

I AM WE_ interactive image

2010 - 2020

This documentary is dedicated to my beloved brother Manfred,
he accompanied this project from the beginning.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOG WOLF NKOLE HELZLE, SOCIAL MEDIA ARTIS & FOUNDER 4

ESSE EST PERCIPI - A WORK OF ART ON PEOPLE 6
 RICARDA GEIB, ART HISTORIAN

I AM WE AS A COMMUNITY OF APPRECIATION KLAUS HAASIS, COUNCELOR 9

„I“ AND „YOU“, „WE“ AND „YOU“ PROF. JUSTUS THEINERT, DESIGNER 10

CI AND EXHIBITION CONCEPT MIRJA WELLMANN, ARTIST 11

CONCEPT OF THE NET ART PROJECT 14

DESIGN AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT 20

HOW IT WORKS 22

USERMEETINGS 28

ANOTHER I AM WE BRANCH: I AM WE_STAY TUNED 56

HISTORY AT A GLANCE 58

VITA WOLF NKOLE HELZLE 60

Imprint

Publisher: Wolf Nkole Helzle

Photographs: Wolf Nkole Helzle and many participants

Design: Mirja Wellmann

Print: Vereinigte Druckereibetriebe LAUPP & GÖBEL GmbH

Edition: 200 copies, 2020

Internet: www.helzle.com

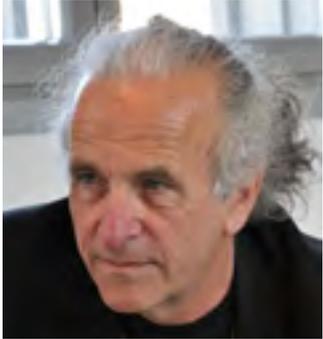
E-Mail: mail@helzle.com

All rights reserved



PROLOG

WOLF NKOLE HELZLE



Inspired by reading the work of the Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti and his statement „the observer is the observed“, I took a photo of a random counterpart every day from 2010 to 2011 in order to personally verify this statement. With the astonishing result that the previous view of the world: „This is me“ and „This is not me“ could no longer be maintained. And - by chance - a new series „365 Self-Portraits“ was created. Further interests were added like „Simultaneity“ and the project „Stuttgart 21“, so that I developed the concept for I AM WE_interactive image at the end of 2011. Sponsors enabled me to realize the design and programming, the platform went online in April 2012. Today, ten years later, 500 people from 70 countries uploaded 90,000 pictures in their diaries and added 300,000 comments.

From the beginning it was clear that the common language had to be English, to enable all nationalities to participate this project. As a side-effect, this certainly led to an improvement in English language skills, not to mention the learning effect of daily photography. One fact was surprising: none of these 365 pictures showed me, though these were taken as self-portraits. One got to know someone quite „intimately“ without knowing what this person looks like, one „saw with the other person’s eyes the circumstances of their life“. If an opportunity arose to get to know each other not only „virtually“ but also „personally“, one was amazed how well one already knew this person, but in a completely different way than usual. One was often surprised to know more about a „stranger“ than about a friend or close relative. Over the years, one has accompanied oneself in real life. There were participants who were there from the beginning and all the time, others for a few years, others for a few months, a few weeks, a few days.

From the beginning it was clear that the participants also wanted to get to know each other personally. This is how the user meetings came about, which were soon called symposia because of their demanding content. And there was always a participant who invited the group to his or her own living environment. Stuttgart/Germany, Izmir/Turkey, Turku/Finland, Luxembourg, Birmingham/England, Heiligkreuztal/Germany, Münsingen/Germany, Obermarchtal/Germany. Here friendships deepened and one could adopt new perspectives and share one’s own. Always and above all, there was an art exhibition every year in

which everyone could participate. A great challenge at first, since both professional and hobby artists were involved. Since I always set a theme and had a wonderful curator with my wife Mirja, the problem solved itself, it was ultimately about authenticity, about truth, about personal expression.

The user could interact with the platform in his own individual way: it showed that only one decision changed the basic use of the platform: to get in contact or not. If yes: the user could experience a great variety of interacting – much more than planned or expected. Once the user decided to get in contact, the whole world of I am we opened.

Being busy with the preparation of this documentation I realize how valuable this project is to me. From just an idea in the beginning a community arose that is concerned of each other and of topics that are close to my heart. Closing the project, I remind of the initial intent: to learn and to understand Jiddu Krishnamurti’s words: The observer is the observed. As an expression of it I present the picture of Jiddu Krishnamurti created out of every picture the participants have taken in these years. As a media artist and son of globalization I am proud to present such a result.

I AM WE



ESSE EST PERCIPI - A WORK OF ART ON PEOPLE

RICARDA GEIB



„Stepped through so much shapes,
through me and us and you“
(Gottfried Benn, Zwei Dinge)

„Esse est percipi“ - the thesis of the 18th century philosopher George Berkeley seems to be to anticipate the thinking of Wolf Nkole Helzle:
To be is to be perceived.

For centuries, the genre of the portrait remained determined by Cartesian thought: „cogito ergo sum“. Faces were considered the key to identification. Helzle broke with the topos of unity, the inviolability of the self. The project I AM WE marks a high point in the media artist's work: in it, the ego becomes the you, the we - as if he were trying to decipher the secret of our existence. It is not the reflection of the self that is in the foreground, but a reflection of the possibilities of the portrait. He formulates doubts and searches for a valid form. Central questions for him are narcissism and individualization. The result is the self-portrait without self.

In the project Helzle was looking for an opening of the view. 500 users from 70 countries generated 90,000 pictures and 300,000 comments in a collective diary. They shared and recorded their moods and experiences over a period of 10 years. How can we describe an aesthetic practice that transformed art collectively into an existential experience?

Actually, it should be enough to open our eyes. It is through our perception that life takes on meaning: for the artist, seeing to become part of what he sees is an aesthetic, but first and foremost ethical action.

For Wolf Helzle, every picture, every sound is part of a big whole. Early on, he began experimenting with different strategies to make perception, even in cross-cultural encounters, the subject of his social media art. He worked intensively on an aesthetic of openness and change. Globally networked, he is in search of a visual art without fixed procedures, an intersubjective art beyond academic norms.

The content of diaries is usually very private, because a diary follows the lines of one's own life, records experiences, moods and feelings - traces of life. It is a medium of self-assurance. A characteristic of all diaries is the regularity of reporting. The collective diary I AM WE became an exemplary model of open artwork through its playful approach to perception: the community is the author. Through daily intersubjective updating, a unique project space was created in which levels of time and reality interpenetrated worldwide - a digital panopticon that also found a concrete location once a year through an analog symposium. What we experience is often not recognizable for ourselves at first. Among hundreds of impressions the perception of the other had to be recognized by the users. Thus a very own face-to-face was created: through their gaze they came close and shared a world. But haven't we long since trampled the world, this rose in the endless snow field of silence (Milan Kundera), through our noise? We do not understand the night sky, not the moon, not the stars. The fact that we travel to the moon has not really explained it to us. Maybe we should follow in Basho's footsteps in Japan, who as an old man made a journey on foot just to enjoy some special views of the moon - to be real means to be surrounded by mystery, James Joyce realized.

Wolf Helzle loves coincidences. For him they are, beyond logic, causality and contexts of meaning, a separate structure of the world - a world of its own. I AM WE is also a densely woven network of coincidences, isn't it? An algorithm calculated a new common avatar every day, it emerged as a photo mosaic of all uploaded motifs and gave the project a current „face“ again and again.

The portrait is one of the most important tasks of the fine arts. „But who possesses the art to create himself“, Augustine already considered in his Confessions. The term portrait conceals the Latin protrahere, protrahere, or pull out. Portraiture means using the means of art to make the essence of the other visible. In a self-portrait, one's own self becomes the other. It is not without attraction to reproduce one's own features. Art history is rich in examples. Meanwhile we live in ego-centered times. Day after day, our faces wander into a gigantic digital picture. Self-description has become a tool for everyone.

Helzle reacts to this, existential questions guide him. His Self-Portraits extended (2011) showed motifs from 365 days. Each picture, each day stood for a different feeling, a new encounter: the sky, the clouds, the crucifix, the father. The immediacy of his perception became palpable - the viewer became the observed:



„I wanted to ask questions, I thought about a work so that I could ask myself questions. Every day I went out and wanted to know: is it the same? The flowers, they were close to me in their development and passing, the shepherd in the pasture, he was so different, many things separated us, and yet we were both human beings. Even the rockets in the former ammunition depot, which I photographed then - that was me. There was nothing I wasn't connected with.“ With I AM WE he radicalized this realization - the I becomes the you - the we. Man overcomes his ego, or vice versa: the world overcomes itself.

Only when we understand the other, the foreign, do we recognize ourselves. For the ego and the other are like a torn pair of twins: „I am an other“ was Rimbaud's famous formula with which he underlined his longing for dialogue and the dissolution of boundaries.

In globally networked images, I AM WE responded with great clarity to the tendency of isolation and narcissistic cocoonings. Collective and individual were reconciled in dialogue. Far beyond the traditional concept of art, the project allowed to show what value pictures have for us, what we feel, what we share, what we are. The project resembled a search for meaning, which it created itself in a vibrantly pulsating profile: I am we - I AM WE is a work of art on people.

I AM WE AS A COMMUNITY OF APPRECIATION - ALSO A PHENOMENON OF THE 10S

EXPERIENCE AND APPRECIATION OF A COMPANION - BY KLAUS HAASIS



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

If you want to understand lamWe and Wolf Helzle, you have to understand the years between 2010 and 2019, the 10s. It was a decade of the final takeover of images over words: The first iPad was introduced in 2010 with a quantum leap in display, resolution and reproduction quality of images. Instagram, a fully image-centric social network, was launched in 2010, lately to be acquired by Facebook for \$1 billion in 2012. WhatsApp was created somewhat later in the 10s to easily exchange messages and pictures and was also acquired by Facebook in 2014. The iPhone continued its triumphal development. But there was also growing scepticism about the impact of social media on the society and privacy issues. A massive shock was created when it became evident in 2018 that Facebook had passed on hundreds of thousands of personal data to Cambridge Analytica and had thus trained algorithms to directly influence political opinion making in society, e.g. in the presidential elections in the US. This is the context of the lamWe project, in which Wolf, as a media artist, set a new artistic and human sign in an increasingly digitalized and globally networked world: lamWe as a safe place in this universe, an intimate platform for the upload of personal pictures and mutual appreciation.

