The Project

1 (scope)
The Art and global media. An exhibition in the media space project took place over a period of approximately two years (October 1998 - February 2000) in a number of cities (Barcelona, Graz, Karlshruhe, Tokyo), in various media, and in collaboration with several partners. The project was launched in 1998 as part of the Steirischer Herbst festival in Graz, Austria, where it focused on the newspaper, poster, video, film and television media. The project was concluded in 1999-2000 at the Center for Art and Media (ZKM) in Karlshruhe, Germany, where the focus was shifted to the network medium.

In addition to the Steirischer Herbst festival and the ZKM, the partners of the Art and global media project included the museum in progress in Vienne, Austria, the Schulenburg-Kino, cinema and the K2O Kino am Augustiner cinema in Graz, the Austrian daily newspaper Der Standard, Austrian television ORF, the global newspaper combine World Media Network, the British art magazine n.para-doxa, the Media Centre Art d'Istissi in Barcelona, Spain, on the Intercommunication Center (ICC) in Tokyo and their journal Intercommunication.

The Art and global media project was a networked, multidisciplinary and multilingual event. The aim of the project was to make us aware and to visualise the way the media change and construct reality with the aid of a media project taking place primarily in the media space. Logically enough, the global network plays a key role in a project exploring the global conditions of art and media. The aim of telling an exhibition in the media space from print media to electronic media, from television to the World Wide Web, is essentially to leave the traditional places and institutions of exhibitions such as museums, galleries, etc. Ideally, an exhibition focused on the social, economic and political consequences of the new media can only take place within these very media. In what is a kind of placelessness, an exhibition was organised mainly taking place in the new media themselves. In this case, the traditional material places and cultural institutions served as a basis for extending activities from local physical spaces into the immaterial global information space. The media conditions were geared to the production and distribution conditions of the artistic projects. Poster actions took place, films were screened in cinemas, TV films shown on television, media installations were in exhibition spaces, and net projects on the net.

The Art and global media project tended towards a form of realisation in the global media space, so it was not tied down to any particular venue or local time. The project left behind both the traditionally limited structures of space and time to which an exhibition is amenable and the restrictions in terms of media.

The works produced by the artists in the media for the Internet, TV, cable television, radio, film, daily newspaper, magazine and poster media were published at specific points around the globe in their media. The international networking of the artistic contributions corresponded to an inter-media networking. Some of the contributions connected one medium to another and were acted out in several different media - one medium is reflected on in another medium. The television works analyse how news is constructed in newspapers (Noam Chomsky: The New York Times, Paper Tiger television, 1985, 1986), or about cultural transformations (the telephone brought about (Avisio Rosell, The Call, GRENZ-Film, Vienna, 1998). Media and media constructions of reality and media fictions are reflected on in the media. How is intimacy coded in the net? What kind of news do we see on television? What kind of politics do we read about in newspapers?

The way media construct society, history, memory, politics, market, economy and knowledge is the main focus of the Art and global media project. All over the globe we are seeing how the media have formed and taken over the traditional institutions of society. The projects and operators involved in the construction of reality. To an ever increasing extent the construction of the world is being dominated by the media. Society is increasingly becoming a media society. This is why media work is increasingly taking the place of world observation in art. From law to financial markets, from leisure to the world of work, from art to politics, there is no social space of the image not decisively shaped by and mass media use of media. Thanks to the interplay of the global economy and global mass media, there are new types of structures, new classes, new hierarchies, new forms of economic and political power. This project about media in the media was not only about portraying the representation of reality in the media, it was rather a new approach, namely to shed light on the different methods with which reality is constructed in the various media.

II (film)
A first major project in Graz in 1998 explored film as a medium of the representation and construction of reality. Retrospectives curated by Peter Weibel featuring the overall oeuvre of three outstanding representatives of three generations of critical documentary film, the 1960s - 1970s. In 1967 Christos Markaris and Harun Farocki, provided some typical examples.

