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In collaboration with MUTE magazine this Wiretap examines the old German saying 'Die Stadtluft macht frei' or the city air liberates. Dating from medieval times, the city was seen as the place where notions of freedom, citizenship and independence could come to fruition. However, is the urban condition still considered as a means that can stimulate and accelerate social and cultural change? In short: Macht die Stadtluft noch immer frei?

In the fifties and sixties the Situationists formulated a radical critique on capitalist power structures and consumer culture, by mapping public space as a political locus of action and cultural creation. Central to their theories was the remaking of urban space in which individual experiences become protagonists, and where cultural intervention is viewed as a political act.

Taking this historical note into account, how do cultural practitioners manage the fabric of the city today? Cultural organisations have increasingly been attributed a cleansing value through processes of gentrification and regeneration (e.g. the revamping of de Witte de Withstraat in Rotterdam). Yet, how radical can these organisations claim to be when their culture becomes a currency in the urban political agenda. Is there still a culture-critical wind of change in the city?

The participants of Wiretap7.05 surf between these tensions, often in the wind's eye.

Guests

Pauline van Mourik Broekman (NL/GB)

Pauline van Mourik Broekman is, together with Simon Worthington, co-editor and publisher of Mute magazine, which she co-founded in 1994 soon after leaving art college and has helped develop into an internationally recognised voice on technoculture and independent media production. Aside from editing Mute, she also writes and lectures extensively on culture, media and publishing in the UK and abroad. Recent essays include 'The Vanishing' - on artistic responses to nuclear technology (Locus Solus, Black Dog Publishing) and 'Art, interrupted' - on the work of English artist Josephine Pryde. Pauline is currently involved in the metamorphosis of Metamute from a traditional magazine archive site into - something completely different!

James Stevens (GB)

James Stevens has been one of the driving forces behind BACKSPACE (net lounge and medialab in London) since it was established in 1995. In 2000 he established 'spc.org', a small organisation run and arranged by consensus and loose association to share resources. He is Co-Founder of CONSUME, a strategy for self provision of networking services, utilising Wireless LAN technologies, open source development principals and counter commercial tactics. It is developed and maintained on a not for profit basis by those using it. James Stevens works currently as the UK Producer for the Windows Media Player Guide.

Josephine Berry (GB)

Josephine Berry is Deputy Editor of Mute. She is also completing a PhD on site-specific art on the net at the University of Manchester. During 1997-1998, she co-edited Crash Media, a bi-monthly tabloid on independent media production, with Micz Flor and organised "Exploding Media", a related symposium at the University of Salford in 1998. Josephine co-authored the "Snowfields" Internet site with Micz Flor, for which they won the Stuttgart multimedia prize of 1998. She writes extensively on art and culture. Recent work has been included in Inventory and Telepolis.

David Panos (GB)

David previously worked as a research consultant to large commercial clients. He specialised in deploying ethnographic and documentary techniques to produce comprehensive studies of phenomena such as festivals and suburban social networks. David has lectured at Goldsmiths, The University of East London, The Royal College of Art and the Architecture Association on contemporary culture and communications and branding. He is also a contributor to Mute Magazine and is part of the experimental improvisation/digital noise project Aufgehoben No Process

Benedict Seymour (GB)

Benedict Seymour is a freelance journalist, writer and film maker. He has written for a range of magazines, journals and newspapers including Mute, Radical Philosophy, Frieze, Art Monthly, Dazed & Confused and The Independent. His areas of interest include politics, philosophy, art, literature, film and technology. At present he is researching a documentary film about regeneration, gentrification and the impact of globalisation in London with Year Zero productions.

Year Zero Productions

David Panos set up Year Zero in September 2000 as an independent production company that aims to foreground experimental and critical/political approaches to digital documentary making. Their current project is an examination of the convergent trends of Gentrification, Regeneration and Social Housing in East London. Year Zero's current documentary project looks at London's Borough of Hackney and examines the recent social, economic and architectural transformation of this part of the inner city. The film looks at Gentrification, Regeneration and Social Housing in an area infamous for its poverty and social exclusion. It also seeks to address broader issues about how we think about social provision, citizenship and the urban condition in the wake of the Neo-Liberal attack on the Welfare State throughout the 80s and 90s. The film is constructed from interviews with local politicians, housing and regeneration organisations, community action groups, local people, estate agents, writers, artists, and academics exposing the contradictory rhetoric and new social conflicts of a supposedly 'post-political' era. Shot entirely on DV in and around Hackney the film is still in production and will be completed in Autumn 2001.

Location: V2_Organisatie

Entrance Fee: Fl. 10

Boemarks

James Stevens

<http://www.spc.org>

<http://bak.spc.org/subscribe>

<http://consume.spc.org/press/PR001.html>

Josephine Berry

<http://www.yourserver.co.uk/crashmedia/>

<http://www.art-bag.net/snowfields/>

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