

Politics of Love

30.11.2024–2.2.2025

“Love is an ontological condition, an ontological power really in that sense that love changes you. When you love politically you lose yourself and are transformed into something different [...]”.

Michael Hardt in an interview with Johan Grimonprez, 2014

On the initiative of the French Fluxus artist Robert Filliou (1926–1987), the *Art-of-Peace Biennale* was launched at the Kunsthau Hamburg and the Kunstverein in Hamburg in 1985 with a call “for the weaving back together of the three threads of ART, SCIENCE and WISDOM into a new authenticity.” The idea for a concerted art event in the name of peace took shape in 1983/84 while Filliou was teaching at the Hamburg University of the Arts in collaboration with his students and colleagues. Following the premise that peace is a form of art rather than an abstraction, artists from around the world were invited to develop “their individual contributions to this collective (re)search”: perspectives envisaged by Filliou in the *Biennale* catalogue for the joint creation of peace as “an alternative to doom” connected with the horrors of war.

Forty years later, however, in a time of increasing global crises, wars, humanitarian strife and ecological catastrophes, we are facing growing national and individual delimitation and isolation. More and more, essential visions for collaborative solutions and coalitions of action are disappearing, from which new concepts for networking and forms of mutual participation might emerge. “We’re all **against** war. But what are we **for**? Peace, we say. What is peace?” In our transnational situation of mounting conflicts and threats of war, we again raise Filliou’s questions. Today, socially engaged “politics of love,” as defined by the political philosopher and literary theorist Michael Hardt, are more relevant than ever. Based on “a physics of multiplicity” (cf. Hardt’s *DOCUMENTA* (13) essay “The Procedures of Love”, 2012), this practice of love departs from economically steered assertions of control and power.

Love is a driving force of our existence that also affects our collective interactions. Despite its commercialization and depletion through the global mechanisms of consumerism, it retains its transformative potential. The international group exhibition *Politics of Love* casts a focus upon an inclusive, multi-voiced bonding that posits a multitudinous “we” in the place of individuated disconnection, bringing about a productive, collective potentiation of difference. The exhibition explores the interplay between proximity and distance, creation and disruption as well as varied forms of intimacy, the common good and multi-perspectival experiential abundance as a basis for togetherness in solidarity and diversity.

Works by both emerging and established international artists are juxtaposed in the exhibition with recollections of participatory projects that have brought the notion of the commons to life and have put collaborative processes into practice. An integral strand of the project is the question of the societal perspectives given by a “politics of love” in the sense of a passion for that which interconnects us in our differences and multiplicities: as a perception-, mind- and heart-expanding dynamic of openness, empathy and affection that brings us together in the multifariousness of our respective particularity and otherness and provides inspiring and sustainable paths into the future.

Curated by Dr. Belinda Grace Gardner and Anna Nowak

Participating artists: Mounira Al Solh, Francis Alÿs, Isaac Chong Wai, Anna Ehrenstein, Amna Elhassan, FAIRY BOT (Jon Frickey, Thies Mynter, Sandra Trostel), Robert Filliou, Parastou Forouhar, Green Go Home (Rirkrit Tiravanija & Tomas Vu), Johan Grimonprez, Elza Gubanova & Leon Seidel, Shilpa Gupta, Monilola Olayemi Ilupeju, Soyon Jung, Hiwa K, Rebecca Katusiime & Emmanuel Oloya, Tilman Küntzel, Lulu MacDonald, Nicholas Odhiambo Mboya, Sabine Mohr, Dan Peterman, Frieda Toranzo Jaeger, Wolf Vostell

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