

RADIO THE NE(X)T CENTURY is the title of an art-project by Bruno Beusch and Tina Cassani. In this project (and others before) the two Swiss artists explore the medium radio (and our culture) as they are changing under the impact of digitalisation. In RADIO THE NE(X)T CENTURY the two artists use the fictitious webcrash of a fictitious on line cult- radio as the starting point for an ongoing radio-(hi)story in actual radioprograms and in the World Wide Web. They appropriate the format and styles of popular radio together with well known presenters, with producers, sound engineers, scientists, theoreticians, curators of technical museums, etc. They seduce listeners to phone in, users to contribute material to a Cyber Memorial, they turn technicians into resourceful actors etc etc

In a very playful way they deal with serious issues - like the redefinition of concepts like authorship, originality etc. or the practical and theoretical development of new production strategies for the new multimedia environment we are and will be living in. But RADIO THE NE(X)T CENTURY is only one of several art-projects using the traditional radio-medium and the World Wide Web in very different ways and styles.

In some of these projects radio-stations- and artists - from all over the world link efforts, e.g. HORIZONTAL RADIO, 1995, or RIVERS&BRIDGES, 1996, two world wide radio- and Internetprojects with performances, concerts, installations at many nodes in three continents.

Projects like these are very difficult to grasp in their entirety - only aspects render themselves to the experience of each participating individual. A passive observer could be left encountering a surface that does not tell anything about the project itself, unless decoded as one of many participatory entrance points into the space/time of an everchanging field of energy created simultaneously - in a prenegotiated time-span - by many artists and non-artists ... The projects do not only change shape constantly their local/temporal manifestations may be very fugitive and very different as the projects as a whole are open and uncurated.. They have no center..They at the same time include, challenge and redefine a wide spectrum of concepts of art from the very not traditional ones to the ones that do not believe in the possibilities of control for the authors etc.

In other radio- and Internet-projects interdisciplinary teams of writers, visual artists and composers join forces, e.g. in FAMILIE AUER. a SitCom for Radio and Internet. This project has been running since the beginning of 1996: teams of authors with different backgrounds produce a weekly 5 minute episode for the radio. Each of these episodes is a piece of acoustic art. Style and form vary to a high degree, only the voices of the actors representing Gustl and Hansi Auer (the parents), Michi and René Auer (the two teenage kids), the neighbours (an elderly couple) and their dog stay the same. On line the FAMILIE AUER can be accessed all the time. There are possibilities to play games with them, to make contact with them, to become a member of a FAMILIE AUER fanclub etc. The on line episodes which are not necessarily related to the radio episodes use Real Audio. During the summer of 1996 the FAMILIE AUER was also present in a weekly print-magazine. FAMILIE AUER can also be reached via telephone. A first audio CD with a selection of the radio-pieces has just been published. Over 70 people are so far involved in the project, that - again in a playful way - tries to develop interdisciplinary production strategies for a project unfolding in different media and multimedia. The project is also intended to further the transfer of computer literacy from artists and technicians who already have a lot of experience in the new media to those who just enter the field.

More and more individual artists devise projects using tradi-

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### **RADIO THE NE(X)T CENTURY**

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#### SUMMARY:

There is a variety of artists' projects dealing with and reflecting the process and actual state of the current convergence between massmedia, telecommunications technologies and the computer. Many of these projects take place in the public space of the radio medium and the Internet and are very difficult to grasp inside the traditional venues of (even media-) art. The examples in this presentation all come from the experience of the KUNSTRADIO - an on air and on line radio-and telecommunications-art-site based at the Austrian National Radio, Vienna).  
<http://www.ping.at/thing/orfkunstradio/>

tional radio and the quite different possibilities of the Internet. To realize these projects they usually again have to find the cooperation of other artists and/or technicians. An example for this type of project is DARB-I-FETIH by Rupert Huber. DARB-I-FETIH is an on line composition that unfolded over months linking the image of the score with more and more visual and Real audio data. Twice in this period DARB-I-FETIH came alive also as radio-compositions and several times material from the on line and radio-versions became part of an installation and performances in different contexts from a gallery to a computer fair...

The artists, composers, writers etc. working on this type of project realize that radio (together with other traditional media) is in the process of becoming a secondary medium - the place of the primary medium is taken over by the computer. This of course means that new cultural techniques have to be mastered, stories have to be told in a different way, art production and distribution become one and the same, the relationship between authors and recipients is changing drastically to the point where the recipients become authors themselves. Artworks loose their special aura and -after a very brief moment of fugitive suspension turn into zapping-, sampling- or collaging material...etc.

While the irreversible process of the convergence of massmedia, telecommunications and the computer is going on rapidly, hopes for new possibilities to make money are flying high hiding questions like access, content and cultural change. In this situation artists, technicians, media-activists inside and outside of non-commercial and independent cultural and media institutions are forming new alliances for an alternative use of the emerging megamedium.