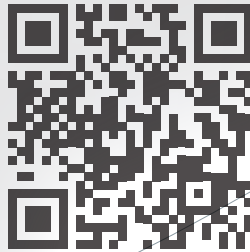


@mcwww.service

4



MEMECLASSWORLDWIDE



Fig. 1

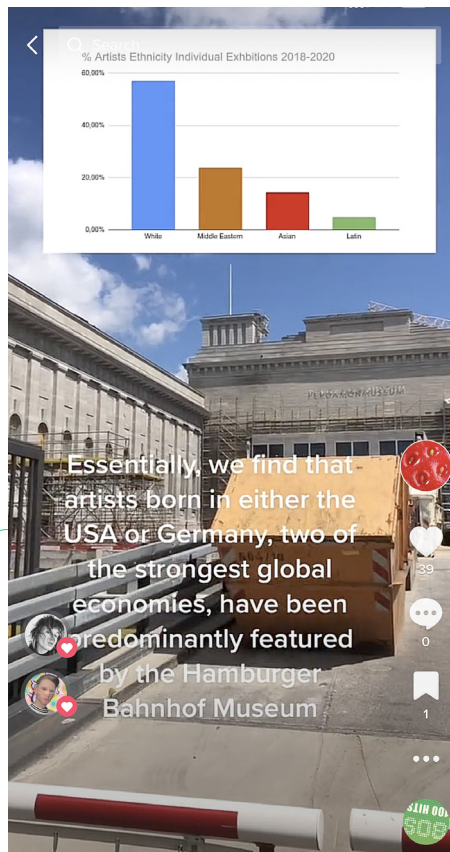


Fig. 2

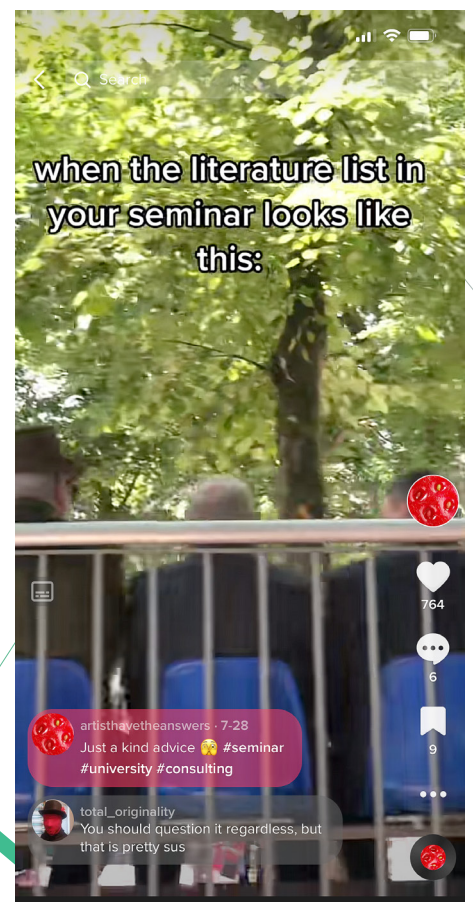


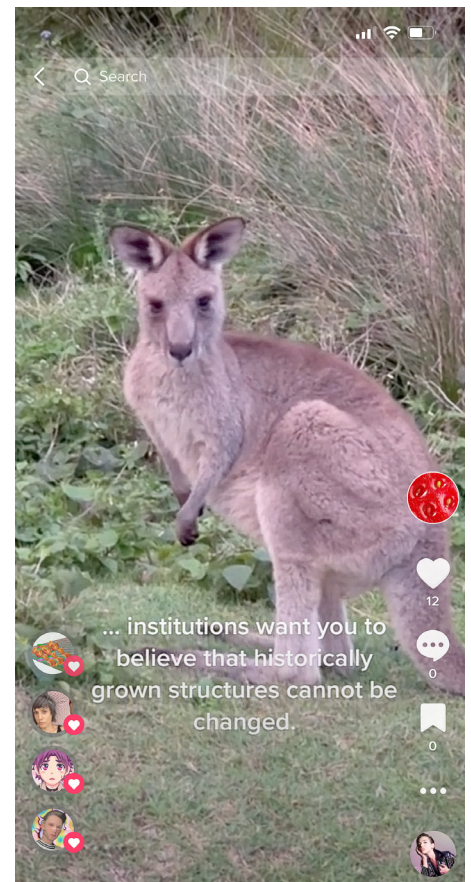
Fig. 3

4

»What if institutions would ask their constituents for principles, terminologies, and instructions instead of demanding their assimilation? For several years, the artist collective memeclassworldwide asserted that this can be the other way around within the institution providing their education. Instead of only relying on its prescribed procedures of participation, they applied a critical and prefigurative approach to making the changes they want to see. For their online performance for What Would Artists Do?, memeclassworldwide launches a consultancy channel on TikTok. Their content is addressed to institutions and provides inspiration for integrating creative political participation.«

In the process of the online performance, not only institutions in general, but staff and students at art academies in particular, are addressed. Thus, the account now gathers a wide range of different video content: encouragement to start a revolution in (art) universities (Fig.01), attempts to analyse the Northern European art market (Fig.02) or recommendations to improve university structures (Fig.03). The group tackles these issues with satirical exaggerations and acoustic memes as a way of generating attention. By this, memeclassworldwide turns towards the bubbles of art institutions (on- and offline) and stimulates them not only from the inside but also from the outside to awaken the desire for change as well as for further development.

