

Dear participants of our symposium WILD CAPITAL / WILDES KAPITAL,

first of all we would like to express our THANKS. Thanks to you for the time spent in Dresden and for your readiness to share your knowledge and a process which was not meant to be unified, but also controversial. We very much enjoyed having you here. Below you find a rough first summary & response to questions regarding the second phase of the project.

#### WILD CAPITAL / WILDES KAPITAL AT THE WTC: ANALYSIS, STRATEGIES & DISTINCTION

The symposium was a first encounter of many people from very different backgrounds, meant to juxtapose distinct practices and cultural, social and economical urban contexts. Different cultural (artistic, political & social) STRATEGIES to COUNTER the dominance of economics and money flows on our various post-socialist urban environments should be exchanged and discussed. What are the TOOLS with which we can create space for other than economical exchange between people? In order to find strategies, an analysis has to be conducted on the current state of the situation: WILD CAPITAL / WILDES KAPITAL was conceived to provide a platform for the individual approaches of the different projects towards public space in capitalist societies, both for analysis of the current situation as well strategies to confront it. The WTC Dresden for us seemed to provide a very good location for this, being itself an example of failed capital investment in the early transition period to a post-socialist urban condition.

#### FAR AWAY AND YET SO CLOSE: WILD CAPITAL / WILDES KAPITAL

Due to the distinct backgrounds & approaches, the way to come to a mutual understanding was not always easy. WILD CAPITAL / WILDES KAPITAL was NOT to be understood as a reference to the way capitalism inscribes itself in the urban landscape of post-socialist eastern europe. With its reference to the metaphor of nature, it much rather meant opening up a question on the characteristics of capitalisms in general: Behind very different facades and visual appearances in different parts of the world are very similar dynamics at work. What we are looking at are micro- and macro-structures, or rather a capitalism from above and a capitalism from below. Privatization processes under way have different visual appearances, but might follow the same logic: The withdrawal of the state goes along with the renunciation of the political common. It seems legitimate to redirect the gaze from the eastern european cities back to central europe and the United States and to discover transformation processes here behind comparatively orderly facades which follow a similar logic: capital flows directing the way cities and formerly public realms are being organized – accompanied by a belief system which presumably delegates decisions to „natural“ societal self-regulation via competing forces of capital.

#### IN FOCUS: THE DAYS & THEMES / HEADLINES

Starting out with comparisons between the very different examples of urbanity in Sofia and Dresden which were explained at the opening day, the symposium for us was meant to offer the chance to ZOOM IN and take a closer look at the phenomena we were discussing. DIFFERENT WAYS into capitalism had to be looked at in order to explain the diverging discourses and socio-economic situations in the new federal states of Germany and other post-socialist countries. Politics of media and thus VISIBILITY play an important role in the debate on what is to be conceived as

PUBLIC and its inherent hierarchies. Strategies of bypassing or using dominant media were presented as well as an example of one of the products of a privatized media landscape in Germany. The day dedicated to the IMAGE production of cities and the instrumentalizing of specific periods of history within this image production, unexpectedly also brought to the surface a debate on dominant discourses in the art world between eastern and western traditions, which provoked some reflection on the different backgrounds of participants involved in the symposium and might have been missing in the „official“ programme.

The final day dedicated to INFORMAL ECONOMIES with a detour through the example of Detroit, once the cradle of capitalism and now a wasteland, by Ingo Vetter opened up new perspectives for all of us. Regina Bittner with her calm but very differentiated and thorough observations on "capitalism from below", its implications on social mobility and simultaneous precarization, offered a multi-layered ending, leaving space to consider the impact new economies have on the bodies of the increasingly mobile individual entrepreneurs in informal economies.

ZOOMING IN was very much the logic of the morning programmes, observing exemplary consequences of the recent transformation processes, from the INVESTOR position to the marketing of Semper opera to the Vietnamese flower garden. Each of these examples proved to be more complex from a closer perspective than seen from afar and provided a possibility to show more of the urban structure than could be presented by a regular tour along the main sites.

#### THE LAST DAY: SEVERAL NARRATIVES

Wednesday morning, for those of you who missed it and had to leave earlier, in turn was then optimistic - not for global capitalisms effects on our societies, but for a common project at the Kunsthaus Dresden.

All this is worth writing a longer story, but hopefully this will happen - Antje and Thomas, who were commissioned as artists to document the process of the symposium, for their "report" opted for an open website tool now, in which perspectives of the individual participants on single events and turns in the narrative can find their place.

#### THE PROJECT IN DECEMBER

In general:

- All participants of the symposium as a first part of WILD CAPITAL, are invited to take part in the second part in december.
- The second part can be an EXHIBITION at the Kunsthaus Dresden, but not only: It can be INTERVENTIONS in the city, APROPRIATION OF SPACES, filmscreenings, lectures, TV-interventions, markets, gardening, printed matters, parties.....
- The topic is again WILD CAPITAL as we discussed it during the symposium. The contributions can, but do NOT HAVE TO focus on Dresden
- There can be individual contributions by the participants as well as collaborations
- Budgets for further travels and contributions will be set.

To open up the curatorial process of the project, on Wednesday morning after a tour through the KhD several ideas were discussed:

Observatorium suggested to connect Kunsthaus Dresden with a build structure to the surrounding city, both the old and the new part – the „leitmotiv“ being a passage – referring back to the heyday of capitalism in the late 19th century – a passage in the Benjaminian sense.

Ingo Vetter proposed alternatively or in combination to transfer some of the visual brutality from other urban contexts to Dresden – to cover the entire building of the Kunsthaus with billboards, possibly even rent them out in order to refinance some parts of the project.

We then discussed different forms of commercial architectures – the market, the passage, the gallery and the department store – periodically competing with each other, each time pushing out smaller economical structure in the favour of larger and more powerful players.

In general everybody agreed that the different appearances of capitalism we experience – from anarchy to strict regulation – should become manifest. Iara Boubnova suggested to think about aspects of masking capitalist power structures – the visibility and transparency in so called „wild capitalisms“ and the invisible, less transparent structure in visually regulated urban contexts such as Dresden or Paris.

Torsten Birne brought to our attention the lecture of Regina Bittner and the interviews with individual sales people at the big informal markets: It made clear how the transition period and the pressures of capitalism shape not only the urban landscapes, but also the biographies and bodies of the individual people.

Christiane Mennicke proposed as a reference term for the various aspects the term „uneven development“ used in critical geography – meaning that the capitalist logic implies movement – density and boom in one geographical spot and deterioration and disconnection in the other, center and periphery being two sides of the same coin.

We discussed the political and economical role of cartographies and maps – Iara Boubnova mentioned the fact that in socialism maps were issued by the authorities and therefore clearly regulated hierarchies on the map – whereas in capitalism companies start to produce their own maps and distort the proportions and measures according to their own needs and the sizes of their logos.

**THE DEADLINE FOR SHAPING THE EXHIBITION AND SECOND PHASE OF OUR PROJECT IS END OF SEPTEMBER**

This summary of Wednesday morning might be a starting point for a further process and a second phase of the project in december. We also tried sketch some aspects of the symposium for those who could not be there all the time, hoping you had good trips back home.

Attached please find a list of all the CONTACTS of the participants involved. Please feel free to ask any question which comes up concerning the second phase of the project, specific proposals or potential collaborations.

Looking forward to your responses and proposals and a good collaboration for the second phase of WILD CAPITAL

Christiane Mennicke, Sophie Goltz, Torsten Birne  
& all the team of WILD CAPITAL