

EGEU | LaDøns - Residency program for Hamburg based artists

The curatorial exchange project between EGEU and LaDøns started with the idea of using past visions of the future to think about the future today, in a moment when technology is inaugurating a new perspective on human experience and opening up new possibilities. As to what concerns art, for the last thirty years there has been an increased use of technology that gave birth to *new media* and *new senses*. But although the terminology might be new, forms of expression resulting from scientific breakthroughs are not unprecedented. For instance, one might say that film and photography were once *the new kids on the block* and subject to the same kind of apprehensive and critical reception, raising many similar questions.

Both from a historical perspective and a political one, the most important question is probably whether *new media* bear a language outside of the realms of *traditional art*. To answer it, however, we must pose some rather structural questions: Does the fact that *new media* entail new formal possibilities mean that it brings a novelty along altogether? How has novelty been announced in the past?

To address the issues mentioned above, our aim is to pose the same challenges to *conventional media* as *new media* are facing, hopefully fostering a tension that will open space for discussion. Instead of a narrative focused on a technical/artistic revolution where one replaces the other, an act of discontinuity, we propose an alternative vision of evolution where *new media* are seen as a complement which enriches tradition, an act of continuity.

This would happen at two levels. First, at the level of structure, we ought to figure out what kind of language *new media* are bringing about. Thus we would like to encourage artists to think about the language of *new media*, its possible delusion and ways to transpose it to *traditional media*. This would be done without using new media devices or using them in a controversial way, in the hope of emancipating new media's language and apparatuses. Second, on a rather political dimension, we may use that structural approach to reflect upon and dissect the notion of value that it brings along: how it is perceived, judged and anticipated.

By challenging artists to work around this historical analysis, we could propose a take on what the future looked like thirty years ago and how much of it turned out to be an enthusiastic illusion. That research would provide a nice ground to discuss the strands of developments up to the present day, as well as recover possible solutions to contemporary problems that have emerged over the years and have been forgotten.

Our plan is to address all of these questions through a curatorial exchange project between Galerie LaDøns, an off-space and art-collective from Hamburg, and EGEU, another off-space from Lisbon, which would happen from July to August in Portugal and Germany. Members of LaDøns will be doing a one-week artistic residency and exhibiting their work at EGEU, whereas EGEU's curatorial collective will select a group of multidisciplinary artists from Hamburg to work with at LaDøns, based on an open call.

Since our main aim is to use these exhibitions as a means of discussing and sharing knowledge about contemporary problems such as the use of technology, it is fundamental to use a transnational approach, for this will expose both teams to an environment where they are not used to work, hence raising different

challenges. Hopefully, this will trigger more unconventional questions and therefore less conventional answers both at an artistic and curatorial level, which can only improve learning. We believe that it is the clash between two antagonistic art scenes and milieus that may foster discussion and enable the sharing of knowledge and the creation of gateways between them.

Besides, both LaDøns, which is part of Verein Gängeviertel e.V., a non-profit association, and EGEU, also a non-profit association, share a similar approach to artistic expression. Being independent cultural spaces, we are aware of the importance of creating networks off the beaten path of the art market, providing a space for communication free of market-related concerns. It is this, we contend, that strengthens and reinforces the role that art and culture should play in contemporary democratic societies, enabling them to provide solutions that go beyond its environment.

All in all, we intend to use this cooperation in order to create a meeting point between the emerging artistic and non-commercial cultural scene of Hamburg and Lisbon, as well as a relational structure for our projects to collaborate internationally, now and in the future. Indeed, we hope to establish a long-lasting exchange program that may support both young artists and independent projects in finding new artistic and curatorial paths in a shared way. This, we reckon, is especially relevant today, at a time when we feel it is our social duty not to let the physical distancing we are practicing create a gap among cultural actors and push us solely into a digital environment.