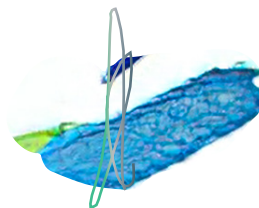
memeclassworldwide has been providing a rogue (meaning without invitation) consultancy service to a German art academy in the form of a critical meme account and self-organised seminars for the past four years.



The world is changeable
#lifelesson #fy #kangaroo #consulting
🎵 New Rules - Dua Lipa

During this time, the collective has been observing and collecting various incidents within the structure of art institutions. Based on their own experiences and in exchange with members at other universities, this analysis of accumulated knowledge leads to looking for ways of communicating feedback and opening a dialogue within the hierarchy, in the hope to create relations between different members of the art world to enable reflection about the myths that are part of institutional foundations.

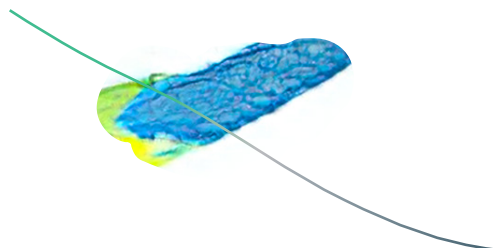
Instead of being organised, the group takes initiative and organises itself within the institution. Through roaming workshops, the knowledge and tools of self-structuring and self-empowerment are passed on to students at other art schools. The aim is to develop formats in which current and contemporary themes are given attention. In the specific case of memeclassworldwide, it is the manifold effects of digitalisation, both on the structure of institutions and on artistic practice.



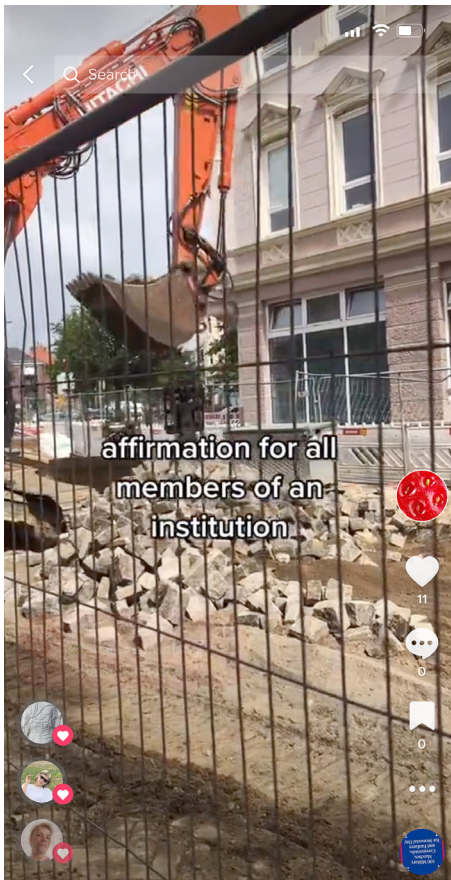
The pro-institutional stance of memeclassworldwide is very different from familiar ways of inspecting institutional behaviour.