The concept from Wolf landed on my desk one day at the beginning of the 10s - at that time as managing director of MFG Media and Film Company with the request for funding. I was immediately enthusiastic. But as so often, this artistic innovative concept did not fit into any funding scheme and I had another idea. At that time I was already thinking of leaving MFG and starting a new professional experience. After 18 years of inspiring, energizing but also often energy-sapping dealings with politics, ministries, universities etc., I wanted to break new ground once again. For this purpose, my friend Kai Bierich, the architect of the new Stuttgart Trade Fair Centre, and I planned to found a gallery and we already had a space for that in Stuttgart. I had the somewhat vague and naive idea of an inspiring place as an artistic interface between the virtual and physical world. Wolf's idea was a perfect fit for this. So I answered him that unfortunately there was no public funding, but I could personally provide him with a project room. And so our common adventure of the last 10 years began.



„I“ AND „YOU“, „WE“ and „YOU“

JUSTUS THEINERT



At first glance, „I am we - interactive image“ appears like a social media platform on which people who are interested in photography share and comment on images with the peculiarity of an ambitious artistic standard. According to Jiddu Krishnamurti, we humans are beings who live simultaneously in two worlds - the given and the created, the world of matter, life and consciousness and the world of symbols. We use a wide variety of symbol systems in our thinking, linguistically, mathematically, figuratively, musically and ritually. Without such symbolic systems there would be no art, no science, no law, no philosophy, no foundations of civilization: in other words, we would be animals.

The images contributed by the participants as universal symbols, are therefore not illustrations but statements that set the artistic process in motion on different levels.

On the first level every image, even if it may initially appear purely documentary, is an expression of an individual view of life. The representation is the result of a resonance between individual imagination and the given reality. This image as a contribution on the platform induces an impulse for dialogue among the other participants and thus opens up the next level of the artistic process. Images taken by every member involved in this dialogue will from then on be different. So far „I am we – interactive image“ is not significantly different from other social media platforms.

However, this is only the intentional part of the artistic process, which is based on an idea or a goal. »But as long as our actions are determined by an idea, there can be no liberation of the mind.« (Krishnamurti)

And this is where the particularity of Wolf Helzle’s media artwork comes into effect.

By exchanging our images, we unintentionally cause the database to grow. We are aware of this, but it is beyond our targeted action. The individual portraits of the users are generated as a patchwork from the image database. As the database is continuously growing, none of the images will ever be identical. The collective creates the image of the individual.

Then you might »realize that you are like the rest of humanity and you gain great strength. Then you have overcome the narrow furrow of individuality, the narrow circle of ‚I‘ and ‚You‘, ‚We‘ and ‚You‘.« (Krishnamurti)

CI AND EXHIBITION CONCEPT

MIRJA WELLMANN



For „I am we - interactive image“ I developed in 2011 a uniform design (CI) consisting of the logo, the internet platform and the corresponding app, as well as exhibition materials such as invitation cards, posters and catalogues. I was also entrusted with the conception and implementation of the exhibitions at the annual user meetings. I enjoyed working as a curator for I am We and liked the challenge of dealing with a new space, a new place and country in an exhibition. Moreover, each exhibition was based on a different theme, such as „I am We“, „Relationships“ or „Selfportrait Extended“, which made it even more varied. The participants of the platform and invited guests were each able to apply with works on one theme. They were professional photographers, amateur photographers and visual artists.

There were also cooperations, such as in Finland, where a phototherapy association from Turku joined forces with the I am We - interactive image community for its anniversary to present itself in an exhibition. Or in Izmir, where Turkish sculptors met the community’s exhibits, which were displayed on the long walls of the Tepekule Center, thus creating a balance between surface and space. How to bring them all together in an exhibition?



CI AND EXHIBITION CONCEPT

First of all, a uniform external form had to be found that would allow the pictures to be handled easily. They had to be representative for an exhibition and could be produced inexpensively by the participants on site; after all, they were sent from everywhere or brought to the exhibition site. Thus, plotting the photographs and laminating them on lightweight foam boards was a good option and could be realized in any country.

For some participants it was their first participation in an exhibition, something they had only seen with „real“ artists before. This created a cheerful and exuberant atmosphere. The professional artists also looked forward to the project with curiosity, as it was also an interesting experiment for them to present themselves together in an exhibition in such a way. The virtual presentation of the photographs in the net art project met the works in the „real“ exhibition space and the people behind the works.

It was important to me in all exhibitions to place the net art project I am We - interactive image as an umbrella theme, which often took place in a large-format projection of the mosaic images, in order to bring the diversity of the visual languages into a context of meaning and make the context tangible. In context, the works could be seen and understood as extended portraits. I developed an exhibition concept in advance that was adequate for the respective exhibition space. While the presentation in the a+ gallery in Stuttgart was still a combination of photographic, painterly and sculptural works in the manner of a white cube, the „Köysirata Galleria“ in Turku, Finland, with its hundreds of photographs of the phototherapists and the I am We - community to be exhibited in the long gallery space with many windows, presented a completely different challenge. I solved the tricky design task by creating a meeting space in the middle of the gallery through partitions with sofas, comfortable armchairs, kidney tables and floor lamps, thus breaking through the tube. The many photographs were grouped into exciting statements and thus developed their own interesting visual language.

And so each room with the works of art was also an object in its own right, reflecting the atmosphere of the encounters.

Image on the right: Projection Wolf Nkole Helzle, Old Camp Münsingen, 2018





CONCEPT OF THE NET ART PROJEKT

THE CONCEPT IS BASED ON 3 IDEAS



Jiddu Krishnamurti

1. In 2010 I read the work of Jiddu Krishnamurti and watched many videos of his lectures on the internet. In the printed work as well as in his lectures this sentence appeared again and again: „The observer is the observed“. At first, I „nodded off“ inwardly, probably because I am „used“ to such statements because of my interest in philosophical and spiritual matters. But later I noticed that I wanted to know more precisely what he might have meant by that. So I decided to arrange an artistic work around this statement that would allow me to deal with it on a daily basis.



Example from „365 Self-Portraits“

On May 31, 2010 I started to take a photo every day with me as the observer and my counterpart as the observed. Each time I asked the same question if and how the observer (i.e. me) is the observed (i.e. my counterpart). Around the studio where I worked I could find enough „material“ which could serve me as a counterpart. The first photo of the artwork shows a wet leaf. And so the question was also relatively quickly answered, I could recognize myself without great effort in the becoming and passing away quite as one with the plants.



Example from „365 Self-Portraits“

Of course, despite all the abundance, this fertility didn't last too long, soon our cats were found as a motive, the sheep on the next meadow and then - first major questionability - the shepherd, a cozy looking red-cheeked gentleman in green robe and hat, with stick and black flock dog. What next? That's really not me; how could Jiddu have meant that? Could he mean that I am the shepherd, since we are both human? That I would not exist alone on this planet? Could it be that I am the shepherd, since I see and recognize him as such? Do I make him the shepherd, as I have

learned what makes a shepherd a shepherd? Does he feel himself to be a shepherd or simply a person who is in the middle of a meadow and enjoys the sunshine? Or is he just thinking about how he can bring his large flock safely across the busy road? How much do I see myself as what I am perceived for? I don't constantly think about the fact that I am an artist, a male representative of the genre, sixty years old, etc. How does inner and outer perception differ?

One day it seems to me completely inevitable that a tractor will appear opposite, a petrol station, a tire pressure gauge in the repair shop. Do I have to go into explanation attempts just to confirm the statement? How can I say that I am a tractor? For one thing, the same thing comes to my mind as with the shepherd, that I create the tractor by looking at it and recognizing it as a tractor. The tractor itself can almost certainly not know that it is a tractor. Is it permissible in this context to further say that the tractor is man-made? Is it further permissible to say that I need the tractor, the filling station and the tire pressure gauge for my existence? That they are in some way part of my existence?

The experiment lasted exactly one year with 365 photos and at least as many comparisons. On May 30, 2011 I took the last picture of this cycle, an underpass in Frankfurt Airport on the way to Bali. I would like to take a closer look at one of the juxtapositions this year: When I visited the „Old Camp“ in Münsingen on the occasion of the opening of the centre of the biosphere reserve, I also visited the Ammunition Museum there. And - you will have guessed - the picture of the day had to be a foto of this armory



