

Nobody Is Safe

LIVE TV ART by satellite directly to the household and back. Television in the hands of artists on channels 3sat and FS 2.

NAILED GUTS NG001

Live programmes are the blood of television. If a broadcasting station suffers a loss of blood, it will become a mere supplier for the goggle-box or some audiovisual home disco. Television is never more thrilling, nerve-racking and specific than in live programmes. You chew your fingernails to the bone, you want to go up the walls, get hopelessly plastered, pick up the telephone angrily, rave, hope to finally get through with your call, switch over again and again because you simply can't stand the thrill of being there again for the finale.

Therefore, those previously recorded and trimmed game shows with their anonymous studio audiences are all the more damnable. No TV juice is streaming over the screen. Game shows are ruled by safety, order and boredom. Nobody exceeds the time limit, nobody talks smut in the heat of the studio lighting, nobody has to react to mishaps, nobody runs out of crisps and beer.

STWST-TV has this blood in its veins and STWST-TV is blood-thirsty.

Our artistic understanding of the medium is based on the actual character of the matter of television. If the medium is seen from this point of view, in the foreground there is the endeavour to trace the root, the origin of the matter of television, namely real-time transmission. The live performance is (the medium's) autonomous quality. Therefore, our overall aim is to broadcast live. The television camera is the only camera that can simultaneously record, transmit, and copy the picture. Electronic picture, sound and data processing permits us to design and transport at the same time.

SPORTS SET THE EXAMPLE

Sports are real events that happen spontaneously; their course cannot be predetermined and – most of all – they are happening now. The constants are the instruments, the tools of the network unit. The composition develops in the course of the performance. Things, facts are confronted with each other, dialogues, talks, statements set side-by-side, and suspense develops – sports effect. The experience is subject to a wide range of obligingness, boredom and thrill. The rhythm is determined by its own dynamics, with both loose moments and tense, thrilling situations being given equal justice.

NG004

The sound makes the music. The sound makes your blood run through your veins. Turn your TV up to maximum volume, so that the boom in the set fills the entire room (which has been darkened, of course). React to the pictures and get in contact with us. Ignore any other changes in your apartment. Enjoy television, as television should be. STWST-TV is live television, without a false bottom, and it is direct. I took a ride with the pretty music, and now I'm buzzing to you straight from hell.

INSTINCT TV

Not a finished, ready-(made) piece of work, but a process on the basis of dialogues. Work in progress – a communication sculpture. The patterns used correspond to the specific language formula developed by Stadtwerkstatt-TV. The subject is instinct, special processing – not smoothing but roughening and intensifying, uncovering. Nobody knows what the other one is doing and yet they are all connected with each other. The autonomy of the individual promotes the fundamental emancipation of the individual voice. Art as a development aid to find one's speech.

INSTANT TV

The TV set is the powder and we pour water into it; or rather, the TV set is the water and we mix it with our powder.

REACTION-ACTION TV

The menu offered: quick, spontaneous, domestic, raw and pure. Whatever the viewer brings in, is taken up immediately and incorporated into the individual levels of the studio. Action, pictures, sound and text react and act in and with each other. TV takes place in the studio and in the households simultaneously. Network unit: apartment – receiver – telephone – studio – transmitter. Of course, you can phone in or get called.

CATASTROPHY TV

The Number One scene of catastrophies is the TV screen. As everything else, catastrophies can only be determined by human judgement. Irritation should be provided by TV in order to relativize conceptions of value. The enjoyment of

catastrophies and catastrophic pleasure should not be left at liberty. Man's innate drive for destruction and annihilation is being speculated with.

"STUDIO OBERTREFFLING" A Live TV art project

There is war on TV

The military training village at Obertreffling, which resembles a movie town scenery, is the location of the action and of the TV studio. Here we find the appropriate environment for our project, a real background for the execution of our subject. This training ground, an ideal test field, represents a real simulation area and is confronted with the virtual space of the medium. The village accommodates a field of tension from inside to outside, from houses and streets. The subject is dealt with chronologically, in four blocks. The structure is that of traditional drama: the quiet and the tension before the storm, the eruption, the survivors and the victims, the dance on the volcano. For the project to go well, it is necessary to involve the Austrian Federal Army to carry out individual tasks. Furthermore, the subject requires cooperation with the fire brigade, ambulance service and other disaster relief organizations. The festival audience will be taken to the location by bus to be provided by the Federal Army specifically for this occasion. Participating artists in the festival and guests will be incorporated in the programme. An event taking place in situ, in the studio and in the household.

