



Academy of Asociality

Today everything is about sharing. I don't like

G Theory / Discourse / Workshop

V Graz



Nothing has shaped our notion and practice of sharing as strongly as the Internet. We are constantly being asked to share and to communicate, and we do – emphatically. We share opinions, information, photos, links, software, cars and sofas through social platforms; current locations, banking details, and health data through smartphones or simply by logging on to the Internet. From creative commons to social media

to shareconomy: sharing is the imperative of our age. Share little and you lose your status; share nothing and you become suspicious, after all, you must have something to hide. Even Edward Snowden's revelations have changed little about that. But for all the pleasure of this new sharing, one thing tends to get overlooked: we do not share the conditions in which our electronic must-haves are manufactured, nor the profits that can be made with them. Resources from Congo, processing in China, taxes where they are least expensive – places where future technologies are quite old-fashioned and we are silent partners. In short, sharing is highly appreciated – unless I have to give up something.

The "Academy of Asociality" investigates and propagates strategies for "de-sharing" in this context. Based loosely on Henry David Thoreau – the inspiration for Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" – it encourages people to renounce all involuntary participation, to opt out of processes and systems that are impenetrable – and which I so rightly mistrust – as Facebook's T&Cs. But where do I go if I prefer a categorical "I prefer not to"? A hut in the woods is no longer an option. Does interstitial distance within the state really exist, as the philosopher Simon Critchley suggests? Do we have to get smaller than a pixel to vanish in the system, as proposed in a video by Hito Steyerl? Are stateless communities out on the ocean a solution, as advocated by Google founder Larry Page? Can we conceive individualisation without desolidarisation? And what needs to happen for us to share not only in the digital sphere, but also in the physical world, where sharing has to do with giving up things that can sometimes hurt?

Sat 11/10 & Sun 12/10,
11.00 – 19.00

Heimatsaal im
Volkskundemuseum
Admission free

Expeditions

Sat 11/10, 15.00 – 17.00
Admission free

Information and registration at
academy@steirischerherbst.at

German and English language

With Inke Arns (DE), Francis Cape (GB/US), Kelly Copper & Pavol Liska (US), Sean Cubitt (GB), Christoph Engemann (DE), Harun Farocki (DE), Leo Kühberger (AT), Alice Lagaay (DE), Nina Möntmann (DE), Elisabeth Scharang (AT), Laura Kalauz & Martin Schick (AR/CH), Alexander Tuchaček (AT/CH), Urban Subjects (Sabine Bitter, Jeff Derksen, Helmut Weber (AT/CA)), Harald Welzer (DE) et al.
Curated by Christiane Kühl (DE)

Application

First name, surname _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Date of Birth _____

Occupation _____

- Workshop 1 **Researching the Militant Image**
(09/10 - 10/10/2014)
- Workshop 2 **Life and Times, Episodes 9 & 10. Come and Dance!**
(08/10 - 10/10/2014)
- Workshop 3 **Utopian Communities. Refusal, Participation and Anarchistic Practice**
(13/10 - 14/10/2014)
- Workshop 4 **Participation, Sharing, Being Shared: Codes and Scripts of the Ambivalent**
(13/10 - 14/10/2014)

Please enclose a substantive CV and a short description of your expectations of the workshop as well as any material you consider helpful in regard to the workshop's intention. For further information please visit www.steirischerherbst.at.

The contribution towards expenses for each workshop is €130. Accommodation (room for 4 people, double room possible for extra charge) and lunch is provided for each workshop and conference day. Travel costs are extra.

Deadline for applications: Thu 31/07/2014

Please send your application to:
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I prefer not to ... share!

"I prefer not to ... share!". When steirischer herbst borrows from Herman Melville's dissident Bartleby for its leitmotif in 2014 it is because we are torn – between the knowledge that we need to share more and, at the same time, need to give up more if we want to stop the richest and poorest of the planet from drifting even further apart. We know that we need to change our ways, very specifically and in our private lives, and subject our habits as consumers, the way we conceive our children's training and careers, to an ethical reality check.

In view of discussions on privatisation, nationalisation, common property and open society in the broadest sense, the crucial question is: am I willing to share at all? What and how much? Only the losses? The profits, too? And if so, with whom? The question then is how we really understand community and to which groups we have a feeling of belonging.

That's not just a personal question. The identity crisis of Europe has escalated in increasingly aggravated economic conditions in which sharing has become the central politically charged issue. It is about the definition of what goes to make Europe, what holds it together, and what gets shared with whom. It is about constantly drawing borders. After all, the geographical map of Europe is different to one drawn up on the basis of economic, social criteria. Not to mention Europe's demarcation and increasing isolation from the rest of the world. "I prefer not to ... share!" may be the majority of those who indulge in growing nationalism – as long as they don't belong to the economically weak member states.

But while Europe is preoccupied with its own affairs, very different, new maps are being drawn beyond the bulkhead, maps that redefine the dimensions of cultural Eurocentrism in terms of its global significance.

Yet sharing is an integral part of our everyday lives. It is the new buzzword in the age of social media. Not sharing is no longer an option in today's digital world. But where do I go today if I do not want to share, if I do not want to communicate or network, if I want out of the vast group of supposed friends and communities? Where does this path of a categorical "I prefer not to" lead us?

As always, ambivalent considerations have shaped the leitmotif of steirischer herbst, forming the point of departure for dialogue with artists, curators and artistic partners of the festival, leading to a programme of many voices. These considerations run like a red thread through the 2014 steirischer herbst festival, now clearly visible, now more subtle or surprising.