Example from „365 Self-Portraits“



Example from „365 Self-Portraits“



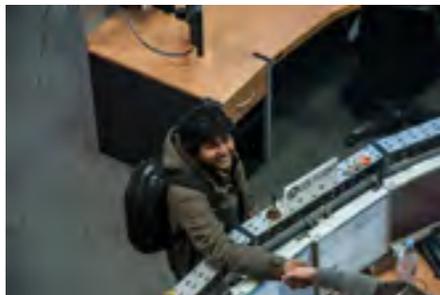
Example from „365 Self-Portraits“



Example from „365 Self-Portraits“



Example from „365 Self-Portraits“

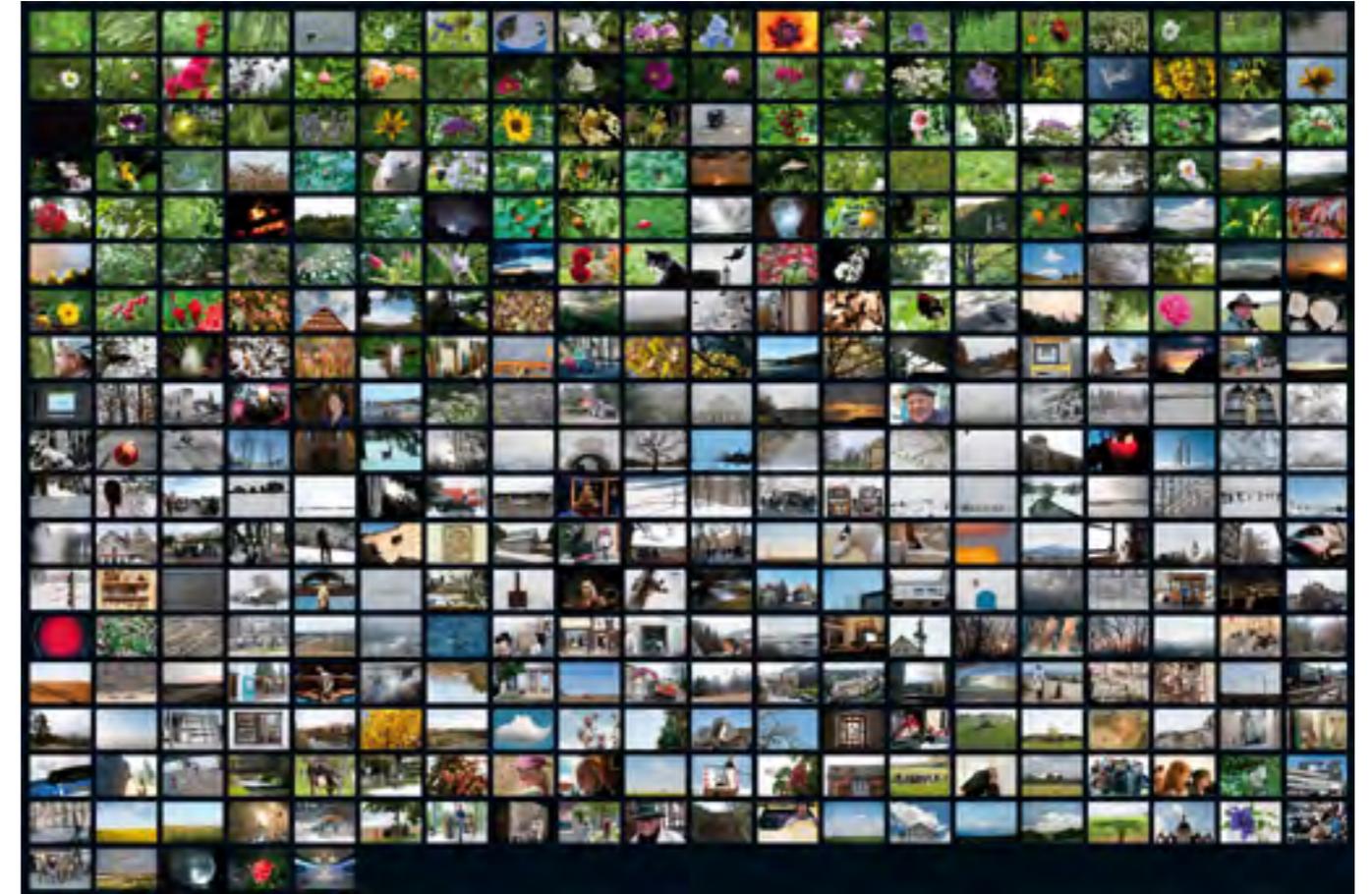


Example from „365 Self-Portraits“

full of sophisticated killing utensils. How can I, as a conscientious objector and pacifist, now see myself as one with it? That is really impossible. This has to stop? Can I take myself out of world affairs with my personal conviction? Isn't it raining on everyone without distinction? Does my neighbor perhaps earn his money in this industry? Can I stop wars and the energies associated with them? Do I not know anger, rage, hate, envy? How do such feelings add up in the collective?

What remains are not only these 365 photos and their stories, or rather their underlying encounters, - which I further refer to as „365 self-portraits“. What remains is a changed perception of the world, from the previous „This is me“ and „This is not me“ to something that I am not for myself alone, that I exist as a self-contained, self-fulfilling entity and that the world should obey me in this respect. That my world is a collection of definitions, likes, dislikes, judgments and opinions. This world has collapsed. Thank you Jiddu Krishnamurti. Thank you, world.

2. Since my early childhood, it happened on certain days - although I can't say exactly on which ones - that I felt the ability to know what everybody in this world experiences at the very moment. How many were listening to a lecture, how many were riding a bicycle, a car, a metro, sitting in an airplane, how many were eating, sleeping, arguing, making love, how many being born or dying, were sick or healthy? How many feel lonely or stressed, have too much to do or too little, how many are afraid or feel very powerful? How many long for love, want to be happy, how many talk badly about others, postpone something until tomorrow?



365 Self-Portraits, FineArtPrint, Wolf Nkole Helzle, 2011

Seven billion people simultaneously. Gigantically active. And this in every second of my life.



„Protest Fence“ Stuttgart Central Station



Logo of the protest movement



Arab Spring, Cairo

3. Shortly after my wife and I moved from Stuttgart to the Swabian Alb in 2007, the demonstrations and disputes about „Stuttgart 21“, the project for the new main station, began in Stuttgart. During our visits and conversations with friends and acquaintances we noticed that the people split up more and more clearly into different camps, in which one denied the other’s ability to judge. It did not stop at Stuttgart 21, in many places in the world there was resistance against an all too powerful state power, which no longer has anything to do with the own feelings of many people. Keyword „Arab spring“.

In this context I learned that being only in opposition costs energy and results can’t be found. The step to the constitutive act was too difficult in many places, because new forms of togetherness were not yet practiced.

So that alternative behavior enables alternative opinions and actions. As soon as such alternatives become viable, they can be used by broader sections of the population.

Out of these three components - The observer is the observed / simultaneity / Stuttgart 21 - I tried to develop a new artwork at the end of 2011, I wanted to combine the increased self-perception by keeping a diary with the simultaneity that this is done simultaneously all over the world by different people and that this is the practice of behaviour through which one perceives oneself as part of a whole at the same time, or even visibly helps to shape the whole.

During this development process, it gradually became clear that it would be a work in the field of net art to which anyone who a) was interested and b) had the technical possibilities - i.e. Internet access and a camera - could gain access. If thousands of people in this world were willing to keep a picture diary and use this platform, what would happen to the common big picture in which everyone appears equally?

For years I had been making pictures, which were put together from many pictures. This technique is also called mosaic in the computer terminology and there are several programs that automate this process by selecting the main motif as well as a database in which all the images are stored from which the main motif is to be calculated. I used this technology to complete the circle: Each participant in the platform should select and upload a profile picture, which is available as a motif for a mosaic, which should then be calculated from all diary entries of all participants.

Net art had more of an underground art form and therefore it wasn’t very popular. The rapid development of the so-called social media such as facebook, twitter and other platforms on the Internet, in which many people participate and not only marginalized groups, could help me in this context. These platforms developed at a breathtaking speed and had their share in the social movements in Egypt and elsewhere.



calculated mosaics of users profile pictures



DESIGN AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

DESIGNING AND PROGRAMMING THE PLATFORM



Design of the website

At the beginning of 2012 the concept of the new work entitled I AM WE_interactive image was ready and now it was a matter of finding sponsors who were willing to finance this project. The first broadcast was already a great success, a private sponsor was so convinced of the idea that he immediately funded the necessary sum.

It took six weeks to find suitable developers. Przemek Kuffel with his internet agency dot23 GmbH and programmer Peter Gašparík were found and the programming could start. Mirja Wellmann designed both the website and the app with all its pages in close cooperation with the program developers.

During the first three months of 2012, I set up a group on facebook and invited my facebook contacts to join. At the end, I had almost 300 international members. Communicating with the participants from all over the world helped a lot to confirm themes. For example, that it is an absolute must for a global platform to use a language that is spoken in many countries. As soon as it becomes clear that more participants are talking in a local language, this slips away. So I choose English as given language. I also noticed that people are not only interested in uploading pictures to their diaries, but also want to communicate about these pictures just as much as they want to share them. This experience became an important aspect in the development of my own project.

On March 28, 2012 I was able to upload the first image to the ii platform, which was the start of the official test. Everyone involved in the facebook group was invited to participate in this test.

And at the end of April the time had come: I AM WE_interactive image was released to the public, everybody could participate.

After launching of the website, more and more people asked for access to the platform to update their diary with a smartphone. The inquiry with the development team revealed that the cost of developing an own so-called app would cost a lot more than the website itself. The reason for this was that there are less good app developers and that they therefore charge more. So, it was said that it was again a matter of finding sponsors.

Through an artist friend I learned that the Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg, short MFG, administers a fund from which especially projects with digital content such as films, apps and games are financed, the Digital Content Fund, short DCF. A meeting with MFG revealed that this project would in principle fall within this area and would therefore probably be eligible for support in principle. So I took the extensive conditions home with me and immediately started to formulate a proposal with detailed descriptions, cost statements up to affidavits and everything else that belongs to it. And: the request was granted! The development of the app for the mobile use of this art project began at the end of August 2012, both for iPhones and iPads from Apple as well as for smartphones and tablets with the Android operating system.

It was possible to announce the I AM WE_App with a press release, which was sent to more than 1,000 addresses to Santa Claus, December 6, 2012. Until the first bugs were corrected, it was mid-January 2013, until the app worked really well.



Design of the mobil app



HOW IT WORKS

HOW THE PLATFORM WORKS



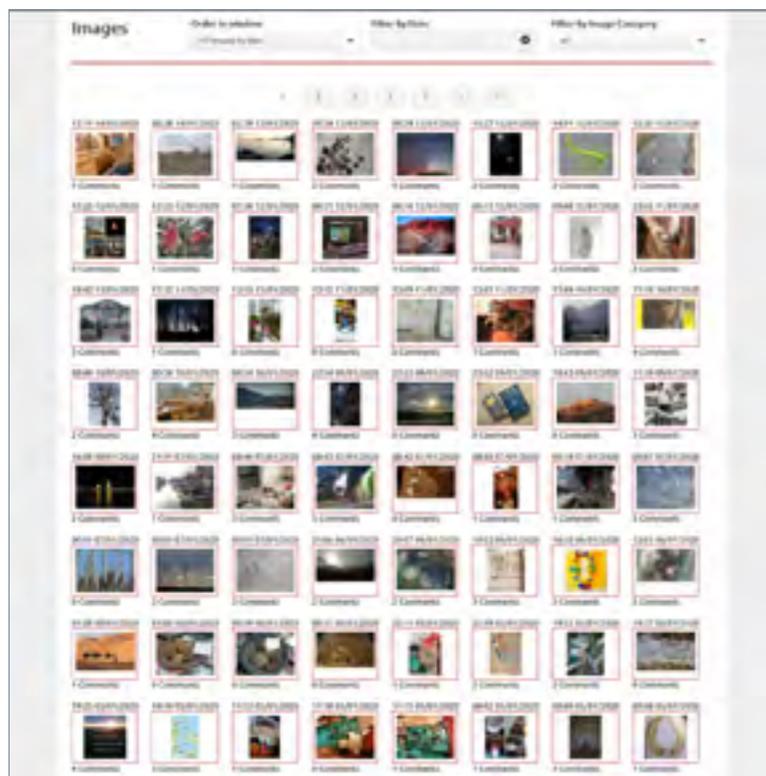
The starting picture of www.interactive-image.org shows a profile picture of a participant composed of 2,200 individual pictures. These pictures are selected by the program out of all diaries on condition of structure, brightness and colour. After a short time, the mosaic picture changes gradually until the profile picture is no longer recognizable. From this picture, in turn, the profile picture of another participant, determined by a random generator, gradually emerges. This process is repeated ad infinitum and has already been shown as a large projection at some art exhibitions. It is a picture that never repeats itself one-to-one, as new participants join in or a participant uploads another profile picture.