Joris Ivens (1898 - 1989), after formal movement studies Études des mouvements (1928), De Brug (1928) and above all Regen (1929), began his actual documentary work with Vrij Bas (in Film Building) (1929), Philips Radio (1931), and Mistere au Bovinac (1933), which were protests against the conditions of the economic and social system that engendered so much misery. Nieuwe Gronden (1934) was his first collaboration with the composer Hanns Eisler. For many people, Nieuwe Gronden (1934) is Ivens's masterpiece. Afterwards, Ivens did not make any more films in Holland for more than 30 years, but rather worked in Germany (Spanish Earth, 1937), with a commentary by Ernest Hemingway, in China (The Four Hundred Million, 1938), and from 1938 to 1945 in the USA. In 1949 he shot Andes Condor in the Andes. In 1949 he designed the constitution of the socialist society of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Poland in Pianezzo (The First Years). In Eastern Europe he also shot the famous film Das Leid der Strasse (1954) with music by Dimitri Shostakovich and texts by Bertold Brecht, a celebration of the world-wide labour movement with material from 32 nations. In 1956 Ivens settled in Paris where he remained until his death, apart from travel for his numerous works abroad. In 1963 he shot Au Pays des Montagnes, with a commentary by Chris Marker. In 1965 he made Le ciel, la terre (The Threatening Sky) in Vietnam.

In 1964 he made his only fiction film, the legendary science fiction film La Jetée, that consisted solely of still frames apart from the opening in which a sleeping girl opens her eyes.

S'ava a quatre drames de l'âme (1966) is comprised of 800 photographs taken by Jean-Luc Godard in a period of ten years. In 1967 Marker initiated the collective film Loin de Vladivostok, with contributions from Raisnas, Godard, Ivens, Leutke, Klein and Varda. After May 1968 Marker mainly worked for the film collective SLO, that was to become ISKRA in 1974 (Images, Sons, Kinescope, the image, the sound, the image, the sound, the image, the sound). In 1974 Marker began filming under his own name again. In 1977 he analysed his work of internationalists in La Face de l'air est rouge in a very personal style. In the 1980s he shot Sans Soleil (1983) and a portrait of Akira Kurosawa A.K. (1985) in Japan. In the words of Michael Chion: "Chris Marker has made one of the best documentaries ever filmed on the making of a film." Marker's interest in film as a medium of culture, and in the terms of the private and collective, becomes increasingly evident in Level Five (1996) he searches for the traces of the film "La Jetée" during and after the death of Simone Signoret he created the documentary film Mémoire de Simone.
As to the original media of memory, writing and images, Marker uses film as the medium of memory. His films are forms of writing that treat events, images and sounds as elements with which the author constructs his reflections. For Marker, culture is memory work. His films oppose the imperial interests of hegemonic political systems to forget and repress certain memories. He deploys his discursive images to counter the antidedemocratic images of historical unawareness and a loss of experience as supplied by the mass media and Hollywood films. Language and images, more so than in the work of Ivens, a child of the silent film era, are united in Marker's films to create the characteristic (film) style of an author who interrupts the endless visual loops of global multimedia systems that destroy knowledge.

Marker adopted this style of filming, this manner of language and images, working directly with the conditions in which the visual is produced at the global front. He is particularly interested in the social and cultural contexts of image production. He not only disrupts the industry, but also the images themselves. Thus he analyses how we see, as evidenced by his essay on the work of Ivens and Marker, he investigates the conditions in which the world becomes images of the world. Ervas wird sichtbar (something becomes visible) is the title of one of Marker's films dating from 1980-1982, a film that makes visible what matters to Marker to show how the world is portrayed. He examines the thing of the world by showing how something becomes visible. By showing us the conditions in which the world transforms into a statement about the world, he facilitates the transformation of the public media and global media conglomerates: their Zeitungen (1976). Ein Bild (1983). Videogramme einer Revolution (1991-92). Die führende Rolle (1994).