The collective advocates an open and public culture of conversation and favours the mode of mistake-making as a starting point for the progressive structuring of an educational institution. Through a multi-channel critique, the work of memeclassworldwide shows how institutions can learn from artists to give up control over public images and meaning. In the bidirectional medium that is the internet, attempting to control images and meaning will lead to nothing (but a lot of unnecessary stress). The medium offers different and in some cases more democratised possibilities of commenting, altering and appropriating and hence of expressing critique in a very public space. If the institutions try to keep their image in line with a predefined and clearly outlined one, an ethical imbalance is created. Often this leads to a dissonance between what is portrayed publicly and what is felt within the structure. The obsessive control over an existing image of an institution also leads to the hardening of myths that often prevent new things and exclude naturally grown structures from the canon.



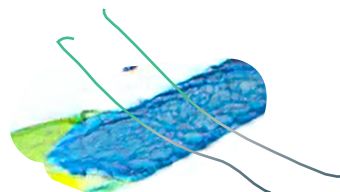
However, it is a question of balance:



What is worth preserving should be preserved, and what is new should be cultivated at the same time. Institutions are living bodies and are both able and indebted to adapt to new conditions and contexts—memeclassworldwide aims to remind authorities to continuously practice that flexibility. Instead of ignoring openly expressed criticism, ridiculing alternative discourse practices and suppressing creative will, institutions should increasingly see artists (and art students) as advisors. However to see them as advisors should not imply to see them as employees rather as collaborators.

The mcww.service of memeclassworldwide is primarily aimed at all forms of institutions in the field of artistic and creative education and funding. In addition, memeclassworldwide is open to working with other organisational and administrative institutions within the arts and cultural sector. The service can be used by leadership, staff, lecturers, students as well as visitors within an institutional structure.

It consists of three stages:



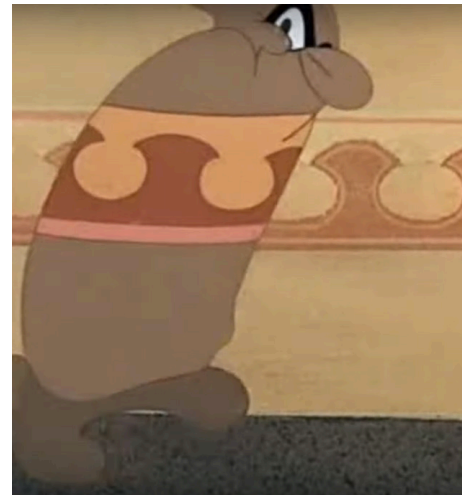
Stage 1: Camouflage.



1/



2/



3/

2 3 4 5 6 7 8

1 / Swan song, Trace Viral Photos Upstream OER Services, accessed on 20 August 2022,

<<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-webliteracy/chapter/activity-trace-viral-photos-upstream/>>

2 / These People Know How To Blend In With Their Surroundings, Funalive, accessed on 20 August,

<https://funalive.com/articles/these-people-know-how-to-blend-in-with-their-surroundings-27-pics_R19.html>.

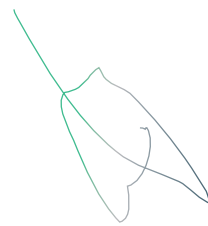
3 / Asterix & Obelix, Asterix and Cleopatra-Caesar's Spy, accessed on 20 August 2022,

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF6E-4G4n_M>



Institutions are good at playing hide-and-seek. To be able to closely understand the roles of each of the actors of the institution, institutional camouflage is necessary. Camouflage becomes a strategy to approach a new environment and learn its ways. It allows us as a perspective from the outside: to walk in the shoes of the institutional actors that wish to express themselves but are not granted the space to do so. Observing, to collectively understand the surrounding, includes using all senses and an openness to listen broadly to the needs of an institution.

In order to find the balance between the institution and its different parts, opinions and experiences will be collected, myths, gossip and events that have marked the history of the institution will be discussed. These tools will help you to be able to empower yourself from the structure—and to not be controlled by the structure. Following the principle: don't let the software control you, control the software.



