

orf-Kunstradio

Static Between The Stations

The Kunstradio Manifesto

TWELVE NOTES ABOUT RADIO ART

KUNSTRADIO takes it for granted that:

- 1) Radio art is the use of radio as a medium for art.
- 2) Radio happens in the place it is heard and not in the production studio.
- 3) Sound quality is secondary to conceptual originality.
- 4) Radio is almost always heard combined with other sounds — domestic, traffic, tv, phone calls, playing children etc.
- 5) Radio art is not sound art — nor is it music. Radio art is radio.
- 6) Sound art and music or literature are not radio art just because they are broadcast on the radio.
- 7) Radio space is all the places where radio is heard.
- 8) Radio art is composed of sound objects experienced in radio space.
- 9) The radio of every listener determines the sound quality of a radio work.
- 10) Each of the listeners hears their own final version of a work for radio combined with the ambient sound of their own space.
- 11) The radio artist knows that there is no way to control the experience of a radio work.
- 12) Radio art is not a combination of radio and art. Radio art is radio by artists.

Static Between The Stations

RADIO RESET A KUNSTRADIO-PROJECT WITH MEGO, PHONOTAKTIK AND U.R.L.

"Wherever we are, what we hear is mostly noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. When we listen to it, we find it fascinating. The sound of a truck at 50 m.p.h. — Static between the stations ...

Der Erfindersohn Cage, dessen Vater einige Radiopatente hielt, die Cage-Junior bis ins hohe Alter verwaltete, versteht das Radio als das, was es immer war, ein Ensemble eines selbstreferentiellen, auf sich selbst bezogenen Experiments. Was die Kunst betrifft, so ist dies der einzige Ort, den sie in den technischen Medien legitimerweise tatsächlich hat, indem sie nämlich die technischen Medien als das begreift, was sie sind: nämlich ein in blinder Taktik operierendes Apriori der industrialisierten Zivilisation, das aus liegengelassenem Experimentiergerät der Technik und der Physik her stammt." (Wolfgang Hagen: Vom Ort des Radios. Opening Lecture. RECYCLING THE FUTURE IV, Vienna, Dec.1997. <http://thing.at/orfkunstradio/FUTURE>)

"Cage, the son of an inventor who held a number of radio patents that Cage Jr. administrated to a ripe old age, understands radio as that which it has always been: an ensemble of self-referential experiments. As far as art is concerned, this is the only place that it can actually be said to legitimately occupy in the technical media, in that it conceives of the technical media as that which they are: namely, an a priori of industrialized civilisation operating by means of blind tactics, one which originates from the experimental devices which technology and physics have long ago left behind." (Wolfgang Hagen: Vom Ort des Radios. Opening Lecture. RECYCLING THE FUTURE IV, Vienna, Dec.1997. <http://thing.at/orfkunstradio/FUTURE>)

"Niemand hört Radio. Was Lautsprecher oder Kopfhörer ihren Benutzern anliefern, ist immer bloß Programm, nie das Radio selber. Nur im Ernstfall, wenn Sendungen abbrechen, Ansagerstimmen ersticken oder Sender von ihrer Empfangsfrequenz wegdriften, gibt es für Momente überhaupt zu hören, was Radiohören wäre."

"Nobody listens to radio. What loudspeakers or headsets provide for their users is always just radio programming, never radio itself. Only in emergencies, when broadcasts are interrupted, announcers' voices dry up or stations drift away from their proper frequencies, are there any moments at all to hear what radio listening could be about." (Friedrich Kittler: Die letzte Radiosendung. In: On The Air, Kunst im öffentlichen Datenraum, TRANSIT; 1993)

The rather complex and dispersed project *Static between the Stations* has two subtitles: The first one — *Radio Reset for the activities in Linz and at some remote locations* — points to the many different attempts to (re-)define and/or position the radio medium in today's mediascape — accordingly the descriptions of radio today ranging from "a blurring of the borders of radio" in the Internet (Christoph Barth/Thomas Münch: *Internet und Webradio*. 8. Baden-Badener Hörfunktagung, 1998) to a "liberation" of the medium proper.

"Radio is Free (thanks to TV): Since the birth of television, Radio is free; it doesn't always realize this (it often stubbornly denies it, as in National Public Radios — visionless televisions) but it definitely is. Free from being the 'voice of power', radio has become the chosen voice of minorities ..." (Sergio Messina, unpublished)

Brutal Radio — the title of the (from a Linz point of view) remote Vienna performance of some of the artists, who then will join *OpenX* on site in Linz- could be said to evoke a "radical radio" that is neither "tyrannized by the clock" nor has "become the birdsong of the 20th century, decorating the environment with 'pretty'" (R.Murray Schafer: "Radical Radio" in: *Festival for a New Radio*, 1987, New York). But, rather than transmitting the "sounds of wind and rain, the cries of birds and animals ... without editing into the hearts of the cities" (as Schafer would have put it), *Brutal Radio* is transmitting radio itself.

