significance. But in the heart of secrecy lies a fundamental paradox: the fact that in order for something to remain secret it has to be shared. From this paradox another secret can be drawn: how to resist the contemporary imperative to share without necessarily not participating. The guiding concept here, as Alice Lagaay suggests, is creative indifference.

Alice Lagaay is a researcher and lecturer at the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Bremen. Her research centres on 'negative' performance (silence, secrets and Seinlassen) as well as the connection between philosophy and theatre. She is a co-founder of the network performancephilosophy.ning.com.

Harun Farocki: „Ein neues Produkt" / "A New Product" (2012)

Over the course of a year, Harun Farocki accompanied employees at the Hamburg-based business consultancy Quickborner Team, which specialises in organisational building design. Its proposals for the optimisation of communication and working processes on a spatial level reflect contemporary work concepts as well as developments in social order in neo-liberalism at large. In July of this year the restless artist, critic, theorist and most influential film-maker Harun Farocki died unexpectedly. Nina Möntmann and Claus Philipp present the documentary film that invites us to reflect on how we will work in the future.

Nina Möntmann is a curator, author and Professor of Art Theory and the History of Ideas at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. She co-curated "A New Product" and edited the accompanying reader, "Schöne neue Arbeit"/"Brave New Work" (2014). **Claus Philipp** is a culture publicist and managing director of Stadtkino Vienna.

Nishant Shah: To Share is to (s)care: Networks of Reputation and Machines of Repetition

We live in a world that is premised upon the promise of sharing. On digital networks, sharing has become a badge of honour that gets paraded from acts of piracy to building communities of shared resources. To share, it is argued, is to care. Focussing on social media sharing spaces, particularly on the inscrutable 'selfie', Shah will unpack the machinations and mechanics of digital computing, online networks, and socio-cultural practices to uncover the sinister and often alarming controls that sharing brings with it.

Nishant Shah is the co-founder of the Centre for Internet & Society in Bangalore, International Tandem Partner at the Centre for Digital Cultures at Leuphana University Lüneburg, and a cyborg.

Alexander Tuchaček: Participation, Sharing, Being shared: Codes and Scripts of the Ambivalent

The promise of self-empowerment and involvement is inscribed into digital media. Sharing is extremely ambivalent, however: social networks have created the potential for democratic public opinion and mass surveillance. The focus is on this gap between sharing and being shared, the semi-public, in which the private is only produced by the public: how are allocation and representation generated? Who defines the rules of sharing, are there also scripts for the non-coded?

Alexander Tuchaček is the co-founder of media group Knowbotic Research (CH) and lectures in media arts at the School of Art and Design Zurich. His exhibitions include shows at the Venice, Seoul and Rotterdam biennials. He is a recipient of the Prix Ars Electronica and the ZKM Media Art Award.

Nature Theater of Oklahoma: "Life and Times" – Sharing the Personal, on Stage and off

"Life and Times" is a multi-part series of performances by Nature Theater of Oklahoma based on the life story of an ensemble member recounted during a sixteen-hour phone call. The company has been working on this project for more than six years: developing new episodes and touring the world. While sharing one life story with the audience, they have shared big chunks of their lives among each other, in rehearsal rooms, on planes and backstage. Was this profitable? What was sacrificed, what was gained?

Nature Theater of Oklahoma is a New York based company working in various styles of performance including theater, musical, dance, animation. At this year's festival they present "Life and Times – Episodes 4.5 – 5 – 6" and work on Episodes 9 – 10.

Urban Subjects: Researching the Militant Image

Mass media are filled with images of protest and revolt. But an image of militancy is not necessarily a militant image. Just as militancy itself constitutes a social relationship that must be shared in order to be unleashed, so must militant images emotionally short-circuit prepresentation and politics, community and action. From postcolonial film to migrant images – What tactics of representation and dissemination allow us to perceive an image as a form of participation in militance today?

Urban Subjects (Sabine Bitter, Jeff Derksen, Helmut Weber) is an interdisciplinary cultural research collective based in Vancouver (CA) and Vienna (AT). They are co-curators of the current Camera Austria exhibition "The Militant Image".

Francis Cape: Utopian Communities. Refusal, Participation and Anarchistic Practice

The world is presented to us as though individualism and materialism are the only possible orientation systems and representative democracy the only practicable form of government. Yet there are communities who refuse these systems and choose instead to live in self-defined collectives according to comprehensive forms of sharing and practice participation. Cape portrays communal societies from the 18th century to the present day, Zapotec villages, David Graeber and encourages anarchistic everyday practices.

Francis Cape is an installation artist and a trained wood craftsman living in upstate New York. His project "Utopian Benches" is presented at the herbst exhibition "Forms of Distancing".

Christoph Engemann: Seasteading – Floating Dis-associations

Seasteading is an utopian vision of building floating societies on the open seas beyond the reach of territorial nation states. Individuals are allowed to associate to a community simply by docking with their vessel. Equally important is the possibility to leave by sailing off: "Free exit is so important that we've called it the only Universal Human Right" (Patri Friedman). Consequently, Seasteading can be understood as a social utopia of dis-association, promising a paradox community of "I would prefer not to's".

Christoph Engemann is a post-doc at the Centre for Advanced Study in "Media Cultures of Computer Simulation" at Leuphana Universität Lüneburg. He writes and teaches on the genealogy of transactions, the history of authentication media as well as on rurality and barns.

Inke Arns: The Power of Sharing

The concept of sharing presupposes having; I can only give away what I own. Despite this, sharing does not necessarily have to mean that my possessions are halved, since what is digital is doubled by sharing, without involving any loss. It sounds good, but nonetheless can entail complications and produces losers in other places. The question, therefore, is how property is actually constituted nowadays: tangible and intangible, private and communal property - and how can it be that everything that I buy from the iTunes Store still belongs to Apple, and not to me?

Inke Arns is artistic director of Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV) in Dortmund. She is a curator and an author focusing on media art/theory, network cultures and Eastern Europe as well as co-founder of mikro e.V. (Berlin).

Sean Cubitt: If a Lion could Speak ...

Distribution (Rancière), partition (Beck), oeconomia (Agamben): the share is at the heart of political philosophy again. Neoliberalism asks us to produce more, consume more, and demand less. Meanwhile increasing numbers of the excluded must submit to the rule of experts. To ask what share we offer to the environment at such a time is surely madness. But we will have to hear what the environment demands if we are to be free. To hear we need technologies, but they are the instruments of the existing share that leads to the collapse of democracy. What media can make a difference?

Sean Cubitt is Professor for Film and Television at Goldsmiths University of London and currently researches the history of visual technologies, media art history, and relationships between environmental and post-colonial criticism of film and media.

Nathan Andrew Fain: ALWAYS ON (installation)

Nathan Andrew Fain is a hacker who studied interaction design. His work focuses on the intersection between technology and social behaviour. whttp://cypherpoet.com/

Further contributions to themes and projects at steirischer herbst 2014 can be found in our magazine "herbst.THEORIE ZUR PRAXIS"