As soon as the user is logged in to the platform with his username and password, another function appears: He can click on any picture and he gets all information and correlation of it.

As soon as a new participant has joined the system and uploaded a profile picture, an infinite calendar is available represented by the actual month. You can upload one picture a day and add some information. This is the actual basis of the net art project, keeping a diary and following the statement of Jiddu Krishnamurti when taking pictures: „the observer is the observed“.

It is possible to change month by month into past or into future. Just like you, every participant can look at your pictures and write comments as much as he likes. It is also possible to display a slide show in which, for example, the images of one year are displayed one after the other.



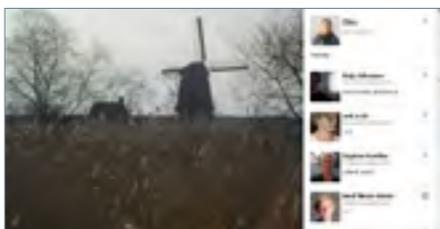


Another function shows all the pictures that were uploaded by any participant starting from the newest up to the latest picture. With the control elements you can turn one page forward and one page back. As soon as you click on a picture, the corresponding diary entry of this participant is displayed, and you can write a comment to this entry. This comment function is very elementary in the overall system and has been used extensively. From small comments „oh, how nice“, to longer discussions or questions.

With appropriate controls, you can also display specific images, sorted by date or type of image (people, animals, culture, etc.)

This tableau shows all participants of the net art project with their profile picture, sorted by the amount of their diary entries. Every registered person is enabled to look at the content of the diaries of the other participants and comments. As with the picture page, it is also possible to enter a search term.



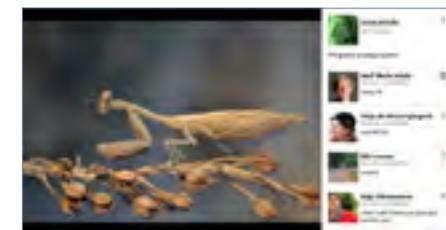


- J.S from Corvallis in Oregon, USA, a therapist, was part of the project pretty much from the beginning. She wrote to me one day: „A personal note. Your site has been very important to me. I lost my sense of smell last June. Doesn't sound like a big deal, but I was a big „foodie“ and a supersmeller - and it was my favorite sense. It has been very hard. I have been trying to develop more visual appreciation and this site has been a god-send for that for me. I feel deep gratitude to you.“ And some times later: „grateful to my ii community and all i have learned from being part of it. happy thanksgiving.“
- A. Z. a Kilnbuilder from Nothern Germany, recently shared a contribution that many participants commented on: they were so moved by it and they would like to thank her for sharing this: „remembering samson. how to write about that now? to tell you the story of a life that ended 8 and a half years ago at the age of 8 and a half.... today, 17 years ago, he was born handicaped. his whole short life a great soul was locked in a body that never walked, never did anything without help from others. but his soul was free and gave us his smile and laughter every day. a friend wrote: in memoriam to you sam, who in his speechlessness spoke to so many people. so, after such a long time, i decided to give am a voice in this diary, him and his brother leo and some others who had the honor and the joy to give him a protected place in this world for a short time. (...and it wasnt always easy..but what stays is smiling)“
- MV, from Finland a Psycho therapist in a paediatric clinic and an enthusiastic diver shared the death of her mother with all the others on the platform and let them take part in her grief.
- E. B.. works as a secretary in Amsterdam and describes with

now 365 very painterly photographs the Dutch landscape.

- M.A. media artist and Professor at a University in Japan supplies us not only with the newest technological inventions, but also travels a lot on bicycle and lets us participate in the varied landscapes and changing seasons of Japan.
- G.Z. a physician and flight director at ISS control centre in Oberpfaffenhofen, loves photographing mundane motives, for example the structure of a wallpaper in close up and lets the ii_family participate in his work at the ISS control centre: New Year's Eve he uploads the photograph which shows the different time zones on earth and in the universe.
- The geologist, N.O. from Izmir in Turkey has a special talent and an ending patience to photograph small and big animals in their natural habitat and it is very entertaining for example to observe the praying mantis in their mating process.
- Public relations director R.N. from Bavaria has recently been for several weeks in a Private charity in South India and reports about 250 children that are looked after there. They have been rescued as babies from rubbish bins and other places and he tells us about another 250 grown-ups that over the years have stayed there because their post birth experiences have left them with disabilities. His photographs from such a different world move all participants deeply but then not only images of grief but more often colourful and intimate moments of the reality of those people.

The example into their daily life of the platform could be expanded arbitrarily. This is meant to give you a small inside into how we experience I AM WE on a daily basis.



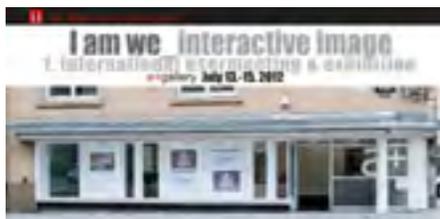


2012

1. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING & EXHIBITION IN THE A+GALLERY, STUTTART, GERMANY



a+gallery in Stuttgart



Invitation card for the first usermeeting



Group photo of the meeting 2012

Interactive, global, socially committed

Almost at the same time with the appearance of the sponsor in the financial area, a sponsor was found in the non-material area. The owners of the a+gallery in the Olgastraße in Stuttgart - Klaus Haasis and Kai Bierich - were also among the addressees in my search-a-sponsor mailing. They responded quickly this was a project, which is exactly why they founded this gallery together. Interactive, global, socially committed. And we should get together as soon as possible. No sooner said than done and so a few weeks later I had another key on my key ring, the one to the a+gallery. Since I hadn't actually been looking for a place to live, I wanted to know more about this room and decided to open my studio in the gallery every friday from now on. And so I met there again and again with different people and got to know some people who are still participants on the platform today.

When the time came and the website went online, the question was how we could organize an exhibition in the a+gallery. The gallery owners came up with the idea of whether it wouldn't be great to organize the exhibition with works by participants of the platform. And immediately the further idea arose to combine this with the first user meeting: that virtual acquaintances become physical counterparts. No sooner said than done.

A big hello!

On July 13, 2012 about 20 participants of the project from Japan, Finland, France and different parts of Germany met for the first I AM WE_usermeeting at the a+gallery in Stuttgart. First of all, there was always a big hello every time someone came in the door



Friends from Germany, the UK, Finland, France, Japan, the US and many other countries took part in the project and we all were able to see various aspects of each other's lives via our photo diaries. In addition, many of us got connected via social media. Deep friendships were formed. Nuray Önoğlu

who had never been met in person before. The first morning was otherwise used to set up the exhibition. After lunch together in the gallery there were lectures on the topic I AM WE from different perspectives until dinner. From software development to a user report to the sorting of such a work into the context of contemporary art by art historian Ricarda Geib.

After a morning sightseeing tour of Stuttgart, the lectures and workshops continued on the second day with contributions from the fields of architecture „how much space needs virtuality?“ and religion „Body of Christ“, among others.

This is an essential part of the concept: Interdisciplinary lectures and workshops on the topic of I AM WE. From the most diverse perspectives, areas of knowledge and experience, we look again and again at how everything is connected - nothing exists on its own, cannot exist at all. That would be too stupid.

On Sunday at 11 a.m. the exhibition with 40 exhibits (photography, painting, objects and digital art up to augmented reality) by artists and non-artists from seven nations was opened with two very special performances from Japan and Germany. Prof. Masayuki Akamatsu showed his sound performance with 24 iPhones and the Stuttgart musician Christiane Maruschka Hasselmeier performed her sound performance, which was recorded especially for this day together with the Japanese composer and musician Satoshi Fukushima.

The exhibition lasted a total of four weeks, had a good response - also in the press - and was very well documented both photographically and video-wise. A catalogue was sponsored and a print run of 100 copies was published and distributed. During these



Impression of the first meeting



Workshop with Klaus Haasis



Lecture by Kai Bierich

„I AM WE“



Artwork by Chris Mennel



Performance by Masayuki Akamatsu



Visitors at the a+gallery

intensive days some friendships were formed, which will continue to last. It is very special to meet people personally, of whom one already knows so much, as often not from close friends. And this in a completely new, previously unknown way: simply tell about your life with a daily photo. Quite unspectacular. It's not the photographic qualities that are important, but rather the personal, authentic qualities.

Klaus Haasis:
About the wonderful people and images

„I was fascinated by the diversity of the people who joined the project, with their artistic work, and during the many user meetings in Turkey, Finland, Luxembourg, Germany. I remember a workshop in Finland, where we set up inner teams and inner images of the



Opening speech by Klaus Haasis



Every diary photo offered a momentary vision to a mindscape of a participant and virtual large mosaic pics were a beautiful metaphor for what people can achieve when working all together. During annual live-meetings, excursions, workshops we shot great photos, found new ideas, new ways to think, new friendships with warm trust, playfulness and lot of joy. Mervi Rutanen

25 participants and a dinosaur quartet, Real Time Social Networks in Stuttgart, appreciation sessions and walks in Luxembourg. I remember wonderful meditation and yoga exercises in a scenic park of a monastery. I remember wonderful open food sessions, guided by Nuray from Antalya. And right in the middle of it all, Wolf, who tirelessly and unbelievably diligently developed one digital oeuvre after the other, bringing people together, always connected and empathetic, interculturally competent, supported by his fantastic wife Mirja, It was wonderful.

The longer the project ran, the more the question of meaning was raised at the user meetings: What are we actually doing here? Why isn't the community on the net growing? Is this actually a business or an art project? In the user meetings we had intensive dialogues between enthusiasm, appreciation and helplessness and resignation - just like in real life. And after 10 years of lamWe it became clear that the end of an exciting journey was in sight. Wolf and I had some deep conversations about it, and I was able to bring in an aspect of my coaching experience: We should always ensure ourselves that processes, projects, stages of life are closed and adopted in a dignified, appreciative and appropriate manner. And this is how the idea of this final publication came about. It should make experiences visible and pay tribute to all those who have contributed to joyfully setting off for new shores. Thank you and I am looking forward to meeting you all again somewhere, because „what remains is tomorrow“.