NOBODY IS SAFE is like TV, taking place at several levels of action taking place at the same time. It psychically and materially investigates the phenomenon of controlled life. Our considerations were focussed on the meaning of the subject in relation to human existence and the everyday life connected with it, A high degree of quality of life produces a high degree of control over potential interference factors. Today we are faced with a highly developed culture of security systems, which have, in the meantime, acquired strong dynamics of their own. They have even come to inspire fear and uncertainty in the simple-minded. We want to know how people have their lives under control day by day and how they deal with their existence. The maintaining of value conceptions (what to protect and what from) associated with this, only apparently results in a network to stabilize existence. Ultimately, however, the network shows paranoid cracks, so that nobody can feel safe. The tendency towards control, which is a primary factor of survival for many, is revealed as a trap. Reason teaches us that we cannot know what will happen next.

NG003 THE BRIDGE

"Nobody is safe" is not a reservoir for Peter Rapp's "Hoppala" show. Of course, gloating must be, but: if it doesn't kill us, it will just make us stronger. Fundamentals of faith and strategy. If something goes wrong, no unprofessionalism will grin into your living room. If something goes wrong, there won't be much brooding about it, instead we will act like lightning to make use of the error in the system. We are not here to face facts but to change them. Everything chalked up as error by outsiders, is a new molecule for us

which sets a mutation in motion that makes us immune. Catastrophies do not occur to make us uneasy and destroy us. Catastrophies occur in order to test and to strengthen us.

STWST-TV is not afraid of any test. STWST-TV invites you to be tested. Look out honey, cos I'm using technology. Scenes of action: on, under and beside the VOEST bridge near the Linz/Urfahr motorway intersection on the bank of the Danube. An intersection between leisure and work.

Above, the motorway crosses the area. Under it, there is a leisure facility for tarmac curling. Paths for walkers, cyclists, Joggers and dog owners also run through this area and beyond, along the river bank to the recreation area.

A public space, which holds a lots and involves several levels which, in our opinion, are characteristic. These represent our dramatic reference points by their physical existence.

HEROES OF OUR TIMES

Survivors: they know they have chosen the right way to spend their everyday lives and their leisure time, usefully. They demonstrate exemplary behaviour in every situation – as small-scale capitalists, macrobiotics, militant cyclists, sexual partners, conscious consumers.

The survivor impresses his fellow beings by his behaviour, attitude and courage of his own convictions. He has himself, his life, his environment, well under control. Insecurity is foreign to his nature.

In any conflict situation, the survivor resorts to a reservoir of rules and sayings: "If you want to succeed, you must stop at nothing" – "Man is what he eats" – "The woman's place is in the home". The simple, straight-forward formula gives him strength and security.

The survivor considers himself primarily a man of practice, and not of theory. His own experience confirms his way of acting. Where others are driven by unfavourable circumstances, and material compulsions, the "right way" manifests itself in the flesh and blood, for the survivor. He despises any form of existence other than his own, towers above the grey masses by his own selfcreated "Self".

Thus, he represents the interesting image of an imaginary personality.

The action develops live before the eyes and ears of the TV viewer – a complex discourse on the subject becomes visible. Several autonomous levels of action operate simultaneously, being interlinked and inevitably related to each other.

ABOVE, there is the motorway – the ordered and regulated system of road traffic. It is the dramatic symbol of the

rational level – the level of the head, so-as-to-speak. What makes the traffic move? A popular, controversial subject, where individual freedom and limitations are subject to strong control and self-control. This is exactly what we want to process, artistically. Here, the movement and motion of people, there, the suspension-bridge. And as cars can't fly, the bridge acts as a crutch.

UNDER the bridge – the level of drives. An open, yet covered space, similar to a hall. The tarmac curling rink is the scene of action, the steel bridge construction with its mobile work platforms represents the grid. This space is an intermediate stop for those driven by leisure activities and those driven from home. Underworld.

BESIDE the bridge, there are meadows a flood area, the water dam and the cycle path. A civilized, mixed form of different leisure areas. The green meadow, growth, lethargy. A story book idyll. A small house, right in the centre, an intact world in the meadowland.

THERE, our television family is accommodated – a living room full of representatives of all ages and sexes. A cosy evening spent chatting, eating, drinking, watching television. A reflexive loop over our current programme, accessible for everyone by phone. Manipulated pieces of information on the screen stir up conflicts.

OUTSIDE, a debate is taking place at the same time. Invited guests who are convinced of the maxims of their own lives, explain their own survival strategies. Detached, saturated and marked by seeing through things. People who know how to have their lives under control. A suggestive disassembly of their points of view takes place – not in order to degrade these people, but in order to visualize the functioning of such self-imposed or learned control mechanisms in the course of making the insecurity visible.