Whereas Ives Ivens depicted civil wars, Marker portrays wars of images.

But Marker and Farocki not only restricted their film style to the classical medium of film, but also transposed the cinematographic experience to other technical dispositives. Media installations that work with video, CD-ROM and computer, for example Schnittstelle (1995) by Harun Farocki and Zapping Zone (1990/97) and Imemory (1997) by Chris Marker. Amplify the discursive elements as a result of their intermediality, this is a method that we show how reality is constructed with the aid of the media.

With their discursive films, Ivens, Marker, and Farocki declared war on the "undeclared war" (David Puttnam, 1997) of the Hollywood film industry, a war far greater and more dangerous than the battles against Vietnam (1968) and the Vietnam war against Iraq (1972-1973). The films Ivens made together with Jean Vigo, in particular, but also Chris Marker, are films that operated at the forefront of the global revolutions. Whereas Ivens, trained his camera in the faces of workers and peasants, Marker's camera focuses on the political struggle of the working class, and the visual anthropologist of Robert Flaherty, still a convinced humanist who saw film as an instrument of political struggle, Chris Marker had realized that the war of man was matched by a war of images and that there is a common logic in both. His films are personal comments rather than pamphlets in the name of collectives. Where Ivens reported the mass media and the register of the social sphere in a formally differentiated manner, in his film essays Chris Marker shows us how the images of history are constructed by the stories that images tell. A criticism of images begins to take shape in Marker's work. Harun Farocki focuses directly on the register of the visual as instances of the social, presenting the "images of the world" as an "inscription of war" (1988). "Philosophy asks: what is man? I ask: what is an image? Images have too little importance in our culture." (Harun Farocki)

Chris Marker from political siding in Ivins' pictures to political treatment of images in Harun Farocki's work articulates the transition with great precision. What we see is an evolution of the conditions not only does occur war on the political actors but also on the images themselves. The camera is not only found at the great scenes of dramatic historical events, but also in the cutting room, the cutting of the images, becomes the scene of analysis. Political action continues from the microstructure of politics to the microstructure of politics. Political education also takes effect in the images provided by the camera. Education about political, social and cultural contexts makes into education about the conditions of production of images and social communication. Ives', Marker's, and Farocki's film essays show how cutting images and sound already served to create or reconstruct the reality in the classical medium of film.

In his films, Marker translated the political and social upheavals that were taking place around the world into an aesthetics that reconciles the subjectivism of Jean Vigo with the documentarism of Dziga Vertov. Marker, originally a writer,
from the global information flow and which, as such, can be found in certain places in both the First and Second worlds and in the Third World. The affluence of the industrialized nations of the First World hinges more than ever on an exploiting exploitation of the Third World. Increasing the efficacy of exploitation is served by an information and economic network that is also linked to Asia, i.e. global network. Globalisation is gaining the whole world as its marketplace, safeguarding the continuation of First World colonial hegemony in combination with Asian partners. This explains the trend of the so-called ‘free market’ towards globalisation. The megatrends of big telecommunications, IT companies, print media, electronic media, content providers and distribution providers (e.g. film companies and internet firms), banks and insurance companies are symptomatic of attempts to subdue the global market hegemonically. The global greed of the big media associations, capital conglomerates and industrial groups is expressed in capitalist style or monopolistic domination of the world market. By means of the monopoly in a single service sector, etc., the aim is to put the global market at the mercy of a single company, e.g. Microsoft. Global expansion means global monopoly.