Visitors are fascinated by an AR work



„365 Self-Portraits“ by Wolf Nkole Helzle



Lecture by W.N.Helzle and M. Akamatsu



2013

2. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING & EXHIBITION IN IZMIR, TURKEY



Tepekule Center in Izmir



Entrance of Tepekule Center



Impressive Workshop situation

The project packs his bags

In autumn 2012 I received a request from a participant from Turkey, to be more precise Nuray Önoğlu from Izmir, if I could imagine organizing another user meeting including an exhibition in Izmir, she would support me in everything on site. A quick poll among the participants of the platform was positive, 20 users were interested in it. So Nuray first went looking for a suitable space, which was found at the Tepekule Convention and Exhibition Centre at the end of the year.

About 20 people will again participate in the exhibition, which this year focuses on photography with the theme of „Relationships“.

The user meeting was renamed to symposium, because it should also attract people who are not users of the platform. Also, this year there will be interdisciplinary lectures and workshops on two days with topics ranging from space travel to swarm research. All contributions deal with the topic RELATIONSHIPS from different perspectives. And there was much space for sightseeing too. We went out to different places in Izmir as well as by chartered bus to the chapel of Maria and to Ephesos. The last day we encountered the seaside at Foca.

Nuray Önoğlu:

„I organised the second usermeeting of the I Am We Interactive Project, in Izmir, Turkey. Unfortunately, I missed the first usermeeting held in Stuttgart, but I managed to take part in the exhibition with two photographs. The next year when the group and Wolf started to discuss the next usermeeting, I invited them to my city, Izmir, Tur-



My public diary as a mosaic is created from countless shared moments. We played together and gave our daily chosen personal reflection through our lenses. Creativity - attraction - travelling. Meeting and workshop in flow.
Kristina Kanaan

key. When I did that, I thought I could easily find a local collaborator who would organize and host the event, but it didn't proceed as I expected and all the local authorities I contacted declined my request for one reason or another. In the end, I had to organise the entire event by myself with the help and support of my circle of friends.

It was a very satisfactory experience for myself and the other participants at many levels. During the second usermeeting in Izmir, I had the opportunity to meet some of my fellow project members in person and instant bonds were formed in that one week we shared. Until they arrived, the only one I knew in person was Wolf, with whom I had Skype sessions to discuss the details of the meeting.“



Group picture at the exhibition at the Tepekule Center in Izmir 2013



Impression of the Phototherapy workshop



It's lunch time on the terrace of Tepekule

„RELATIONSHIPS“



catalogue of the exhibition



Invitationcard



In front of the work of Justus Theinert

A huge room for the exhibition

We had one day to set up the exhibition. At first we were almost scared of this huge empty room, but Mirja had excellent ideas how to use the space optimally. And so we had a lot of fun while hanging.

After Nuray Önoglu's opening speech there was a detailed tour with Wolf Nkole Helzle, where all the works were discussed. And afterwards there was an unforgettable party in a street restaurant across the street.



Visitors in front of the works of Mervi Rutanen, Finland



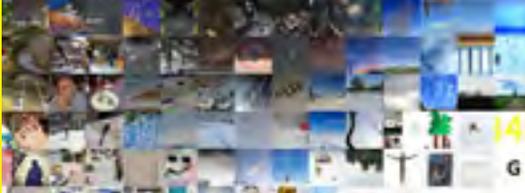
Thank you very much! 1000 pictures of me communicated, 1000 contributions given from me to other pictures, me chatting with 100 participants via Internet - wow! Traveling through Stuttgart, Turku, Luxembourg, Heiligkreuztal, Münsingen, and Obermarchtal - great! Chris Mennel



A discovery: one place – everywhere; People - you and me and me and you; Images - not only of this world; Questions - with and without answers; Encounters - proximity even at a distance; Art - of the finest; Humour - not least. Hans Landenberger



Opening speech of the exhibition by Wolf Nkole Helzle and Nuray Önoglu



2014

3. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING & EXHIBITION IN TURKU, FINLAND



Turku Arts Academy, Finland



Hostel Ship



JAM Session by Nuray

Ulla Halkola:

"I am we_interactive image meeting in Izmir 2013 was a wonderful and very inspiring meeting. It was the first meeting for me, and it made a great impact. It was wonderful to meet the international group enthusiastic in photographing and photographs. Wolf Helzle, Mirja Wellmann and Nuray Önogly had organized a multidimensional event with exhibition, workshops and excursions in a very professional way, it was made together to blossom with extraordinary good spirit. I had from the first moments a feeling that this must continue, I will participate in future the events and even more "What about if the next meeting will happen in Turku in Finland". Raija Silvennoinen and Mervi Rutanen from Finland had the same opinion. Yes, we will suggest the idea to Wolf Helzle and to Finnish photography associations like the Finnish Phototherapy Association and Photographic Centre Peri.

First visit in Turku, Finland

The idea and the starting point was in Izmir May 2013 and the process continued. Wolf Helzle and Mirja Wellmann visited Turku in November 2013 and the decision was made to organize "Selfportrait.extended International Exhibition of Photography and Symposion". It was to be organized by the Finnish Phototherapy Association together with the I am we_interactive image-network in co-operation with Turku Arts Academy, University of Turku and Photographic Centre Peri. The event was at the same time a 10 years an-



„Face of Turku“, 2014



As part of the participants I meandered between image and text participants, with a desire for harmony but also for differences, everything was under the theme of mindfulness, awareness, humanity, openness to the world. Angelika Anna Hagen

niversary event for Phototherapy Association. The program for the event was rich with photographic exhibition, symposium with many workshops and social program.

The Selfportrait.extended Symposium was held at the Turku Arts Academy 12–13 June. The theme for this international event was to reflect the human self with diversity and challenges its constricted borders with falling upon the idea of evolution of humanity with extended identities. The presentations and workshops reflected, discussed and questioned the topic "extended self-portrait" from artistic, therapeutic and conceptual points of view. The Symposium was open for everyone who finds broad-minded interest in fascinating themes of human self and identity. There were nearly one hundred participants from eight countries. 25 % of participants were I am we_interactive participants, 40 % Finnish Phototherapy Association's participants and 35 % others.

Selfportrait_extended Photographic Exhibition had an important role in the event. Mirja Wellmann with Elisa Nordström and Mervi Rutanen were the curators. There were 72 participants from eight countries, participants either from I am we_Interactive group or The Finnish Photographic Association. The opening of the exhibition was held June 11 at 6 p.m. at the Köysiratagalleria of the Turku Arts Academy. The exhibition was open until June 19. One very important part in exhibition was Wolf Helzle's FACE OF TURKU photography. He photographed 717 persons in Turku before the event. 150 of these persons were from elderly people's home Turun Portsakoti. The Turku Face Photograph was presented in the exhibition and many of the persons visited the exhibition either during the vernissage or later.



Symposium Turku Arts Academy



Symposium Turku Arts Academy



Group weekend Turku Archipelago

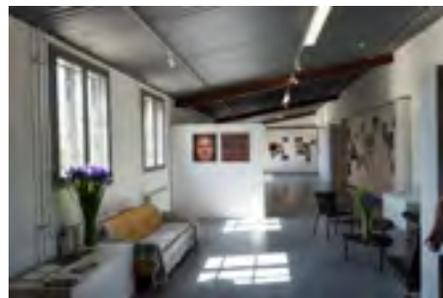
„SELF PORTRAIT. EXTENDED“



Invitationcard Selfportrait Extended 2014



Catalogue Selfportrait Extended 2014



Exhibition Gallery Köysirata

Social program included evening entertainments and opening of Photographic exhibition. Get together party was a sauna evening on the seaside. Many participants had accommodation in an old ship s/s Borea. There we had also a nice evening party. I am we-Interactive group weekend was held in Turku Archipelago. Bed and breakfast house Bergshagen welcomed us to Jumo-island, Iniö. Idyllic archipelago village where 200-year-old Bergshagen House and Satu Heinonen offered us a wonderful weekend. Walking in the village, on the seaside and in the forest was very relaxing. Sauna in the evening was a very special event after a dynamic and well succeeded week. Back to Turku on the ferry.”



Opening with many visitors



In the exchange via the commentary function, however, an insight into the reality of life of the other participants soon emerged - and this across continents. Through this network of like-minded people, a small but worldwide community has developed. Mike Satow



With this project you have made my life richer in many ways: widened my Swabian perspective; strengthened my attention to the everyday; made me appreciate nature as an artist; made people who were previously strangers become familiar dialogue partners and allowed new communities to grow with them. Friedemann Binder



Wolf Nkole Helzle explaining the works of the participants of the I AM WE group to the visitors at the opening



2015

4. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING & EXHIBITION IN LUXEMBOURG



Luxembourg, sight of the castle

Thank you much Volker Strauss for inviting us to Luxembourg!

20 users from different countries met in Luxembourg this year (20. - 27. of May) and we had mostly fine weather, big fun, touching encounters, deep impressions and an appreciative community. The official program started with a guided tour by Rita and Elke through Luxembourg. After the tour everybody searched for his or her motifs to encounter Luxembourg in a special way. We met again at the Youth Hostel for dinner and after dinner we went to our this year domicile, the communityhouse of Volker's protestant parish.

Opening of the Festival at the Place d'Armes

Two days later we had the opening of the Festival at the Place d'Armes and it was very impressing for everybody of us, to see the concert of our images in this always changing 3D-Mosaic. It represented the participation of every individual sight onto the town and brought it together to an exceptionally impression how the group encountered Luxembourg.

Echternach Basilica and Unesco cultural heritage

Next day we had a very special meeting with Christianity: The ordination to the diaconate by Archbishop Msgr. Jean-Claude Hollerich s.j. in the Echternach Basilica. We were impressed by the 2 hours ceremony and drove back to Luxembourg for to have Nuray's JAM-session there and we had 4 workshops: „Tai Ji“ with Karin, „Trans-individual inspiration“ by Justus, „Inner and outer human images“ by Klaus and „Manfred's Hacker space“.