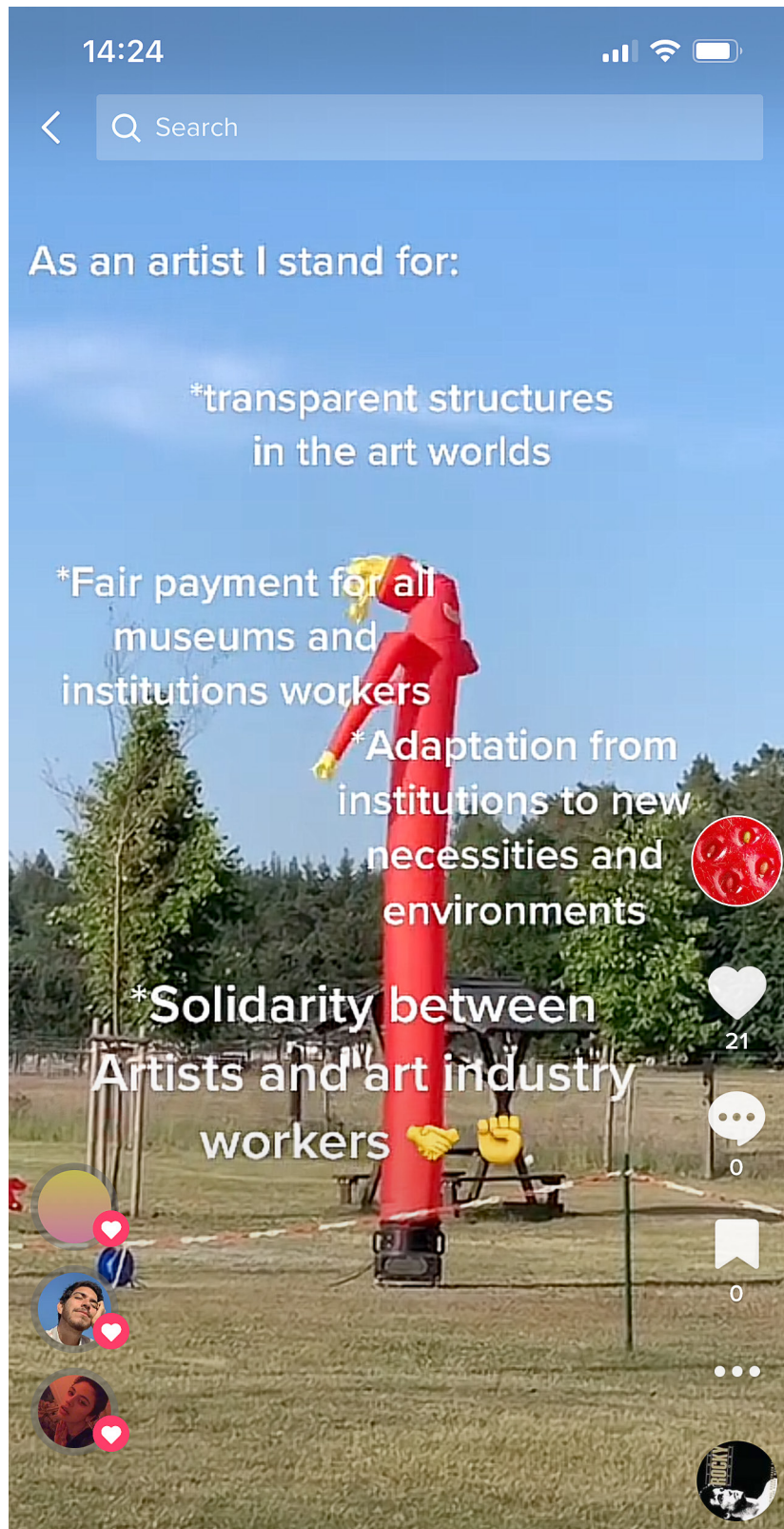
Stage 2: Institutional Makeover.

Once memeclassworldwide is in harmony with the wishes and needs of the members of the institution, they attempt to address and absorb the most resonant themes. Based on the results of the interviews and the observations, we develop a concept for action together with a volunteering group of members.

