

PRESS RELEASE GROUP EXHIBITION

**Journey into a Living Being – From Social Sculpture to Platform Capitalism**

An exhibition by Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien and Tilman Baumgärtel

With friendly support by the Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa: Ausstellungsfonds für Kommunale Galerien und Fonds für Ausstellungsvergütungen and realised in cooperation with Tamago.

Press view: By appointment  
Duration: 18 May – 16 August 2020  
Opening hours: Sun-Wed 10:00–20:00, Thu-Sat 10:00–22:00.  
Entrance: free of admission

The group exhibition JOURNEY INTO A LIVING BEING should have opened at the end of March. Due to the outbreak of the corona pandemic, it had to be postponed and will now be shown at Kunstraum Kreuzberg from 18 May onwards, in compliance with hygiene and distance regulations.

When the exhibition was conceived two years ago, it was not possible to foresee the urgent actuality the topic would have in these times of Corona: lock-in, home office, zoom conferences, live streaming on YouTube and other platforms shape our everyday lives while amazon and Lieferando make the profits that smaller businesses are unable to make. Platform capitalism is becoming more and more entrenched in our everyday lives and in work realities. The exhibition takes a critical look at these developments, which have been emerging for years.

Kunstraum Kreuzberg presents JOURNEY INTO A LIVING BEING, a group exhibition featuring 32 artists and a discursive program which reflects on the methods used by companies such as YouTube, Google, Fiverr or Amazon Mechanical Turk, whose business model rests on the exploitation of their users' creative potential. Around half of the featured artistic works originate from the current age of platform capitalism. A selection of older works traces the concept of collective creativity back to emancipatory ideas from the internet's infancy, such as crowd sourcing and ultimately to Joseph Beuys' social sculpture.

Participating artists:

CORY ARCANGEL | JOSEPH BEUYS | ARAM BARTHOLL | NATALIE BOOKCHIN | IRENE CHABR | JAMES COUPE | ANDY DECK | CONSTANT DULLAART | MARK FLOOD | JOHN D. FREYER | JODI | MIRANDA JULY & HARRELL FLETCHER | AARON KOBLIN & DANIEL MASSEY | STEFFEN KÖHN | OLIA LIALINA | JONAS LUND | JUDY MALLOY | MICHAEL MANDIBERG | NEOZON | OMSK SOCIAL CLUB | NAM JUNE PAIK | MARK SALVATUS | SEBASTIAN SCHMIEG & SILVIO LORUSSO | RALPH SCHULZ | GUIDO SEGNI | JOHANNES STÜTTGEN | ALEX TEW | AMALIA ULMAN | VAN GOGH TV

About the exhibition

In 1977, Joseph Beuys presented his installation *Honey Machine at the Workplace* at *documenta 6*, in which tubes ran into the exhibition rooms, through which honey was pumped. The work symbolized Beuys' idea of the expanded concept of art and of social sculpture. "Everyone is an artist" is his famous motto – not because everyone can paint, dance or make music, but because we all contribute through our productivity to a collective creativity

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that can be weighed as real capital and societal potential, to which Beuys ascribed the formula “art = capital.” Honey as the “spiritual nutrition of the cosmos” (Beuys) is the embodiment of this collective creativity.

These days, we deliver our creative “honey” voluntarily to internet companies like Google, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok or Amazon. Computers and smartphones, online speakers and fitness wristbands upload a large portion of our data to these companies’ servers. Even rental bikes and e-scooters collect our location data. Our every click, every Like, every photo posted and every online comment is fuel for the companies of “surveillance capitalism” (Shoshana Zuboff). They use our data to sell advertising, predict our behavior, optimize their algorithms and AI, and to keep competing companies out of the market as much as possible.

The exhibition **JOURNEY INTO A LIVING BEING** takes its name from a lecture Beuys gave on social sculpture at *documenta* in 1977. It traces the conceptual trajectory to the present, in which the internet and social media are replete with offers of creative services, but where only few reap the financial rewards. It brings together artworks spanning forty years with the aim of deciphering what has come to pass between the development of social sculpture and the rise of platform capitalism and the gig economy, and how this process is reflected in art. The exhibition is accompanied by a series of events.

**#journeyintoalivingbeing**

A catalogue with 116 pages and 89 reproductions will be published to accompany the exhibition.

**Idea and concept:** Tilman Baumgärtel

**Coordination and realisation:** Nadia Pilchowski, Jorinde Splettstößer

**Technical exhibition production:** Kristoffer Holmelund

**Assistance:** Elisabeth Kroegel, Lena Fetkötter, Mareen Linsner, Linnéa Meiners

Accompanying program (dates and virtual platforms tba on our website [www.kunstraumkreuzberg.de](http://www.kunstraumkreuzberg.de)):

Guided tour with curator Tilman Baumgärtel

An evening with Van Gogh TV (Mike Hentz, Benjamin Heidersberger, Karel Dudsek, Salvatore Vanasco), Moderation: Tilman Baumgärtel

Omsk Social Club on Real Playing Games (RPG) and the project *Unrealism* presented in the exhibition

Guided tour with curator Tilman Baumgärtel

The Social Sculpture. Talk with Johannes Stüttgen (FIU - Free International University)

Gig-economy and art. A conversation with Sebastian Schmiege about his project *Gallery.Delivery* presented in the exhibition

Guided tour with curator Tilman Baumgärtel

Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien

Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien is an institution of the district office of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg.

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