

# This is not a protest song! Art, civic engagement and networking

Symposium, 21st and 22nd of March 2012

This symposium covered questions of art, political engagement and activism by focusing on practical working methods.

Throughout history, art has been assigned a range of roles. Aside from the beautification of life, distraction or representation, the acquisition and transfer of knowledge and experiences are still seen as highly important.

Taking up social-political themes in the context of arts has a long tradition: critique of social conditions is continuously – explicitly or hidden – expressed via diverse forms of expression and presentation. But what is the actual potential for art to be effective?

The presentations with subsequent workshops gave the participants the opportunity to explore political strategies in contemporary art, centred on those forms of art whose protagonists aim for social change and civic engagement. The political in this context was not understood as one of many toys at a playground of art in which artistic achievements of distinction are experimented with, but as an opportunity to redeem the social relevance of contemporary art.



Geert Lovink



Libia Castro and Olafur Olafsson



Hans Bernhard  
(UBERMORGEN.com)



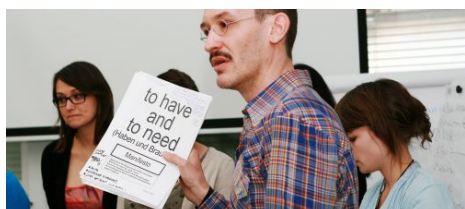
Workshop with Geert Lovink



Workshop with UBERMORGEN



Presentation of final results



Presentation of final results

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### Practical experience - theoretical reflection

The symposium focused on practical working methods. At the start, artistic activist strategies were discussed and then experimented and developed. The symposium started with three presentations from artists, curators, and theorists, which shed light onto the topic from different angles. Experts from various fields who considered the potential and strategies of activist theatre, fine arts and new media were invited. The presentations were followed by four workshops and their results were presented at the end of day two.