I AM WE group



It gave me a taste...let me discover places - inner and outer, who without it would have remained hidden to me. One world, one life, one face, one space... ? The project allowed me a view of the sky. A precious view of people, nature, things and the planet earth. A change of perspective.
Karin Pietzka

Workshop Tai Ji, Creativity and the use of all senses and Living sculptures

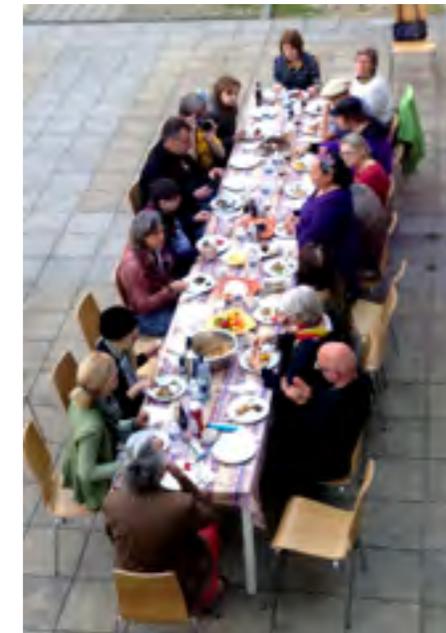
Another day we started with three workshops: Again „Tai Ji“ with Karin outside under huge trees, „Creativity and the use of all senses“ by Mirja and „Living sculptures“ by Chris. Immediately after we drove to the Bahai-Center in Luxembourg by car and were very friendly welcome by Esther Zara-Nau and Jean Marie Nau. They gave us a complete lecture about their religion and were much open for our questions. Nearby the Synagoge waited for us and Chief Rabbi Alain Nakasch showed us their religion, their ceremonies and their rooms in such an overwhelming open way - he also was so much open for our many questions.

Hohes Moor and collection Steichen

The last two days we had a sightseeing program. First we walked through the highmoor of the Hohes Venn in Belgium. We found ourselves again sitting in the cars to Clervaux with the castle with the famous collection Steichen „Family of Man“. It impressed us much.

Dancing Procession

Another UNESCO cultural heritage was in our mind for the last day. Very early we drove again to Echternach and were part of the this years Dancing Procession. Thousands of people are celebrating this day as dancers and as visitors. The Archbishop and many other catholic authorities are leading the procession. After them groups of people hand in hand, row by row are dancing through the streets always to the same melody played by many bands with different instruments. We all never saw such a movement before. They had 40 groups and we left after group 28 passed by.



Dinner in the Parish Hall of Volker Strauss



UNESCO cultural heritage „Dancing Procession Echternach

„ENCOUNTERS“



Construction of the projection

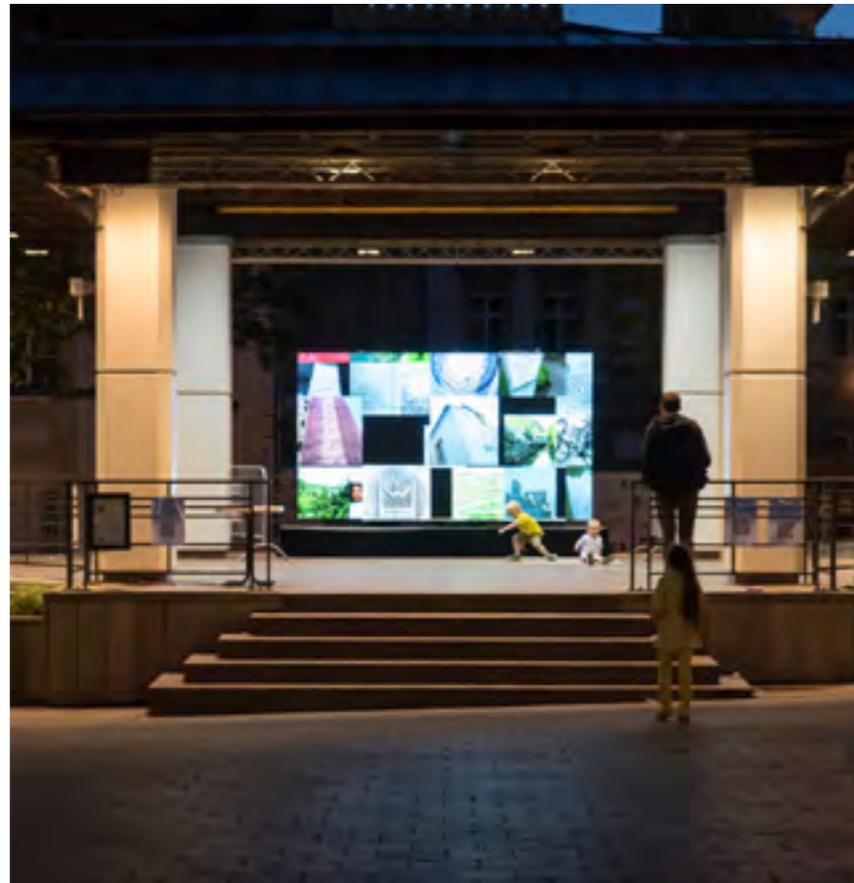


Opening of the Festival



A concert at the Festival at the Place
d'Armes

The work „myMatrix“ by Wolf Nkole Helzle was filled with thousands of photos taken by the participants of several excursions in Luxembourg: ENCOUNTERS was the theme of the meeting.



An impression of the installation with the theme of Encounters



Many thanks to you for enriching our lives, for the suggestions,
the possibility of this special communication - and the community.
Monika and Gerd Strobel



Opening of the Festival at the Place d'Armes with the projection of the moving 3D-Mosaic „Encounters“ made out of all photographs of the participants



2016

5. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING IN BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND



University of Birmingham, England



I AM WE Group



Guru Ravidas Bhavan Temple

This year 's meeting will take place in Birmingham from 9. - 16th of May. As you perhaps know, Iris Bertz invited us to visit her adopted town and country. The organization team with Iris Bertz, Justus Theinert and I had a first tour to this amazing city in November 2015.

Iris Bertz:

„Wolf Nkole Helzle developed an accessible online-game called „I AM WE_IDENTITY“. In the workshops everybody will be able to upload their photos or photographed objects for their “I AM WE_IDENTITY-CARD“. This process will help to get know each other, break down boundaries, overcome language barriers and help us find resonances and themes that connect us.

These photographs will also be part of a huge 3D-mosaic picture projected onto a wall at the culminating celebration/party at the end of the project.

I AM WE_IDENTITY-Card

The idea of the game is that two people meet and ask each other nine questions like for example „Where do you come from?“. For every question they look for a suitable picture and upload it. At the end there are nine pictures and nine answers and the I AM WE_IDENTITY-Card can be printed and be used as a contact-sheet with others.

Like many good ideas this started with a conversation, when visiting the INTERIM Biennale 2013 in Münsingen and becoming part of Wolf's Identity Project “Homo universalis”.

I observed: „If you would do this project in Birmingham, you would get a completely different pictures“. The idea of taking I am We to Birmingham was born. Birmingham is the second biggest city in



It was a wonderful experience to feel that although not every day is a perfect one, it is worth being appreciated. I look at the everyday with completely different eyes. It was even more valuable to see every day with the eyes of many others, to read what moves them in their pictures. Also, the teasing, the humor and the strict seriousness in the comments made the project uniquely alive to a new „world view“. Andrea Bauer-Lecher

Great Britain, often overlooked, looked down upon, not very well known internationally, a working-class city. The Brummies are very self-effacing people, yet the city is the cradle of the industrial revolution and an early example of an immigration city in this century in Europe. It is now of one the youngest and most diverse cities in Europe. It has people from everywhere and they have left their mark and are still leaving their mark on this city and how we live.

So being an immigrant myself I want to share my city and celebrate a different way of living. It is interesting to note that Izmir was and is also a city of sanctuary for many displaced and prosecuted people. Birmingham migration was initiated through needing workers, specialist and technical experts. The industrialists went far and wide to recruit people to come and work and live here. George Dawson who arrived in Birmingham in 1844 developed an ethos which became known as the ‘civic gospel’, this translated the passion and mission of religion into an effort to make a new and better kind of city, one that would benefit all of its citizens.

Meeting with different organizations and Jam Session

In the meeting we met and collaborated with different organizations and people who treasure this city. But first Nuray hosted a Jam Session which has become a tradition for I am We, it is based on food sharing part of the Alevit Cem ritual when people come together to worship, they also bring food to the communal house according to their respective economical means and the food is shared by the participants irrespective of who brought what. We started to connect into the community. Birmingham is a complex multilayered, big sprawling city, we decided to go deep, connected



China Community in Birmingham, working on the I AM WE identity card.



Lab of the University of Birmingham



Workshop Mandala, Birmingham

„SHARING“



Invitationcard



Projection 3D-Mosaic Birmingham, 2016



Projection 3D-Mosaic in the Pop-up Shop

with change makers like the impact Hub, the Birmingham Chinese Community, Guru Ravidas Bhavan Temple.

We danced, ate amazing food, walked, created workshops and presentations about identity at Birmingham City University with support from the Visual Communication Department supported by then student Karen Pang, explored the city as group led by Ben Waddington & Christiane Worth from Still Walking and with local photographer Herbert Walters. We collated and mused over the identity card, how to describe ourselves, delved deep into what connects us, friendships were born, affirmed and cemented.

I hope that we did a takeaway a belief that we all are of one human race and treasure what we have in common and continue to be curious about our differences, something the I Am We project embodies so very beautifully.