A group of social desperados have made themselves at home. We supply them with alcohol, provide a refrigerator, fire wood and a trash container. They can also be reached by phone – a social sculpture.

For the purposes of injustice we also establish a VIP lounge. The best place for non-committal observations and comments. First class, full service – no phone calls for them. In the course of time, an independent force FROM OUTSIDE comes to act on the overall situation, altering it. It begins on a small-scale and gains disastrous proportions. In a pointed form, this is the material illustration of a process of permanent change. Nothing is at rest. The clock is a water bag. Deconstruction and re-creation.

STADTWERKSTATT-TV specifies subjects, provides provocation and encourages an interactive TV event; the viewer is requested to supply contributions in the form of optical or acoustic statements. The viewer's contribution is immediately taken up, inserted and brought into context with blended in pictures and sounds. In doing so, the medium goes beyond pure representation and becomes a multiple means of communication. Things, facts are confronted with each other; dialogues, talks, statements added – a dialectic simultaneousness.

The viewer can release processes by means of his telephone keyboard without even having to comment on them – just by pressing a button. The viewer assumes responsibility. The TV picture of the real action space is set against/made equal to the virtual space of the video game.

A system is created and left to itself. Everyone is a potential perpetrator. A bipolar decision process is set in motion, by means of a rope-pulling technique. Two different phone numbers can be dialled. Simple majority will thereby prevent a process with serious consequences, or initiate it.

NG002

This time, legendary interactive television shall finally come into its own again. Interactive television, as a playground for media artists, media philosophers, media theoreticians and media critics, is a ghetto leading to incestuous boredom. Interactive television makes sense and is fun only if media consumers interact. Experiences made in Europe are frustrating because – except for sound popular instinct complaining of the TV fee – the only people to pick up their phones, faxes or computers are those who define themselves as media XYZs.

In America, however, the interactive telephone, fax or computer is used just as easily as guns are pulled out in innumerable Western movies. Invitations to a join us for a bottle of whisky or prophecies of eternal hell fire were therefore made primarily by people who try to get through, every day, to the "Wurlitzer" show in our part of the world: children, jilted lovers, psychopaths, religious fanatics, bar keepers and the spotty-faced teenagers from the neighbourhood. With such interactivists, more happens in half an hour than in any media discourse around here. Since "Der Goldene Schuss" (The Golden Shot) German-speaking television has been providing nothing but pseudodemocratic and pseudointeractive television. STWST-TV is not made up of media artists but of culture labourers who make interactive television. STWST-TV shoots with live ammunition and has a high hit rate.

I shot a man in Reno, just to watch him die.

AS WELL AS HERE AND NOW

Psycho-mindgames, heavy security, car wash and angling, fustilation of a tree, computer grants, climate tapes, private visits, horses, asses, rock'n'roll, headmounted camera, Grand Prix Ars Electronica, collisions of mind and matter, accidents, dynamite dog, mountain climber, autoerotic, successful business people, gun lovers, signal rocket, salvage diver, radar traps, speed reduction, twins, snow gun, dew, the last hay-harvest

Für Konzeption und Regie zeichnet Stadtwerkstatt TV

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Werkschronologie

1986 Superweisende Installation, Ars Electronica Linz
Nebenraum, Österreichische Filmtage Wels.

1987 Hauptplatz-TV-Konzert, Ars Electronica Linz
Hotelvision, Österreichische Filmtage Wels

1989 Automaten-TV, live auf 3sat, Ars Electronica Linz

1990 Live in Buffalo/NY, auf Public Access Cable-T.V.

1991 Out of Control – Niemand ist sich seiner sicher, live auf 3sat und FS 2, Ars Electronica Linz

1992 Projekte in Cleveland/Ohio und Niederösterreich in Vorbereitung. Through the camera lens to the chip across the field of electronics, by cable into the picture mixer and through the TBC to the signal amplifier, to go on via the coaxial cable to the parabolic antenna, into the air to the parabolic receiver, through the switch desk to the radio relay line, over meadows and fields and across the border to Mainz to the uplink into the orbit to the satellites, from the satellites to the receiving dish of the cable operator, through various places of equipment into the copperlines beneath the streets, into the households to the tuners in the video-cassette recorders, into the antenna cable the RF bushing of the TV set through diodes and resistors to the picture tube, from the picture tube to the retina, via nerves into the brain and from there into the blood. Television must get under your skin.

