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The exhibition *Process as Paradigm* poses a bold thesis: process – non-linear and non-deterministic – has become one of the major paradigms in contemporary art and culture.

Here we mean process based art in contrast to the process art of the sixties and seventies that was all about performance, the here and now, the ritual, the artist conducting the process, whereas we use the term in a different way: process as a property or behavior of a system, be it nature, society, culture or art.

This paradigm reflects the fact we have ever better means, concepts and technology to observe reality. As a result we have both a deeper understanding but simultaneously realise reality is far more difficult to master. Reality is an all-entangling process that holds many uncertainties – of which we are part.

Not discarding the past in which the Enlightenment has learned that nature holds many laws, *Process as Paradigm* explores the wide field between certainty and unpredictability. We curators look at systems constructed by artists and then released into the world; processes taking over their own development, experimental situations running in the relatively stable environment of an exhibition.

An exhibition, however, is a very discrete format of presenting artworks, even more when wanting to present processes as artworks in times where communication technology has learned us much about new forms of networked collaboration and human agency in processes and processual art.

Instead of just giving an overview about the exhibition and discussing how the works represent responses/answers to the questions we posed as curators, we would rather use the presentation at ISEA to discuss works that were difficult to present in an exhibition, but that take our concept further.

Those are works with a strong human/social aspect, with a strong aspect of (live) collaboration and of processual nature. Simultaneously questioning the exhibition as a format, those works in their nature alter contemporary

methods of artistic production. Art works that are composed of a multiple authorship through the involvement of multiple collaborators and participants; works that dissolve the barrier between the artwork and the public by the processual nature of the action of that same public (don't agency and processual contradict if agency is regarded a conscious strength?).

Human agency can be regarded as an ingredient for processual art production, but can its effect also be that the process becomes a *phantom captain* of human action as Andrea Grover concluded after Buckminster Fuller in her 2006 exhibition *Phantom Captain – Art and Crowdsourcing* [1] (a show that experienced similar difficulties representing its art in an exhibition)?

In how far do these properties lean on processuality, what does this mean for contemporary art production and what does it tell us about how we act as humans within “First Nature” (nature as we used to know it before technological singularity) and “Second Nature” (the highly sophisticated amalgam of automated processes our civilisation relies on) [2]?

References

- [1] <http://www.apexart.org/exhibitions/grover.htm>
- [2] The distinguishment between First and Second Nature is made by Baruch Gottlieb in his contribution to the online discussion on empyre about the thesis of Process As Paradigm [<http://gratfortech.blogspot.com/>]