The architecture of the global economy goes hand in hand with the development of a global information marketplace, a global network. The rise of a global media market in the late 1980s took place accordingly. The new missions of capital increasingly became aware of the significance of a global media culture for the liberal economic market. Global telecommunications systems and the world wide web thus do not serve the previous cultural, instructional purposes of public media companies, e.g. as state-controlled European TV and radio stations, but rather - as can be seen by the example of private US media systems - we can recognize the negative consequences of media globalisation for the public sphere. The miniaturisation and triumph of global mass communication can only be seen and comprehended in context with the installation of global media conglomerates and transnational groups that take advantage of world-spanning communication technology, from the telephone to the Internet. The anti-democratic tendencies of neoliberalism and the mass media reciprocally augment their power. Thus, it will be all the more important for us to be informed about the social construction mechanisms of media and the media construction mechanisms of society. This is why media critique and social critique can no longer be divided.

In a society in which civil rights are constantly being diminished by the media construction of the world, art has a historic opportunity to put communication technology in the hands of the individual and to reprevent it from the dictates of capital, commercialism and the military. Art has a chance to contribute to re-establishing global media technology.

At a symposium curated by Peter Weibel, which brought together a selection of the first socialism and political theorists to introduce into the writings of the 19th century, facts and theoretical concepts that allow a critique of global media culture, the aim was to investigate and name the effects of the global media on culture and economy. Parallel to the real-world symposium in Graz (featuring Christa Blümlinger, Timothy Druckrey, Edward S. Herman, Diana Johnstone, Bruno Latour, Gerhard Lischka, Robert W. McChesney, Vincent Mosco, Florian Rötzer, Dan Schiller, and Siegfried Zielinski) with the lectures printed in this book, a virtual symposium was also held in the print media and on the net, in which Pierre Bourdieu, Manuel Castells, Jürgen Habermas, Immanuel Wallerstein and Peter Weibel took part.

IV (newroom)

The film programme and symposium were accompanied and extended in a local national newroom in Graz and in the multimedia international newroom of the media.

At a local indication of the exhibition project Art and global media taking place in the immortal, global public space of the print and electronic media, there was a physical, local public space, dubbed ‘newroom’, at the steirischer herbst associations building in Graz, in which visitors were able to inform themselves on site about this project or log in via the website at http://www.xspace.at. In this room, visitors were not only able to regularly follow and read all the contributions continuously published in the print media and the newroom, but also view some of the video- graphically documented lectures of the participants in the symposium (Siegfried Zielinski, Bruno Latour, specific works by Paper Tiger Television and the essay film, Der Angriff der Gegenwart auf die Urgeste (1988) by Alexander Kluge, etc.) and videos were also shown that were put together by the STROBE trailer by TV - True Image Vision, Vienna, and productions of the alternative cable TV producers. Further, a virtual newroom called newweb was created and was installed for the public space constructed by the print media, the public billboards. A specially designed poster, Jardín Voyager, Travelling Garden by Martin Altieri, curated by Ulrich Obrist, was shown in collaboration with the museum in progress, Vienna, in November/December 1998 and January 1999 in 23 European cities. In addition to these discursive and artistic interventions in the classical media space, i.e. the public space constructed by the print media, there were also discursive and artistic interventions in the virtual media space constructed by the new electronic media. In the electronic media space of television, in collaboration with the Austrian broadcasting company ORF, the kunst-stücke series featured existing films on the subject of global media, e.g. Stillhere (1997) by Harun Farocki, Manufacturing Consent and the Media (1992) by Peter Wimnick and Mark Schaper and Avital Ronell, The Call (1998) by Susanne Gramza and Arno Bährer. On the other hand, specially produced programmes on the subject of Art and global media were also screened under the series title STROBE (with contributions by participants in the symposium and news correspondents around the world) by the alternative TV producers TV - True Image Vision, Vienna, in kunst-stücke on ORF television.

V (net condition)

Under the heading net condition, art/politics in the online universe, the ZKM presents a project in the form of a multilocational networked event simultaneously in Karlsruhe (ZKM), Graz (steirischer herbst), Tokyo (ICC International Communication Center) and Barcelona (MCI Media Centre d’Art d’Ibiza).
This exhibition, featuring some 100 works, aimed not only at providing a comprehensive view of the current status of international net art, but above all, to introduce visitors to the political and economic ideas, social practices and artistic applications of online communication.