Flexibility is here the main pillar of the service: The format is entirely dependent on the institution, structures, gaps, needs, and desires. The offer ranges from the creation of a class, a craft workshop, the planning of a seminar, initiation of a critical social media account to an education policy advocacy within the institution.

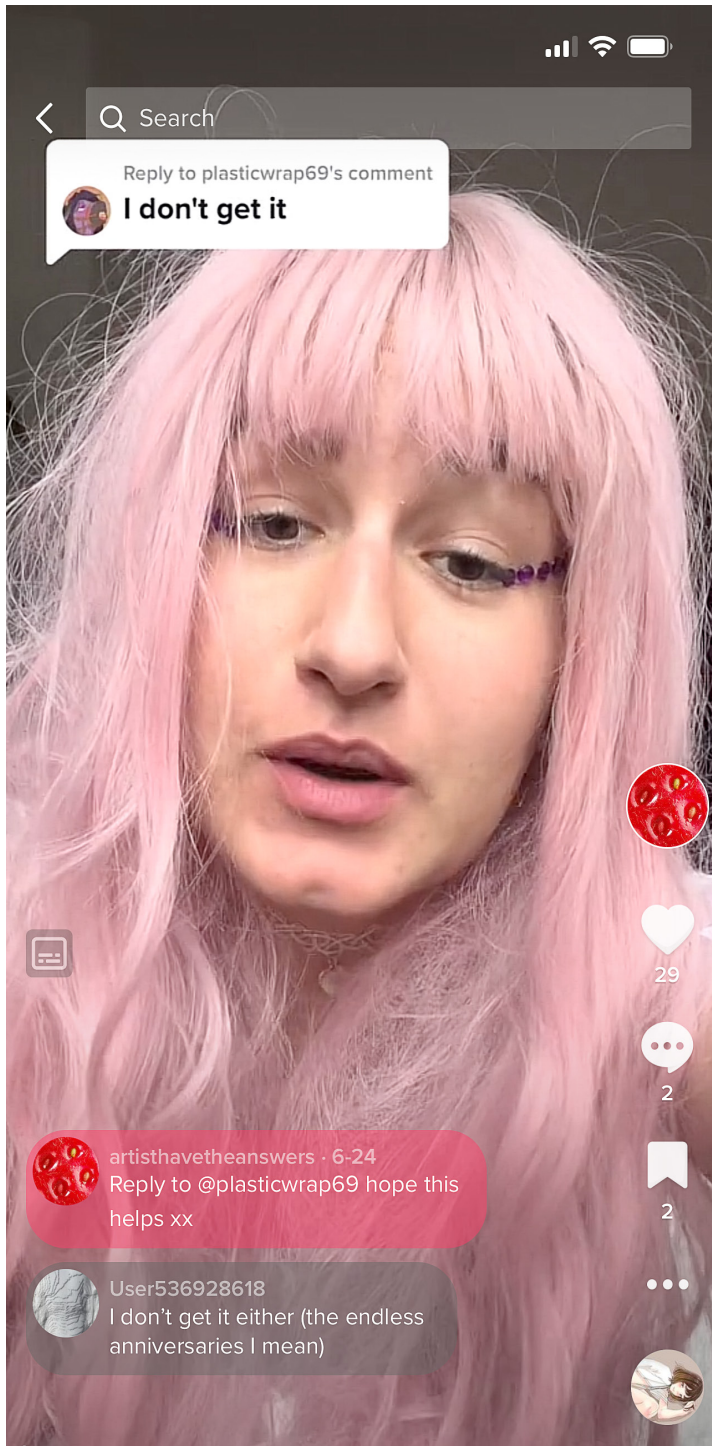
Based on the collected information, a volunteer group of institutional members designs a concept for a community project under the supervision of memeclassworldwide, which is then implemented. We propose the following concepts:





Stage 2: Institutional Makeover.

(A) Workshop on a critical Social Media Account for an Institution.



The creation of a social media account under supervision of memeclassworldwide serves as a method of catharsis while focusing on criticism in a text-image format, which is common in mass media. The account proposes a platform for critical public discussion of institutional challenges while using the positive sides of a (partially) democratised internet. During the workshop, practical and theoretical backgrounds are discussed, including putting the participants' own projects in critical relation. A suitable style, meaning, language, form, and platform is constructed together.



