

REALITY CHECK: WILD CUBE AND GROUND CONTROL

Lois Weinberger – **CONJUNCTIONS** with Heath Bunting and Ladislav Zajac

14 October – 19 November, 2017

An exhibition of the RealismusStudio with interventions in urban space, a framework programme and a publication

Press preview: Friday, 13 October, 2017, 11 am, opening 7 pm

The RealismusStudio of the nGbK places the work of artist **Lois Weinberger** (*1947, Stams / Tirol) at the centre of the show. Since the early 1990s, his works have influenced the debates on art and its dealings with nature. The artist, who describes himself as a field worker, distances himself from an idealised concept of nature and deliberately questions the borders between nature and culture. His engagement with nature is characterised by 'precise carelessness', and he regards art as 'poetic-political constructions of everyday life – as suitable motors of life'. Since the end of the 1980s, the artist has been using abandoned wastelands with spontaneous ruderal vegetation. The unchecked growth without human interventions turns out to be a radical counter-concept to the capitalist industry of exploitation. Alongside his engagement with spaces of nature and civilisation, the artist is interested in the phenomena of an excessively controlled society and its mechanisms of exclusion.

During his grant stay at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin-Kreuzberg in 1994/95, Lois Weinberger undertook regular research excursions to the former border zones between East and West Berlin. He was fascinated by the spontaneous vegetation he encountered along the so-called 'death strip' – a retreat for innumerable plant species that Weinberger observed, researched or transferred to other places. His time in Berlin had a substantial impact on some of his later works. *Das über Pflanzen ist eins mit ihnen* (*documenta X*, Kassel, 1997), for example, already provided a metaphor for the migration movements of our times and questioned the arbitrary drawing of borders and hierarchies.

At the nGbK, works that were created during his grant stay in Berlin or that relate to them will be presented for the first time in a broader work context. The floor installation *Wüstung* (2017), a wall installation in the courtyard of the nGbK and a large billboard at the U-Bahn station Bernauer Straße have been newly created.

In the curatorial experiment **CONJUNCTIONS**, Weinberger's oeuvre is elucidated from different angles and discursively expanded by the artistic positions of Heath Bunting and Ladislav Zajac – in the roles of a satellite and a reflector.

Heath Bunting (*1966 in London, Great Britain) originally comes from street art and graffiti art and calls himself an 'activist'. In the 1990s he was a co-founder of the 'net.art' and 'sport-art' movements, one of the first flash mobbers and the founder of the internet platform irrational.org, which still exists today. In his work, the artist crosses borders, questions hierarchies and power relations, uncovers existing power structures and capitalist appropriation processes and develops free, democratic communication systems and social networks. In *status project* (since 2004), Bunting uses complex diagrams to reveal the constitutive webs of relations and dependencies of 'official' identities and corporations. In his new work *Artificial intelligence searching for artificial life in the coastal rain forest of exmoor* (2017) for the exhibition *Reality Check*, he will apply them for the first time to the forest and nature. A further mapping, *A terrorist – a map of terrorism* (2008), is on display behind one of the tracks at the U-Bahn station Bernauer Straße. On Saturday, 14 October, 2017, the artist will present further views of his expansive *status project* and invite the audience to a six-hour *Indoor Survival Workshop*.

Ladislav Zajac (*1978, Košice / Slovakia) researches the formal aspects of space, time and perception in an almost analytical way. With seemingly simple interventions, he addresses the peculiarities of specific sites or certain situations and in doing so puts our perception to the test. Zajac also prefers spaces (of time) that open up beyond their borders and are additionally able to cast off the limitations of everyday perception. In *Ground Control* (2014/17), he cheekily transforms a mirror ball into a satellite dish to establish contact with distant worlds; in *Space Extends To Infinity* (2016/17) – a kind of chamfer – he makes the background disappear through edgeless illumination and provides a projection screen for imaginations. Zajac will reflect the exhibition in the spaces of the nGbK and in public space, and establish further connections.

The exhibition *Reality Check: Wild Cube and Ground Control* provides the opportunity to discuss the theme of Art – Nature – Critique of Civilisation. In conjunction with the show, works will be presented on two surfaces behind the tracks of the U-Bahn station Bernauer Straße, and pictorial motifs of all three participating artists will be fly-postered in **urban space**. The accompanying framework programme will delve into selected aspects in talks, book presentations, lectures, a workshop, and guided tours. More information at ngbk.de.

An eponymous **publication** will be issued by nGbK publishing house in November.
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