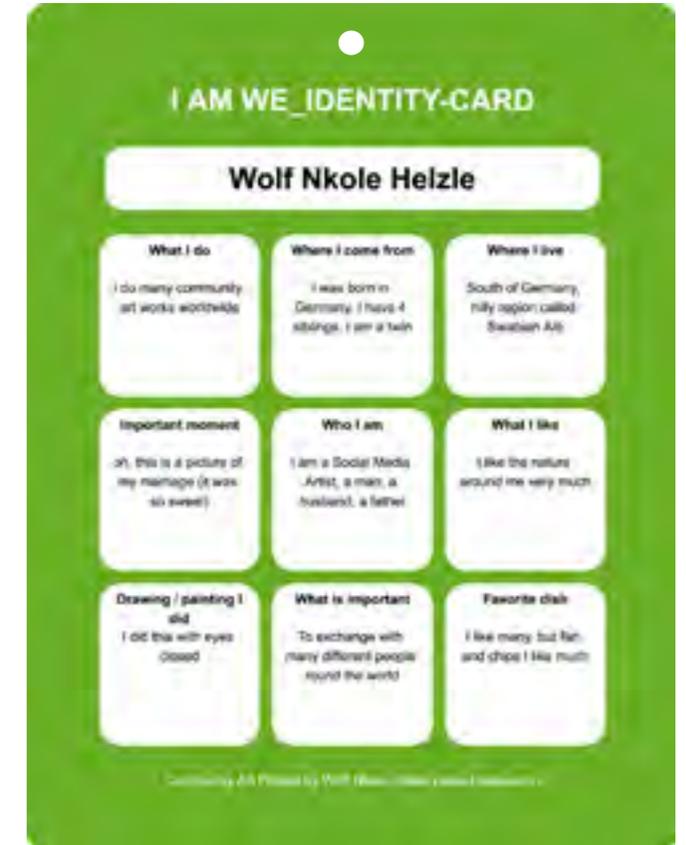
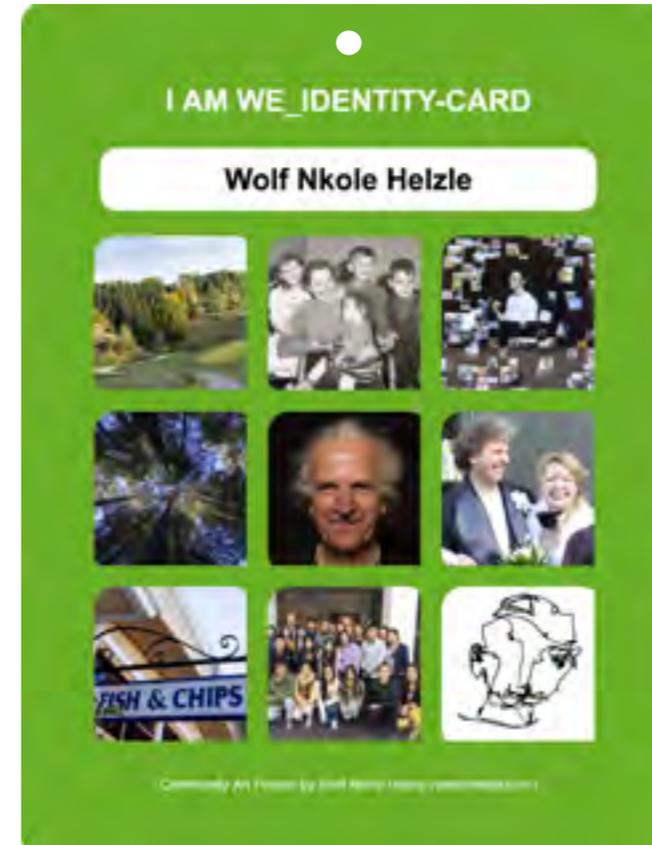


I AM WE Identity-Card

Organizing team: Iris Bertz, Prof. Justus Theinert, Wolf Nkole Helzle
Partners: Still Walking, Birmingham City University (Visual Communications Department), Chinese Community Centre Birmingham, Impact Hub, Guru Ravidas Bhavan Temple, University of Birmingham, Aston University, Lara Ratnaraja, Christiane Worth.



During all the time, the participation in the community was important for me, not only because it was fun but also a feeling of connectedness and my sympathy for Wolf's idea and the persons that also offered their time, phantasy and creativity for this project. Reiner Anwender

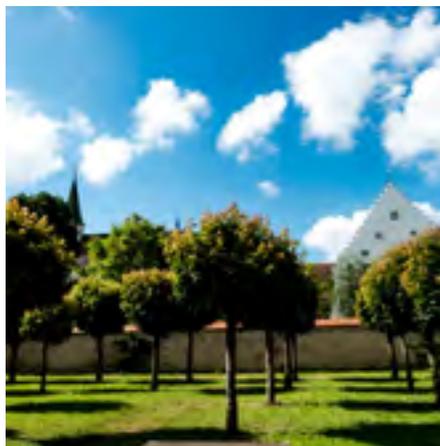


This is the example of an I AM WE_IDENTITY-Card with front and back. They were created interactively with the people we met in Birmingham.



2017

6. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING IN HEILIGKREUZTAL, GERMANY



Monastery Heiligkreuztal, Germany



Workshop drone flight by German

5 years of I AM WE

25 people met in Heiligkreuztal around solstice for one week. The former monastery in the south of Germany invited us with its silence, its simple but always good and friendly style, with space, food and accommodation. The team with Mirja, Manfred and Wolf prepared a joyful program around the theme of connectedness and the game „best group photo“ found with Mervi its winner.

After arrival we met in our group room and Wolf resumed 5 years of I AM WE_interactive image with photos from the meetings in Stuttgart, Izmir, Turku, Luxembourg and Birmingham.

Every morning we began with stillness in the Helena Chapel and at the 2nd day we continued with a general monastery guidance. Then Alfred Bast did his touching performance „the language of things and the art of perception“ with us. After lunch Hansland guided us through the Warmtal by walking through a historical monument of the Celtic age around 2500 years ago. After dinner we had the possibility to learn how to draw parts of the monastery with Reiner Anwander.

Birthday party 5 years I AM WE

Day 3 We started with meditation in silence and after breakfast Manfred showed us the connectedness in and with mobile devices. German came with his multicopter and showed us in practice how it works. Many nice group-photos were taken at the meadow. After lunch we drove by car to Reiner Anwander´s place and had such a great birthday party “5 years I AM WE_interactive image” in and around his atelier and at the lake with coffee and birthday cake



Soon I realized that there was an unwritten law to post only in positive way, which is not usual for the rest of the internet. My first thought was like „oh, what an unreal space“ then I started to feel how healthy this was for my mind and soul. On my search for the daily picture I discovered small fragments of beauty in a grey world full of sorrows. Fredderick

made by Yshouk, with our yearly JAMsession by Nuray, with dancing, with card reading by Yshouk and at least a nice solstice fire.

Day 4 began with a meditation guided by Ananda Giri, followed by the Feldenkrais-workshop „the eyes and the self“ by Karin Pietzka. After a coffee break Wolf photographed us all for to do his artwork „Homo universalis - the face of I AM WE“. And Ulla and Leena continued with their lecture in photo-therapy with the theme of „body-mind-connection“. The day was closed by Mervi´s speech about her participative Kymi River Project in Finland.

Day 5 Early in the morning we did a religious meditation guided by Donat with Taizé-Singing and quotations of the Bible and the Q´ran. And after breakfast we drove by car to the beautiful place of Ursula Schwarz. Nuray celebrated her Turkish cooking workshop together with all of us and we had such a great lunch together in the open house of Ursula. On the road back we visited and had a guided tour through the Hohenzollern castle with a great round view. Back to Heiligkreuztal Chris Mennel performed a special night walk with torches with us.

Best photo by Mervi Rutanen from Finland

Day 6 Karin Fietzek gave us a workshop in Tai Ji outside under big trees. This was followed by the last chance to take a group-photo and we went outside to some nice places to do so. After the workshop „Connectedness, Resonance and Trust“ by Klaus Haasis we all had the chance to print our best group photo for the competition. And while the last round in the evening we together found the winning picture made by Mervi Rutanen and she got a nice price.



Winning picture made by Mervi



Workshop by Alfred Bast



Party and JAMsession in Reiner's atelier



2018

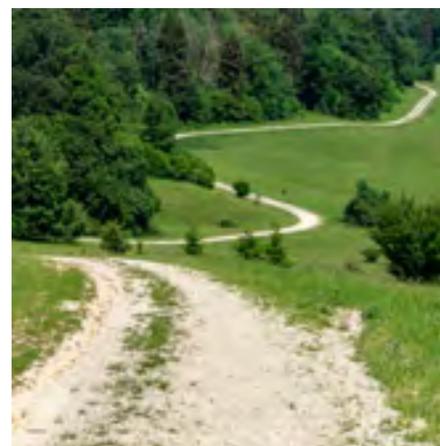
7. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING IN MUENSINGEN, GERMANY



Old Camp, Münsingen, Germany



I AM WE group



At the former military training area

BT18

From 28 May to 3 June 2018, 27 participants met in Wolf's large studio BT18 in the former military base in Münsingen on the topic of transformation. For the first time we catered for ourselves, set up a temporary kitchen in BT18 and had two chefs, Ines and Timber, who spoiled us wonderfully with their creations. And also, for the first time we had professional photo courses, field recordings and German with son Magnus offered training sessions with their drone during the whole time.

Days full of program

On the first day we got a guided tour through the whole area from the new owners including insights into the history of this place. What had already been practiced in Heiligkreuztal was again the starting point in the morning in Münsingen: participants offered different meditations every day.

On the second day we had a big excursion on the former military training area. The two guides Steffen Schretzmann, Dipl.-Ing. Forestry and Susanne Volzer led us for four hours on paths that can only be walked with specially trained guides and we learned a lot about the history of the place, about plants and animals. Then the afternoon course of Karin Fietzek did good: TAI JI - Practicing Transformation and in the evening, we had a lot of fun with Nuray's storytelling workshop.

Day 3 began with another guided tour, this time in the area itself: Annegret Müller-Bächtle showed us a wealth of medicinal plants and gave us tips on how to prepare them and what they can be



Surprised about how much different and personal these views were. Surprised about how well the others can be understood through participating in their views. And surprised how the connections in the virtual room match the ones in the real world. Impressed by the group spirit that was present from the beginning. Reflecting a culture of respect and positive attitude. German Zoeschinger

used for. And in the afternoon, we were outside again, this time with Mirja and Michael and the question how the pictures we take here sound like. In the evening we got a very interesting insight into the technique of the clay field by Karin Rehm.

The fourth day was entirely dedicated to photography and we had great guidance from both the Stuttgart photographer Victor S. Brigola in architectural photography and Timber Hemprich in photographing small plants. The day ended with another workshop by Karin Fietzek on Eutony, a western practice of body movement. On the fifth day, we were all very busy looking at our many photos and preparing them for the big projection within the upcoming exhibition. In the evening we got a wonderful workshop from Karin Pietzka: Feldenkrais and Transformation.

Ulm and Opening

On the sixth day we split up: The larger group followed Manfred's invitation to a guided tour in Ulm and a smaller group with Mirja prepared the exhibition, which was opened in the evening under the title TRANSFORMATION.

Many thanks to this year's organization team with Mirja, Angelika and Manfred.