Stage 2: Institutional Makeover.

(B) Workshop on seminar development: Internet culture and techniques of the digital.



8

Our experience shows that little to no attention is paid to internet phenomena or phenomena of the digital at educational institutions. Although terms such as “digitality” or “digitalisation” are on everyone’s lips, they usually refer to the digitalisation of university administration or the correct use of digital tools and programmes from big tech companies. In our workshops on internet culture and digital cultural techniques, we mainly tackle digital image phenomena by means of art and design and through cinematic and/or pop-cultural positions. The discussion is supplemented with suitable essays and theoretical texts.

While we place the “hard to swallow” disclaimer that “memeclassworldwide is not about memes only”, we are aware that the phenomenon usually has not been sufficiently discussed in a professional and educational context. In order to cater to our participants’ expectations and avoid frustration, meme theory has turned into a compulsory topic in our roaming lectures and workshops.

Together with a number of volunteers, we design a seminar that is run by the volunteer group. The mcww supports and attends the seminar.



Stage 2: Institutional Makeover.

(C) Exhibition project with the theme of Institutional Critique and Internet Culture.



To deal with rusty, institutionalised myths we propose to actively create counter storytelling and countermovements. We analyse how the myths that build the foundation of how art history is told and art education is structured were prolonged over time...and at what cost. Part of this reflection is unmasking the institutional positions in the face of the male gaze and genius, and challenging them to change their stance.

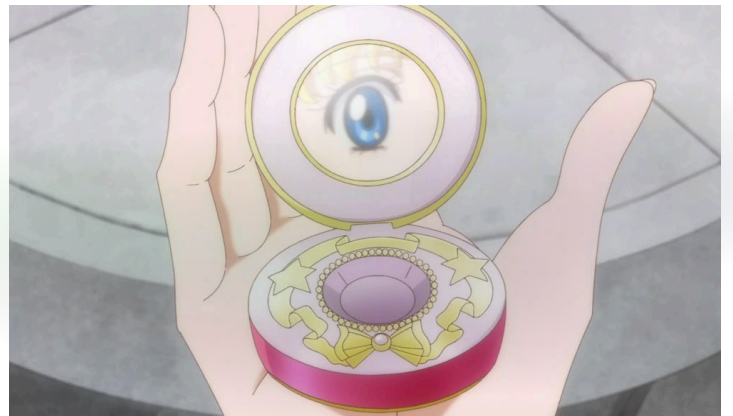
The new stories can be presented or told in an (online) exhibition format. In which the members learn how to give their thoughts a (audio-)visual presence to others. The goal is to find and create points of interest and new perspectives. Moreover, finding ways to talk about those things that should change, opens an imaginary and prefigurative space of thinking. Engaging with topics on an abstract level and finding a way to express complex relations artistically may be the first step to generate awareness, transparency and understanding for one's position.

Working on myths, deconstructing them in an artistic manner and finding new forms and mediums for institutional critique, isn't just a friendly reminder to improve institutional surroundings but a foundation for every contemporary, successful and progressive institution.

Stage 3: There is no back to normal



Fandom, Sailor moon Crystal Star, accessed on 20 August 2022,
URL: <https://sailormoon.fandom.com/wiki/Crystal_Star>.



Utopia, Rührei machen: Mit diesen Tipps gelingt es, accessed on 20 August 2022,
URL: <<https://utopia.de/ratgeber/ruehrei-machen-mit-diesen-tipps-gelingt-es/>>.



The last stage includes adaptation/evaluation, while putting into practice what has been learned, critiqued and built. It is important for all members to find a way to practise the just-learned in everyday life.

The jointly conducted evaluation consists of highlighting the first steps, which can be done in the short term. We also point out which changes will need further discussion and organisation to succeed in the long run. This can be done through the creation of a plan or an outline that indicates how to be listened to, how to be organised, and what could be to do better.

The primary goal of the service is to activate and initiate a sustainable, progressive movement. We elaborate strategies to have a long-term effect and to keep the culture of questioning and reorganising structure alive within the institution. When one positive dynamic is triggered, it leads to almost magical changes, like a domino effect, which can have a positive impact on everyone inside and outside the institution.