On May 19th 1998 Peter Rehberg wrote:

"Radio has been getting a lot of attention recently, especially in Austria. With all these shiny new stations turning up and the like. A complete information overload of oversized mainstream music, as if we did not already have enough. Fine, lots of radio and no content. However, developments at the other end of the dial have been proving to be of interest. People who see the radio as an instrument, a statement, a concept. More than just a promotional tool to sell a few more tickets. Let's concentrate on the bits you do not usually hear. The parts between the programmes ... this static area of grey territory. And how about presenting the unrepresentable? Why, of course ... This is nothing new, it's just no one has bothered to tune in. Till now. On the air tonight, oh yes, indeed ..."

"Tuning down into the lowest reaches of the radio spectrum, particularly in night's shadow of the solar wind, the listener enters a world of diverse phenomena, opening an acoustic window on a world alive with electrical activity. Whistling atmospherics from lightning and thermonuclear EMP ricochet along field lines of the magnetosphere, bouncing between hemispheres of the globe; storms crackle: biostatics whisper, hiss and sigh: televisions scream: pylons and power loops drone and roar: military signals, the musical pulses of navigation systems, timecodes, and coded data broadcast deep beneath the sea. Time and space divided, live 'vivisection' of particle physics, voices, map lines, weapons, mirrors hidden by the illusion of quiet ..." (Disinformation, 1997).

From its very beginnings in 1987 KUNSTRADIO (starting as a weekly radio-art-program on the Austrian National Radio) tried to define radio-art as part of telecommunications-art, bringing notions about simultaneity or the horizontality of the electronic networks into the context of the traditional radio. Since 1995 the production of radio-art has also extended via KUNSTRADIO ON LINE into the Internet.

"The possibility of broadcast stations situated in various time zones ... the synthesis of simultaneous actions ... the utilization of interference between stations ... an art without time and space" (LA RADIA, a Futurist Manifesto by F.T. Marinetti and Pino Masnata. 1933).

In 1996 the international live project Rivers & Bridges (see catalogue Ars Electronica 1996 and http://thing.at/orfkunstradio/RIV_BRI/) comprised 18 hours of Real Audio Live with sounds from all over the world. A team of artists, composers and technicians linked the live stream with a plethora of constantly updated information and the images of several webcams from sites of some of many simultaneous performances and installations. In 1997 a similarly distributed production process — announced as 24 hour Live Web Radio — took place in the context of the 4 on air-on line-on site-episodes of Recycling the Future (<http://thing.at/orfkunstradio/FUTURE>): over periods of up to 10 days several locations coproduced live-Real Audiostreams, live images and constant updating of texts accessible via especially designed surfaces.

"... we are onto something new and interesting (to say the least); we have found a key to improvise which is very different from the way music is traditionally improvised; it isn't even music. I call it improvised radio (...) because of the structure (which reminds me somehow of late night talk radio), because elements other than notes can be fundamental, because it is produced strictly "live" and because it has no "center". (Sergio Messina in an e-mail after RECYCLING THE FUTURE IV)

In summer 1998 Immersive Sound — a five-week long installation with its main on-site-location in Bregenz/Austria processed inputs from other installations and locations into — among other outputs — a Real Audio Live Mix which in turn became part of a distributed on line production process. With each of these projects the on line activities were just one aspect of a much more complex process interlinking on air-on site-and on line contexts and situations.

Static between the Stations at the Ars Electronica Festival 1998 will be a further development of this ongoing process of artistic media-reflection. What form it will take once the festival comes along, remains open. But no doubt the general subject "InfoWar" will be part of the content of the radio-artist's working in the context of this project — in Linz and at remote locations.

"Im Sommer 1935 erprobte die Nachrichtenmittel-Versuchsanstalt zum ersten Mal das Impulsverfahren zur Entfernungsmessung. Auf dem Schirm einer Braun'schen Röhre konnte die Entfernung des Kreuzers 'Königsberg' mit einer Genauigkeit von 50 Metern abgelesen werden.

Im November desselben Jahres hielt Martin Heidegger seine Vorlesung 'Vom Ursprung des Kunstwerkes' ... Radar und Radionavigationstechnik sind im Unterschied zu Van Goghs Bauernschuhen Waffen ..."

In summer 1935 the Nachrichtenmittel-Versuchsanstalt (Experimental Institute of Communication Systems) tested the impulse method for determining distance for the first time. The distance to the cruiser 'Koenigsberg' could be read off the screen of a Braun's tube with a tolerance of 50 meters.

