

Time & Money

Screening, accompanied by a reader and some works

September 29, 2016, 7pm

Program:

The Price of Life, 1987, USA, director: Stephen Tolkin
In Time, 2011, USA, director: Andrew Niccol

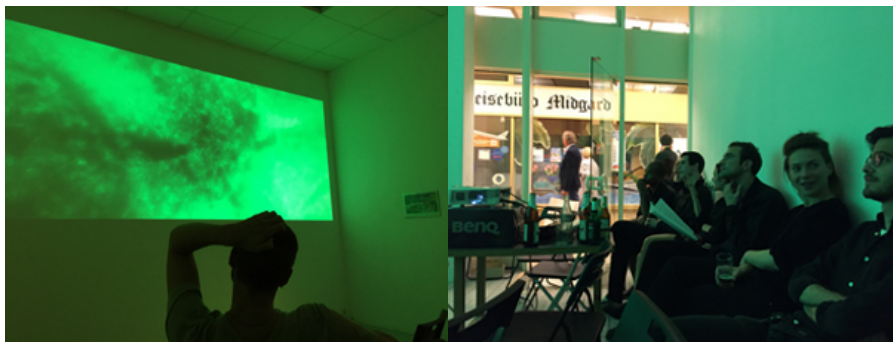
Press Release

Payment for work is usually a certain amount of money. With this money, plenty or not, all the things necessary to keep on living have to be paid. To pay for being alive seems like the ultimate endpoint of our current economic logic. Your wage could be hours, minutes and seconds, and if you don't earn enough time, you are timed out. Today being alive is still for free, but who knows for how long.

Genetically modified seeds are not only often infertile due to cross breeding, it is also illegal to keep some of the harvest for the next season. These plants have copyrights, and Monsanto owns them, not the farmer. In the near future we might see genetically optimized babies, and it is not difficult to imagine that you not only pay once for the genetic design, but a lifelong toll, a certain percentage of your earnings, that you are owing your creator. While for Marx capitalist cynicism had a "natural" threshold – the means necessary for workers to reproduce – today the biological foundation of life is no longer sacrosanct.

It is remarkable that while the first thought experiments what it would be like if your life time is centrally organized and can be turned off appeared in the 60ies (Harlan Ellison's „Repent, Harlequin! Said the Ticktockman) in the 70ies multiple versions of this idea appeared. It was a time when individualism rose to a dominant way of living in Western countries, and when subjects started to conceive themselves as entrepreneurial entities whose time was a precious resource for their self-exploitation. As an artist, Jeff Koons might be the prototypical example of this self understanding, always willing to cater to the demands (unlike Warhol, who was much more a dictator). Maybe this is why living as if there is no tomorrow is such a fetish: those who are unwilling to pay into the idea of seeing their time as a resource to handle carefully are undermining stability the most. They are given everything materially in order to enact our dreams. Or, put differently, they are bribed and bought back into.

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Jeff Koons, Eternal Koons '92, 1992/1993 Katalog-Nr.: 500/0004/Ko



Time/Bank currency design by Lawrence Weiner, stack of 360 Minutes notes