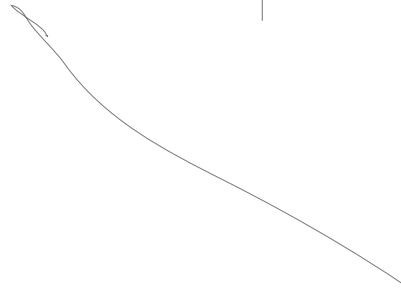
Additionally, we conclude all workshops and activities with a feedback format in order to gain insight in how to improve our service, methods, and concepts.



Here is an overview of the qualities and references of memeclassworldwide.

memeclassworldwide consciously works in a collective format, appreciating a diversity in knowledge and approaches. It will not send out single members for an institutional makeover, as the range of precise observation would be minimised. The collective is aware that hiring multiple people is not the same as a singular one, but it insists on the unique power of togetherness and on the appreciation of collective work being reflected in the payment.

4 x



Unique Selling Points

Flexibility and Improvisation

Multi-perspective mentoring through a collective with members coming from both different art disciplines as well as cultural and political backgrounds

Self-organisation

Humour (lol)

Expertise in internet culture and digital cultural techniques

Treating internet spaces attentively and consciously

Dealing with a critical public and remaining calm

Persistence and doggedness

Prepared for loss of control

Myth and Canon Awareness

Being in tune with current discussions and formats

In addition to activities on social media, activations in the group's immediate higher education policy environment, the working group has held seminars at numerous universities.

Lectures

2021. memeclassworldwide as part of the lecture series »Kunsthalle online«
2021. »memeclassworldwide: attention creates reality« within the seminar »magie und tv«, Caspar-David-Friedrich-Institut, Universität Greifswald
2021. »memeclassworldwide: good ideas always appeal to people when they resonate with their hidden needs«. Guest lecture within the seminar »Memes«, FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Learning Lab Arts and Design, Basel
2020. »memeclassworldwide: break it until you make it then spark a little joy!« Guest lecture at »carte blanche«, FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Institute of Art, Forum 2, Basel

Seminars/Workshops

2022 »LOL« at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel
2021 non-seminar: »save it to your hard disk« at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel
2020. »memeclassworldwide: how to teach a plant the alphabet«, Guest lecture within the seminar »New Media Art Workshop« University of Art and Design, Institute of Art and Education, Linz
2020/21. »memeclassworldwide: riots and love« at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel
2020. »memeclassworldwide: put on your tinfoil hat« at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel
2019/2020. »memeclassworldwide: computing and programming lounge« at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel
2019 »new media art seminar-takeover« at University of Art and Design, Linz
2019. »YouTube seminar« at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel

Exhibitions

2021. »Einhundert Geburtstagskerzen auf einer Buttercremetorte«, Oberbilkler Allee 57, Düsseldorf
2020. memeclassworldwide as part of the exhibition »escaleras futuras« in Galeria Santa Fe, Bogotá (G)
2020. »memeclassworldwide: collection«, poster exhibition at Kunsthalle zu Kiel, annual exhibition of Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel (G)
2019. »memeclassworldwide: I didn't know it's that easy«, exhibition at Prima Kunst Container/ Stadtgalerie, Kiel
2019. »memeclassworldwide: today everything is weird«, annual exhibition of Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel

Research Journey

2021. research retreat as part of the free radicals program at floating university, Berlin

2019. »memeclassworldwide: research retreat in bad aussee« with Karin Ferrari, Susannah E. Haslam and Bernhard Garnicnig

Our recent publication can serve as a guide and manual. This publication - which was designed by no talent studio - gathers the documentation of the project from the period between 2018 and 2020. Moreover, it contains an introduction by Bernhard Garnicnig, memes, partial results such as the curriculum as well as a listing of all past seminars, workshops, lectures and exhibitions.

The publication »memeclassworldwide - Research, Documentation, Index« is available for sale at:
<https://no-talent-shop.org>



(**Artist Bio**) memeclassworldwide (mcww) is a collaborative project that took its initial form as an institution-critical meme account in 2018 and transformed into an autonomous class at a German art academy in 2019. Based on the internet as a reference space, the group investigates post-digital phenomena, considering the range of their aesthetic, social and political dimensions. The gathered insights are integrated into practices of teaching and exhibiting. To this date, the artist group has held numerous lectures and organised different seminars, workshops, and research residencies in the D-A-CH-region. Now the collective defines itself as a roaming working group that approaches institutions from outside.