In November of the same year Martin Heidegger held his lecture 'On the Origin of the Artwork' — a coincidence which makes sense ... In contrast to Van Gogh's peasant shoes, radar and radio navigation technology are

weapons. (Bernhard Siegert: Eskalation einer Mediums. In: On the Air. Kunst im öffentlichen Datenraum. TRANSIT. Innsbruck, 1993)

"For more than 30 years the Shortwave radio spectrum has been employed by the world's intelligence agencies to transmit secret messages. These messages are transmitted by hundreds of 'Numbers Stations'. Shortwave Numbers Stations are a perfect method of anonymous, one-way communication. Spies located anywhere in the world can be communicated to by their masters via small, locally available, and unmodified Shortwave receivers. The encryption system used by Numbers Stations is absolutely unbreakable. Combine this with the fact that it is almost impossible to track down the message recipients once they are inserted into the enemy country, it becomes clear just how powerful the Numbers Station system is. Numbers Stations transmit on very rigid schedules, and can be heard by anyone with a standard shortwave radio. One might think that these espionage activities should have wound down considerably since the official 'end of the cold war', but nothing could be further from the truth." (Akin Fernandez, The CONET PROJECT)

"Due to the increasing number of FM broadcast stations (especially in Europe), the selectivity and dynamic behaviour of radio receivers is becoming a problem. Specially designed analogue chips offer a solution to this problem.

Information war against yourself: electromagnetic impulse: During the Gulf war in 1991 there was a serious threat that all electromagnetic equipment might crash because of an overkill of electromagnetic waves in the air, caused by communication, radar, weapon systems". (Gert Jan Prins, 1998)

"Das Radio, das wir kennen, ist das nicht-digitale Radio ... (dieses) Radio ist mit einer Hypothek belastet. Der Ort des Radios heute ist eine Abrüstung. Ich finde es toll, daß sich der Ort des Radios gleichsetzt mit dem Ort anderer Medien, daß Radio etwas ist, das neben anderen Medien existiert, denn dadurch wird es freier." (Wolfgang Hagen in einem Gespräch mit Susanna Niedermayr, 1997)

"The radio that we know is non-digital radio ... (this) radio is encumbered with mortgage. The place of radio today is a process of disarmament. I think it's great that the place of radio is equated with the place of other media, that radio is something that exists alongside other media, since it becomes more free as a result." (Wolfgang Hagen in conversation with Susanna Niedermayr, 1997)

The Frequency Clock

BY RADIOQUALIA

Project Description

1. A series of 12 micro-FM transmitters will be installed at Open X, at regular intervals round the room.
2. Each transmitter will be a physical representation of a discrete step in global time zones. The space between transmitters will represent the transition between time zones.
3. Audio content from net.radio stations will be broadcast by each of the transmitters.
4. The radius of each transmission will be equal to half the distance between transmitters.
5. The net.radio station broadcast by a transmitter will be from the time zone that the transmitter represents.
6. All transmitters will be set to the same FM frequency.
7. The public will be invited to traverse this space.

8. FM headsets, tuned to the micro-FM transmitters, will be available for the public to wear.

8. The audience will explore the diversity of net.radio in a walk-through experience of time zones and their accompanying net.radio entities.

THE FREQUENCY CLOCK is a very simple but effective demonstration of the relationship between net.radio and terrestrial radio. It enables the public to examine the similarities between these two mediums, and the essential differences.

Static — Between The Stations

A KUNSTRADIO project in cooperation with MEGO, phonoTAKTIK and U.R.L. and many partners at several locations

LINZ: RADIO RESET ON AIR — ON LINE — ON SITE

Sept 3rd to Sept 10th 1998

at OPEN X

production of Live Webcasts

<http://thing.at/orfkunstradio>

in cooperation with Xchange

Adam Hyde/Honor Harger (radioqualia):

THE FREQUENCY CLOCK (Cybernetic Tuner v1.0)

an installation in cooperation with Xchange

Sept 10th/11th 1998: 10:15 p.m.—6 a.m.

THE LONG NIGHT OF LIVE-RADIO-ART

produced at ORF Landesstudio Oberösterreich

broadcast on ORF Österreich 1 and FM4

Sept 3rd and Sept 11th:

LINZ — KUNST — TRAM

in cooperation with Giardini Pensili: ATLAS LINZ

LINZ — KUNST — RADIO

in cooperation with RADIO FRO

REMOTE LOCATIONS:

RHIZ, Vienna: BRUTAL RADIO — a phonoTAKTIK Project
Vancouver, Canada: FIRST FLOOR EASTEND and others
Quebec City, Canada: AVATAR and others

PARTICIPANTS (as of June 28th 1998):

August Black/Markus Seidl, Disinformation, Akin Fernandez, Tina Frank, F.O.N, Bruce Gilbert, Adam Hyde/Honor Harger, Sergio Messina, Christof Migone/Jocelyn Robert, Gordan Paunovic, Gert Jan Prins, Peter Rehberg, Maria Schubert, Matt Smith/Sandra Wintner, Eva Wohlgemut and many others.