Workshop Acoustic Photography
by Mirja and Michael



Workshop Photography by Timber



Workshop TaiChi with Karin

7 EXHIBITION IN THE „OLD CAMP“
IN MUENSINGEN, GERMANY

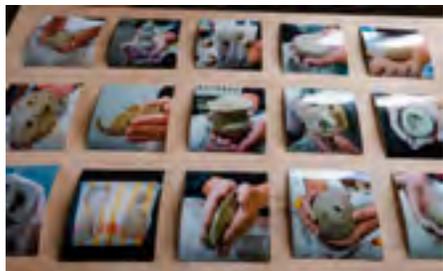
„TRANSFORMATION“



Projection by Wolf Nkole Helzle



Nuray's Corner



Clay fields by Karin Rehm

The public exhibition was well attended and we showed the multi-dimensional audio-visual installation, which Wolf had created from all images and field recordings. Works by all workshop leaders as well as results of the workshops and of course I AM WE_interactive image was shown as a net art platform.



The photography of Victor S. Brigola



... And I met there very kind, pleasant people. With some of them I am still in contact. It was very special to be a member of this global group.
Rüdiger Miksch



What instantly struck me then – and still does – is the positivity, warm-heartedness, and kindness among the users. I have never encountered any hubris or nastiness – a refreshing respite from other social media platforms. Right from the start, „I Am We Interactive“ was marked by mutual respect.
Gabriele Glang



Opening of the exhibition TRANSFORMATION

After the opening there was a grand guided tour to all exhibited works on the subject of TRANSFORMATION, which was chosen because of the transformation of a military area into a civil use.



2019

8. INTERNATIONAL I AM WE USERMEETING IN OBERMARCHTAL, GERMANY



Group photo in Obermarchtal



Mosaic-Portrait of Jiddu Krishnamurti



Wolf with his Sufi hat and Klaus Haasis

New ways ...

After the last meeting in Münsingen, it became more and more clear to me that the net art project was coming to an end. Externally, this could be seen from the fact that there were hardly any new participants and the number of daily active users was 10-20. Internally, it became clear to me that my interest in taking a picture every day and sharing it both here and on other social media platforms was waning until it dried up completely in 2019. As I wondered what might be the reason for this, I realized that the orbiting of the statement of Jiddu Krishnamurti THE OBSERVER IS THE OBSERVED is no longer the center of my interest. My attention was more and more directed to the moment in which the past and the future dissolve. Here I found out that there are no pictures for this.

When I then thought about ending the project and closing the website at the beginning of 2020, I realized that there is now a community and that I definitely want to communicate this to the participants who are interested. Maybe ideas for a changed continuation will come from the group?

So, I decided to call for a weekend meeting from 24 to 26 May 2019 with the central question of whether there is new impetus, how the project could develop further. To illustrate the seven years of activity, I calculated the mosaic picture of a portrait of Jiddu Krishnamurti from over 85,000 individual pictures in the diaries of the participants.

The invitation to the Petrushof in Obermarchtal was accepted by 21 people and we were able to provide for ourselves again in

the spacious kitchen. I received great help from this year's team of Mirja, Angelika, Yshouk and Manfred. Friday afternoon began with an introduction and discussion of the past and current development of the net art project I AM WE_interactive image, suggestions for a new direction including practical implementation. After looking and feeling for the current reality of the project, everyone, both as individuals and as a group, was invited to explore new paths waiting for us from the future on different levels. Manfred loosened up the evening with an interesting game of artificial intelligence (AI).

On Saturday, Yshouk took us into the mental realm of Systemic Constellation and the question „A new space through communication on the level of being“. The afternoon belonged then first completely to the level of the mind with the conversation about complexity by and with Klaus Haasis and then to the body with eutony exercises by Karin Fietzek and her theme: „Our body creates itself anew every moment“. The evening was closed by Chris Mennel as DJ with his dancefloor.

Thank you and good bye

On Sunday morning we still had plenty of time for questions and answers and to try to summarize. It became super clear how much the participants love the project and how there were still no ideas to continue it in a new form. But meeting again in this form was extremely valuable and I wouldn't want to miss it in any case. Thanks a lot.

so far the world was solid and time flew by, now time stands still and the world will be created anew every moment



Discussions of the group



Petrushof in Obermarchtal



ANOTHER I AM WE BRANCH

I AM WE_STAY TUNED



Workshop at the CREATIVE SPACE



drum circles with Andrea Winter



I GING with Justus Theinert

Shortly after the meeting in Luxembourg Karin Fietzek visited us at the Swabian Alb and we went for a long walk in bright sunshine. Meanwhile Karin said that it was a great pity that such events only take place once a year, especially since Klaus Haasis had awarded us the title „Community of Appreciation“ in Luxembourg. And so we took the first mental steps towards a new series of events in Stuttgart with contents that are suitable to positively influence the participants' own appreciation. With Andrea Winter and Justus Theinert, two further comrades-in-arms could be won and Klaus Haasis gave us his CREATIVE SPACE at Olgastrasse 138 in Stuttgart free of charge.

And so we started I AM WE_stay tuned, the interdisciplinary series of events „for the general raising of one's own appreciation“ on 19.7.2015 at 2 pm with the workshop „Intentionless action, finding ideas, finding life“ by and with Justus Theinert. A homepage was created, on which the current program could be found as well as the results of the lectures and workshops were documented.

Four further events - always Sunday afternoons from 2 - 6 p.m. - took place in September 2015 with 10 - 15 participants each, a donation of about 10 - 20 Euros was asked for and during the break there were always small snacks and drinks.

- Clarification of the intention - art as a way of self-realization - talk with Wolf Nkole Helzle
- Drumcircles - Workshop with Andrea Winter
- Resource-oriented card reading - Workshop with Yshouk Kirsch
- TAI JI - Balance in motion - Workshop with Karin Fietzek

From 17.1. - 28.2.2016 there was the second series

- To have and to be - Workshop by and with Wolf Nkole Helzle
- Inner pictures - outer pictures - workshop by and with Laurenz Theinert
- Perception and presence with all senses - Eutonie Workshop with Karin Fietzek
- Free systemic constellation - Workshop by and with Daniel Kirsch
- I Ging - Workshop by and with Justus Theinert
- Wu Wei Intentionless Acting - Workshop by and with Justus Theinert
- Love what is - The Work of Byron Katie - Workshop by and with Timber Hemprich & Betty Hensel

And from 19.6. - 31.7. then the third and already last row, since Klaus Haasis has found a permanent tenant for his room.

- The power of true appreciation - Workshop by and with Daniel Kirsch
- Silence - Workshop by and with Karin Fietzek
- Bodybeat and Powerpercussion - Workshop by and with Andrea Winter
- The art of perception or: the language of things - Workshop by and with Alfred Bast
- Loheland Gymnastics - Workshop by and with Britta Reichert
- I AM WE - Workshop by and with Wolf and Manfred Helzle



Another drum circle



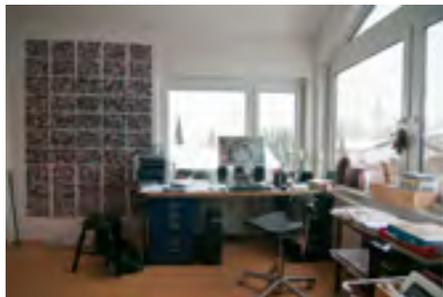
Workshop by Alfred Bast



The language of things by Alfred Bast



HISTORY AT A GLANCE



- 2010** Start of the project „The observer is the observed“
- 2011** Continuation and end of the „365 Selfportraits“ project
Development of the concept for the net art project
I AM WE_interactive image
- 2012** The project is financially enabled by a sponsor
The project finds an ideally suited sponsor and a room
Design and programming of the internet platform
Creating a group in facebook
The project goes online: www.interactive-image.org
1. international I AM WE_usermeeting & exhibition
at the a+gallery, Stuttgart, with a printed catalogue
Concept, design and programming
of an app for IOS and Android
- 2013** The first flyer is designed and printed
The app goes online
2. international I AM WE_exhibition & symposium in Izmir,
Turkey, with a printed catalogue
- 2014** 3. international I AM WE_usermeeting & exhibition in Tur-
ku, Finland and art project Homo universalis, with a printed
catalogue

- 2015** 4. international I AM WE_usermeeting & exhibition in Lux-
embourg and art project myMatrix
The platform gets some improvements
The event series I AM WE_stay tuned in Stuttgart is born
- 2016** 5. international I AM WE_usermeeting in Birmingham and
art project I AM WE_IDENTITY and myMatrix
The event series I AM WE_stay tuned ends
- 2017** 6. international I AM WE_usermeeting in Heiligkreuztal
The second flyer is designed and printed
The app no longer works due to new system versions
- 2018** 7. international I AM WE_usermeeting & exhibition in
Münsingen with art project myMatrix
- 2019** 8. international I AM WE_usermeeting in Obermarchtal
with portrait of Jiddu Krishnamurti
- 2020** End of the net art project
Design and printing of a documentation





WOLF NKOLE HELZLE

VITA



Wolf Nkole Helzle (*1950) studied painting at the Freie Kunsthochschule Stuttgart, and at the Hochschule für bildende Künste Kassel with Professor Harry Kramer. He has been a freelance media artist since 1996. 2000: lecturer for media art at the Fachhochschule für Gestaltung in Schwäbisch Hall. 2006: artist-in-residence at the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, lecturer for video art at the Hochschule der Medien, Stuttgart. 2012: Digital Content Fund from MFG. Member at Deutscher Künstlerbund (German Association of Artists).

Exhibitions and Performative Projects of the last few years (selection)

- 2019 artKarlsruhe; Homo universalis in Kyoto, Himeji and Nara, Japan; ConSozial, Nürnberg; DIALOG #02 Petrushof Obermarchtal
- 2018 artKarlsruhe; Portrait Korntal-Münchingen; Portrait Regens Wagner Absberg; TRANSFORMATION BT18 Münsingen
- 2017 Deutscher Ev. Kirchentag, Berlin; Weltausstellung Reformation, Wittenberg; Oracle Open World, San Francisco, USA; various group exhibitions; artKarlsruhe
- 2016 Birmingham University, UK; Portrait of Mariaberg, Germany
- 2015 College of Art and Design, TU Beijing, China; JavaOne, San Francisco, USA; Fraunhofer Institut IIS, Erlangen; Portrait of Endingen am Kaiserstuhl, Germany
- 2014 Monastery Bad Schussenried, Germany (catalogue); Museum Biedermann, Donaueschingen (catalogue); Hashima Namazu Festival, Japan; Welcome Center, Stuttgart
- 2013 INTERIM Biennale, Münsingen

www.helzle.com