Members: Ramona Kortyka (*1991 in Aachen, Germany), Jennifer Merlyn Scherler (*1996 in Oberdiessbach, Switzerland), Mateusz Dworczyk (*1994 in Zabrze, Poland) and Juan Blanco (*1988 in Bogotá, Colombia).
Collaborator: Bernhard Garnicnig (*1983 in Bregenz, Austria).

Channels: www.memeclassworldwi.de
IG @mcww.club / @memeclassworldwide
TikTok: www.tiktok.com/@mcww.service

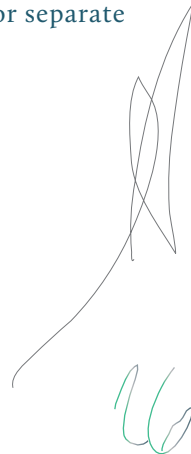
(About - Artist Project Group) The curatorial collective Artist Project Group (Bernhard Garnicnig, Lukas Heistingner, and Andrea Steves) interrogates phenomena of capitalism through curatorial and artistic methods, in an attempt to build platforms for resilient aesthetic and artistic practices. In our project for curated_ by with Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman and within the framing of Kelet, we continue to investigate the capitalist overproduction of meaning, including the recuperation of crisis phenomena into the market, and ask “What Can Artists Do Now?”

Following the workshop “Artists Have The Answers?” and the online festival “What Would Artists Do?”, the exhibition integrates recently developed works—developed from the vantage point of the Artist-as-Consultant and/or offered as services—into the context of a contemporary art gallery. The exhibition troubles notions of audience, participant, material, and impact. In presenting what these artists are doing now, the works connect to a multitude of current crises— both acute and wide-ranging—that are inherent in capitalism and continuously producing its resultant conditions and intensifications. The works hook together and offer an overall landscape of the present phenomenon and epiphenomenon of capitalism.

The Cybernetics-based model of business consultancy services is one of the most pervasive yet invisible global exports from the incipient Western Cold War information industry. Today, consultative industry continues its expansion into increasingly differentiated services, with its methods and services pervasively influencing decision making processes that govern public life.

In the 90s, artists started to critically affirm their transforming role as service providers to institutions, yet their collective movement towards self-regulating their practice was often sidelined by discourses of critique and politics, putting an end to emancipatory initiatives to improve working conditions of artists. Artist Project Group is interested in replacing the concept of innovation with practices of maintenance, that is, maintaining practices through crisis by developing projects in which artists extend their performative knowledge practices as services to institutions, organizations and businesses.

Artists are purported to hold an important role in a changing society, yet their expertise is often undervalued, and their practices are rarely integrated with the processes where change happens. The constant expansion of capitalism continues even through war and crisis, an expansion that doesn't exist outside of or separate from crisis and war, but rather intensifies through these periods.



WHAT CAN ARTISTS DO NOW?

John M Armleder, Eglė Budvytė, Juan Blanco (memeclassworldwide), Mateusz Dworczyk (memeclassworldwide), Thomas Feuerstein, Bernhard Garnicnig (Artist Project Group), Lukas Heistingner (Artist Project Group), Julia Haugeneder, Lucie Kolb, Ramona Kortyka (memeclassworldwide), Jens Van Lathem (Bureau of Analogies/TWIID), Mary Maggic, Walter Pichler, Scott William Raby (Bureau of Analogies/f.eks), Tobias Van Royen (Bureau of Analogies/TWIID), Jennifer Merlyn Scherler (memeclassworldwide), Miriam Simun, Paul Spendier, Peter Sandbichler, Seth Weiner, Franz West, Lois Weinberger

curated by Artist Project Group:

Bernhard Garnicnig, Lukas Heistingner, Andrea Steves

as part of:

Curated by, Galerienfestival internationaler Kurator*innen, Vienna
Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman, Vienna

Dossier Design: Seth Weiner

Editing: Bernhard Garnicnig,
Andrea Steves

WHAT CAN ARTISTS DO NOW?

