

Shu Lea Cheang, artist, Paris

Haunting Wastelands

In 2009, for UKI project (<http://u-k-i.co>), Shu Lea Cheang brought to her artist-in-residency studio in Hangar medialab 4 tons of e-trash collected from Barcelona city alone in one day. The hill-like e-trashscape serve as the set for hardware/software contagion in UKI viral performance. In 2012, she realized her Baby Work project (<http://babywork.biz>) in which junk keyboards are collected, stripped of keys, leaving their membranes to be rewired and made functional. As an interactive installation, BABY WORK asks the public to assume the roles as clone babies, picking up and placing pieces of dislocated keys onto the keyboard membrane to recall human ME (Memory| Emotion) data. In spring 2015, she joined a London based research team „Bodies of Planned Obsolescence“ (<http://www.e-waste-performance.net>) which brought her to the electronic waste dumps in Lagos, Nigeria and the e-waste processing factory in Hong Kong. With a focus on participatory practices, these trips situated her side by side with the e-waste workers to ponder upon the global politics of electronic waste. These three works highlight the e-waste as integral part of our living conditions, returning from the wasteland to haunt us.

Baruch Gottlieb, Berlin University of the Arts (UdK)

why is there e-waste?

Poisonous and polluting waste is generated not only in the disposal of electronic devices, but equally in the mining of the minerals needed to produce new electronic devices. Can this latter waste also be included under the category e-waste? And what about the waste of human potential, of populations kept in virtual slavery to toil at the mine head for essential minerals, is this also e-waste? 99% of the rare earth minerals in today's electronics cannot be retrieved economically. This presentation will examine approaches to understand the immense scale of waste being perpetuated through the current dominant economic model, where vital economic growth is predicated on innovation especially in the industry of electronic computation.

KairUs/Andreas Zingerle, artist, Linz

Behind the smart world research lab

Agbogbloshie is a district in the teeming metropolis of Accra in West-African Ghana. The world's largest electro-waste dump is located here. 22 hard-drives brought back to Austria from this dump are the starting point for the 'Behind the Smart World' research Lab. Alongside the material and exploitative dark sides of the dirty business with electronic waste. The project brings together artistic positions dealing with the value of digital information and our constant production of data. We leave not only material traces that have disastrous effects on people and our environment, but also digital traces, the value of which is to be called into question.

The "Behind the smart world research lab" included a symposium, an artlab, a publication and a curated exhibition dealing with questions of saving, deleting and resurfacing of data. Further collaborations use mapping as a methodology to find new research areas for future artistic production.

'Behind the Smart World' is a project by Linda Kronman & Andreas Zingerle (KairUs) realised the first time in cooperation with servus.at as a research lab and an exhibition for the Art Meets Radical Openness 2016 festival in Linz, Austria.

<http://www.kairus.org>

<http://research.radical-openness.org/2015/>

Shusha Niederberger, House of Electronic Arts Basel (HeK)

on the margins of making

How do movements who are foremost concerned with practice relate to materiality and trash? Talking about the many faces of DIY culture I will connect to rather marginal positions in the field, often taken by artists or activists, where starting from an interest in the connection of practice and materiality a sensibility for the fore- and afterlife of things can be located.

Dietmar Offenhuber, Northeastern University Boston

Making a Mess- Waste as Information

Waste has been described as many things, a nuisance, a conduit for injustice and inequality, a symptom of an unhinged consumer society. But waste is, above all, a designation—there is nothing that cannot be labeled as waste at some point. In my talk, I will propose viewing waste as materially embodied information, and discuss practices of reading waste and its dedicated infrastructures.

The connections between waste and information have many facets. Much of what we know about the past, we know from things thrown away. The data exhausts of our online lives are aggregated in data centers, which are not entirely unlike landfills, and mined for potential insights.

The process of becoming waste, however, generally involves a loss of information. Waste systems are opaque and illegible, discarded objects become part of an undifferentiated mass. Which information is lost in this process is always selective and has wide-ranging social and political implications.

<http://offenhuber.net>

<http://northeastern.edu/visualization>

Research Team *Times of Waste*, ixdm/CML HGK FHNW, Basel

performing the gap

The research project *Times of Waste* (2015-17) looks at the purification, treatment and reuse respectively disposal of objects and materials. On the transport and recycling routes extending from Basel's local context into global connections, objects are not only undergoing material transformation, but also economic, social, aesthetic or rhetorical reassessments. The choice of the media is important in this applied research also because it is a challenge to formulate the fractures in the resulting object biographies aesthetically and medially. The research team will use various examples from the smartphone object biography to show which questions are crucial in research and procedures so far and for further work.

<http://www.times-of-waste.ch>

<http://times-of-waste.ch/en/team-en/>