The title net/condition is meant at several levels to reflect the conditions introduced by the net, both artistic and social. There are social conditions that necessitate and promote the development of the net. The net, in turn, creates the possibilities and conditions with which the information society can continue to develop. The title is to be seen in this sense as a social and technical condition. This exhibition is not called net/art, but rather, for the aforementioned reasons, net/condition, as it focuses on the social conditions forced into existence by the net, while at the same time exploring the conditions that the net itself imposes on society. In addition to these social conditions, the focus of the exhibition project is on investigating which new conditions the net imposes on the historical media and historical social forms of communication and art. Every form of art is characterized by change and relativity, and art as a social practice is characterized as compared to previous media, but generally introduces a host of new characteristics that are superior to historical media in certain aspects. Thus, the result of the emergence of new media is not the eradication of the old media, rather the new media subdue the old media to their condition. "The Photographic Condition" (Rosalind Krauss) has changed painting, video has changed film, digital technology has changed art, etc. As a technical disposable, the new condition means visual, visual culture and literature.

This is why, alongside net-based two-dimensional images and texts on screen, we see net-based installations that adequately widen the ever-narrow definition of net art. Net-based installations are the latest stage of media art after the video-based sculpture of the 1980s and the computer-based, interactive installations of the 1990s. In net-based installations, the changes and advances of new media are particularly clearly demonstrated by two trends. Firstly, the net allows a link between the local physical, real and material space of the net and the dislocated, virtual, immaterial space of the information sphere. The net, then, consists of islands of non-locality. We are not driving as in a car along a continuous space-time, as in the information highway metaphor; we are walking from one location to another, from one location to another. The structure of the non-locality, introduced by the telephone and television, is amplified by the net. The arena of the action is enlarged from the image to the global information space.

The first time, dislocation and non-locality allow communication beyond the local horizon. Up to now, of course, the viewer and the image were in the same local horizon. Even in an interactive computer installation, the viewer and the image were in the same space at the same time. Interactive net art makes it possible for the image to be at different places at different times. For the first time, Images, texts and sounds are not tied to specific localities, to the viewer’s locality. Secondly, the interaction is not unidirectional, monosensory and irreversible, as was previously the case. Even in computer installations, the viewer’s movements may trigger movements in the image, e.g., the simulated growth of artificial plants. The movement in virtual space, however, had no repercussion on real space, the growth of virtual plants had no effect on real plants. In a computer-based net installation, for the first time the relation between the image and the viewer is reversible, i.e., it takes place in two directions: the information flow passes from the viewer to the image, from real space to virtual space, and from the image back to the viewer, from virtual to real space. Net activity in virtual space controls the sequence of events in real space and the events in real space control the sequence of events in virtual net space. The reversible nature of the effect between real and virtual, between local and non-local, is the next stage of cybernetic, cyberinteractive, the virtuality of storing information, the variability of the medium content and the variability of the medium behavior in the interactive computer image is followed by the reversibility of the effect and simulation of non-locality. Two characteristics of the algorithmic artificial image that are perhaps most radical than interactivity. Interactivity, which is reversible and which dislocates, is the new characteristic of net-based computer installations.

Distributed virtual reality, shared cyber-space, non-local communication, multi-user environments, web TV and net games are the focal issues of this exhibition. In this context, the net/condition is not only explored in terms of image media, but also with regard to sound media. Net-based music and NetRadio are thus important aspects of this exhibition.

VI (examples)

As artistic director of Ars Electronica, I already dedicated the festival to the net phenomenon in 1995, under the heading "Myths of Information: Welcome to the Wired World." As part of this festival I myself performed an internet opera that took a critical look at the ideological conditions of the creation of Wagner’s music at Wagners Wahn oder das heilige Land des Kapitals. Cyberoper for Bühne und Inter-
During Ars Electronica 1995 (June 20–23) information about Richard Wagner was made available to the public via www. A worldwide online-discussion on the subject of Wagner's Wahn, moderated and participated in by Peter Weibel, took place via IRC-server during the performance.

