

# GET BASIC

## A SHORT CRITICAL TEXT ADDRESSING THE PROJECT DINGWELT [THING WORLD] - the net art project with an exchange market for things with history

---

### THE HUMAN BEING AND THE THINGS

Humans define themselves (also, almost) with the things which they possess and which they can present and use. Equipment, furniture, clothes, driving vehicles, household, hobby, office: the way of collecting things, the style which is emphasised, the documented status produce relationships of meaning with the environment and the individual itself.

Through the internet trade the exchange relationship gets a new dimension. The uncertain situation with e-commerce services gets a confidence component in the normally non-committal media, which criminalises itself with abuse. The project gives a forum to the "history" and the trusting and entrusting exchange of things. A symbol exchange market is growing, which points out a poetic process and documents an individual THING WORLD.

### THE PERSONAL VALUATION OF THINGS

The massive bartering of goods for money lets the personal valuation of things form the background. In this process the objects and things are devaluated in their usefulness and in their sense of abundance, consumer trend and the change of status. The reasons to possess "the thing" are verifying and become more and more flimsy. Therefore the individual negotiation increases its importance. The special mediation of feeling is displaced into the art. The project DINGWELT (i.e. THING WORLD) however shall not expose the consumption -, media- and everyday life-world of the citizen, but it rather shall manifest the process of things.

The usability or an objective usefulness is not the focus of attention anymore. Everything which is beloved and valuable, or which is especially expensive or sentimental funny constitutes the human being in his symbol world. However the world of things is in a constant change: changed requirements, increased quality consciousness, worn out things, new life situations... But you can play with the things, make them to thoughtful things and they will get meaning. As Epiktet stresses: Not the things themselves, but only our conceptions and thoughts about them make us happy or unhappy.

### INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE MEDIA ART ENVIRONMENT

The once so glamorous gadgets like the ZX81, the internet, the walkman etc. are a part of everyday life and many have now even the shine of "yesterday". That gives the chance to go a step further than artistic and scientific experimentation and getting fascinated with new technical functions. The new challenge is to work with cultural and social dimensions on technical improvement which will not be outmoded so fast.

Interactive- or participative media is oscillating between technical and social interpretation. It depends on the viewpoint if it is seen as restriction or as innovation. >>

>> Interaction and participation is seen as redeemer of art from its intellectual overkill. But if you compare media interaction with everyday communication you think it is a restriction.

The DINGWELT project carries out a symbolic and guided communication process. You cannot say it is a social interaction, you cannot say it is a technical interaction but you can say that there is an artistic interaction that works with stimulation, which is the most important and the most motivating factor for acting with visitors. If there is no stimulation or if there is a misbalance, there will be no satisfactory exchange/ participation for both parts.

### **MATERIALITY AND VIRTUALISATION**

Materiality and virtualisation in the information age has a special, creative quality. The development of the "bit and byte" technology has made possible a relative separation from its materiality. The information is in an abstract relation to the material. For that information is embodied new in carrier material such as paper. It is encoded and decoded again. DINGWELT transfers the things in art-printings and in an online catalogue representation. Thus, it makes possible a meta-reflection about the view of the thing world.

The title DINGWELT stresses the social unification: In opposite to an item, which is the common definition for all that the human consciousness is directed towards, the DING [THING] is a form of interpretation that needs a common cultural mind.

Intellectual and manual labour as artists work becomes abstract property even without particular materiality. The information has creative paradoxical dimensions: it is simultaneously abstract, symbolic and virtual and it is at the same time concrete, detailed and intimate. The only security hope one has is to be confident without guarantees.

The intention of work determines the selection of the medium: artworks are created in the form of time-limited net art and media installation as well as painting, video, photography and object. Moving and acting in the digital world only seems to be much easier and to take less time. It needs less meaning than transferring an obligatory gesture in the real material world. The DINGWELT action is a separation-gesture. A separation from materiality.

### **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THINGS**

Artistic practices as the DINGWELT exchange market uses the internet as platform for reflection. Parallel to the everyday-development of media technologies there are reflections about the disappearance of things and history. The environment virtualises itself. There are even own processes of disappearance in the material and technical timing of media: The new material like printing on paper or CD-ROM is not durable and technique is becoming out of date.

The medium photography as digital image and in the Internet has the opportunity to stage the disappearance of things and the absence of world in time. Things have social, aesthetic, symbolic and time-based concepts. Their function and their construction form the background. You can judge the value of things best when they are used and become old.