



WOW.11 / Ukraine

@ International BarCamp - KARAZIN MEDIA SYMPOSIUM - December 16, 2017
CENTER FOR MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS AND VISUAL STUDIES School of Sociology
V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

W:OW Point of View

by Wilfried Agricola de Cologne

Greetings from Cologne

As the director and founder of artvideoKOELN & The New Museum of Networked Art, I am happy to tell you now something about my „Point of View“. It is already manifesting itself in the names of these two instances and the connected activities in the field of art, which are currently focussed on the complex project, entitled „**The W:OW Project – We Are One World**“ – <http://wow.engad.org>.

Initiated in 2017, it is media art project directed and curated by Agricola de Cologne to be realized in an exchange between virtual and physical space (online/offline) – the Global and the Local, dealing with the most essential question of human existence, eg. the survival of the human species on planet EARTH. The project is covering a wide range of digital artistic media (moving, interactive and static images, and non-visual media like soundart) to be released in different presentation formats during a period of several years – the online/offline W:OW project core, the travelling W:OW Art Film & Video Festival and the virtual and physical W:OW exhibition in different constellations (digital & analogue media).

W:OW – We Are One World – that’s a statement of self-confidence, a real existing positive value and philosophical knowledge, however, an Utopia only, but no real existing practice. As a topic, it is therefore not reduced to some essential issues like ecology, biodiversity or sustainability but includes the whole bandwidth of issues based on compliance with human rights, mutual respect, equal rights, equal access to education and equal chances for all, the freedom of movement, freedom of the word, art and sciences which however are guaranteed currently just by a few democratic constitutions, but practiced in real even on a more marginal scale.

If we are truly one world, then whom does it belong to? Governments? States? Corporations, industrial companies, banks? Individuals? Or probably the citizens of the states, the inhabitants of the earth, that is, mankind? Or does it belong simply to life, and it is mankind as the only intelligent structure being able to take its responsibility for protecting the entire biological life in all its facets against any exploitation and misuse at the expenses of the Whole, no matter what biological system it is, whether the human, animal or plant life, the rainforest or the deep sea, or the meadows and streams before our own doorstep?

Without supranational administrative structures which would have the power to set through these fundamental rights for all inhabitants on Earth and solve the global threats, without the knowledge, that each individual on Earth has to take its individual responsibility for the Whole on a local scale, it will be a very long, probably too long way to overcome all the manifold threats preventing that the Utopia may come true – nearly all of them are –



human made –

that's also the basic keyword: just to name some threats – the exploitation of the natural resources to the shortnotice profit of just a few globally acting corporations destroying the natural environment sustainably– the global warming and the climate change as a result of this misuse taking a dramatic impact on the environment and the nature as the living habitat enforcing people to migrate, threatening animals, plants and the biological systems with extinct, making the resources of fresh water shrink on all continents which has the huge potential for military conflicts in future , the military conflicts of the Present to the benefit of some totalitarian regional powers like in Middle East, Africa or Eastern Europe enforcing people to migrate after persecution and expulsion, or the overwhelming globalization as a result of the rapid development of new technologies, making people anxious they might loose their identity and privileges, and populist political movements try to manipulate and misuse the emotional uncertainty of these people and destroy all the real civilizational achievements made during the past decades and centuries, by reviving most destructive ancient nationalistic, extremist, fascist and even terrorist ideologies which have the potential to catapult the human civilization back on an pre-industrial stone-age like state, while the true problems of global and local nature leave, however, unrestrained escalating.

Based on the two maxims „**We Are One World**“ and „**The Global meets the Local**“, referring to the biggest and the smallest nucleus alike – the planet as a whole and the smaller geografic and social unities like the continents, regions, country, town, village, community , tribe or family or nature as a biological living habitat – each one is representing a cosmos of itsown.

The dynamically structured W:OW Project has to be considered as such a sample cosmos, a progressive and experimental common world on a small scale in which the participating instances (artists, curators, etc) are taking a particular responsibility for the “Whole”, as well as for each other. In this way The W:OW Project is representing for them the platform for approaching the Utopia by developing concepts, asking questions and giving answers through the creative works to be incorporated.

In practice, as a global networking project between artvideoKOELN & The New Museum of Networked Art and associated networking partners, „The W:OW Project“ is inviting cultural activists like artists and curators from all over the world working in different disciplines to reflect (critically) Present and Future of our planet as the place where life as such, the amazing diversity of a magnificent nature and the human species had the chance to arise with all the civilisatory achievements based on humanity, empathy and creativity, expressed for instance, in art, the sciences and a free and open society.

While the project will be officially lauched only in 2018, **The W:OW Art Film & Video Festival** started already in 2017 including the first 10 curators from different countries presenting 125 selected artists for 10 manifestations at 10 different venues in India, Greece, Cyprus, Ecuador, Brazil, Venezuela, Ethiopia.

W:OW – We Are One World.