In the Foyer Brucknerhaus two multimedia-terminals were installed which gave visitor access to the Ars-Infopages, which had been especially set up for this event, were fed into the terminals along with inserts from the online-discussion via internet and the events on the stage. The paths of information that the users of the Wagner's Wahn software travelled became part of the performance in the auditorium, in the Brücknerstall (Brückner Auditorium), during the performance of Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder, video projections of the Wagner's Walhln CD-ROM (operated from the multimedia terminals in the foyer), web pages on the subject of Wagner and of the online-discussion constituted a telematic, electronic stage set.

Another important interest project I commissioned at Ars Electronica 1995 was ARSDOOM by Orhan Kipcak.

ARSDOOM, an art adventure (1995) was the first digital, virtual exhibition to allow action and interaction at the technical level of computer games. ARSDOOM was presented as "Mythos Information" and was accessible via LAN and the Internet. The computer action game about art and artists showed the works of approx. 20 artists from Austria and the US.

A digital model of the Brucknerhaus (the venue of Ars Electronica) served as a virtual exhibition site. Based on the action-adventure game ROOM, that evolved a world of real-time 3D animation, texture mapping, and ray casting, populated by modernist artists, virtual visitors and artists interact amidst digital objects and images. The visitor was able to slip into the stylistic signatures and artistic techniques that turned the artists into trade-marks. The visitor roamed around the virtual exhibition at the Brucknerhaus was able to turn over every object and every work with the Rainer gun, etc. However, visitors to this exhibition were also attacked by digital alter egos of the artists present, but they could also defend themselves.

The work was one of the attractions of Ars Electronica 95. ARSDOOM came to be the legendary precursor of numerous interactive 3D environments brought forth by media art in recent years.

The network capacity of ARSDOOM allowed up to four users to interact. In addition, it was possible to visit the virtual environment we had created from anywhere in the world via the Internet – ARSDOOM thus became an event in the space of information technology.
VII (from DEW to DOCS)

The technological revolutions, to which the civil society at the close of the twentieth century owes its technical advance, are for the main part the results of mid-twentieth century military research or applied research in the service of the military. Control and communication technologies, e.g., the computer, which constitute the foundations of post-industrial information society, were developed particularly during World War II. The takeoff of the Russian spatnik on 4 October 1957 not only marked the advent of space travel and the manifest peak of the Cold War, but was also indirectly the beginning of the net age. The Department of Defense was so shocked by the Russian lead that they commissioned a defense system intended to identify and thwart air strikes quickly. The superiority or rather equal strength of the Russians in terms of atom bombs and long-range bombers was a cause of concern to the US government at that time. Thus, in 1951, the US Air Force commissioned the Lincoln Laboratory at the military, industrial think-tank (MIT, Boston) to devise an air defense system that could discover, identify and attack enemy aircraft. This system was dubbed DEW (Defense Early Warning). In 1953 the psychologist J. C. R. Licklider was also called to the Lincoln Lab, one of the founding fathers of the new age of computer networks, for which he laid the first foundations in his “Man-Computer Symbolics” paper in 1960. “Symbolics’” was not only the first draft of interactive computing in real time, but also the first blueprint for a “computer network, connected to another one by a point-to-point digital link.” In 1960 J. C. R. Licklider published a first Internet concept, “Online Man Computer Communication,” together with Walden Clark. The group at the Lincoln Lab began using computers very early on, withdrawing them from the Whirlwind project, another military MIT undertaking. Whirlwind was replaced at the Lincoln Lab by SemiAutomatic Ground Environment (SAGE), another defense project operating on the basis of radar and radar storage systems using vacuum-tube computers. SAGE was the first computer network to span the United States and thus the basis for the computer and digital communication. IBM was the initial partner for SAGE computers and went from being being business machine special-