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Fictional Academies as Strategy of
Artists' Institutional Critique:
Jörg Immendorff's *LIDL-academy*
(1968–1970) and Gérard Gasiorowski's
Académie Worosis Kiga (1976–1982)

ABSTRACT

Since the student movements of 1968, a wide range of educational alternatives has spread in France and Germany. In the scholarly discussion of this phenomenon, artistic contributions have not yet found the attention they deserve. As an important gatekeeper in an artist's career, the art academy strives to legitimatise artists' social status by procuring canonical norms for their formation. The academy thus aims to provide a basis of theoretical and practical knowledge that guarantees the quality of artistic production and hence its value on the art market; this ideological foundation, however, disagrees with the general idea of a *liberal* artist whose *ingenious* talent cannot be taught. Furthermore, in fact, not all successful artists emerged from an academic education. In this respect, the art academy has been subject to resistance. Using two exemplary art works, *LIDL-academy* (1968–1970) by the German artist Jörg Immendorff and *Académie Worosis Kiga* (1976–1982) by the Parisian painter Gérard Gasiorowski, this article discusses the case of the 'fictional academy' as a specific approach in the struggle for educational reform in the field of art during the uproars around 1968. Uncovering the tight connection between wider social tendencies and individual artistic practices, it proposes an outlook on the effects of artists' claims on today's art business.

Keywords: *artists' formation; art academy; art history; art of the 1960s; institutional critique; art sociology*

Art, Academies and Institutional Critique During the Movements of 1968

On 13 May 1968, art students usurped the *École Nationale des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, converting the public art academy to an 'Atelier Populaire des Beaux-Arts' where they produced posters for the social revolution over several weeks.¹ Some days later, on 30 May, students and artists occupied the *Palais des Beaux-Arts* in Brussels. The occupying "free congregation"² of art students and artists published a manifesto that declared their intention to critically reflect on the actual state of culture and society, and that defined the goal of overcoming the traditional separation of artistic specialisations.

In the course of the student movements of the 1960s, artists worldwide participated in similar protests against what they saw as social injustice, encrusted norms and hierarchical structures.³ Consequently, interpretations of art as part of the social and political reality underwent a critical revision.

Not accidentally, Theodor W. Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*—published posthumously in 1970—begins with the statement that nothing relating to art would be self-evident anymore, not even its "right to exist".⁴ Adorno explains this diagnosis with the problematic double character of art as, on the one hand, a socially autonomous field and as, on the other, a "social fact",⁵ that is to say a social product of the creative mind and at the same time an alternative to society. Hence, the tragic but also prolific paradox of art is founded in the permanent fight against its lack of social functionality as a result of its autonomy, whereas it is precisely this characteristic that gives art its necessity as an opposition to the existing form of civilisation.

- 1 Cf. Exhibition catalogue, *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts (Paris) - Atelier populaire, présenté par lui-même: 87 affiches de mai à juin 1968, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris 1968*, pp. 5–8; Exhibition catalogue, *Les affiches de mai 68 ou L'Imagination graphique*, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris 1982. For further description of the May protests in Paris and their chronology cf. Marie-Jeanne Viel: *Sept Jours de Mai en France*, in: *Historia. Hors série*, 17 (1970): *Les Années 60*, 1: *Le Temps des révolutions*, pp. 146–167.
- 2 Cf. Reproduction of the manifesto, in: Carel Blotkamp et al. (eds.): *Museum in Motion? Museum in Bewegung? The Modern Art Museum at Issue/Het museum voor moderne kunst ter discussie*, Den Haag 1979, p. 248.
- 3 Cf. Susanne Schregel, Introduction to this issue: *Social Movements, Protest, and Academic Knowledge Formation. Interactions since the 1960s*.
- 4 Theodor W. Adorno: *Aesthetic Theory*, London/New York 1997 [German orig. 1970], p. 1.
- 5 Adorno borrowed the term of the "fait social" used here from the sociological theory of Émile Durkheim.—Cf. Émile Durkheim: *Regeln der soziologischen Methode*, Neuwied 1966 [German orig. 1895].

Art's major danger within late capitalist industrial society, according to Adorno (and other representatives of the *Frankfurt School*), therefore consists in adsorption by exploitative interests of the "culture industry".⁶ This reduces the recipient to a consumer and the works of art to "Sunday institutions that provide solace".⁷ For Adorno, the increasing fraying of historically evolved genres marks one possibility to exclude art from the described danger. By blurring the formal differentiation between discrete forms of art, modern artworks consistently pose the question: "Is this still art?"⁸

In the eyes of many artists during the 1960s, it was exactly this transcending of boundaries that cleared the way for dissolution of art in life. This dissolution though must not be misunderstood as a homogenising amalgamation in the sense of the "culture industry". Rather, it aimed at uncovering the unavoidable interference between art and society, abolishing the outworn notion of art that still separated these two spheres. For this purpose, vanguard art forms like happenings, installations and performances, which set out conventional definitions and relations of artist and spectator, as well as artwork and space, became increasingly popular. Thus, the opportunity emerged to free art from its characterisation as a commodity and to rescue artists from their social isolation.⁹

Besides traditional spaces of art reception in the so-called "white cube",¹⁰ the art academy offered a suitable starting point for this purpose. Even though not all successful artists have an academic education, the academy functioned and still serves as a first institutional setting for the emerging artist, and serves as the site for the artist's identification within the social structure. Nevertheless, the institution of artistic education has always been subject to a paradoxical duty. It constitutes shelter for the creative development of artists recognised as *ingenious* in case of real vocation, and it serves as laboratory for their artistic propositions. While the academy ensures artists' formation corresponds to institutional standards and norms, non-distinctive selection mechanisms and a strict hierarchy protect the academy's sovereignty within the social discourse.¹¹

6 Max Horkheimer/Theodor W. Adorno: *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, Stanford 2002 [German orig. 1969], pp. 94–136.

7 Theodor W. Adorno: *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 2.

8 Theodor W. Adorno: *Die Kunst und die Künste*, in: *Gesammelte Schriften, Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft: Prismen*. Ohne Leitbild, vol. 10.1, Frankfurt am Main 1977, p. 434.

9 Cf. Wolfgang Ullrich: *Kunst als Arbeit?*, in: Martin Hellmond et al. (eds.): *Was ist ein Künstler? Das Subjekt der modernen Kunst*, Munich 2003, pp. 163–176, p. 168.

10 Brian O'Doherty: *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, San Francisco 1976.

11 Cf. Barbara Marx: *Der akademische Diskurs und die Strategien akademischer Institutionalisierung: Facetten einer Problemstellung*, in: Barbara Marx/Christoph Oliver Mayer (eds.): *Akademie und/oder Autonomie: Akademische Diskurse vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt am Main 2009, pp. VII–XVII, p. VII.

Since the romantic cult of the genius, however, art as a subject of academic education has been, and, according to widespread opinion, still is reckoned as “unteachable”.¹² The academic track thus finally results in a *liberal* artist equipped with exclusive rights and a whiff of myth who has to be reintegrated into the social system as an exceptional individual.¹³ While an academic degree as a seal of quality may award a market value to the artistic signature, the mythic artist acts as a hermitic autodidact far beyond economic interests, always in conflict with the current academic definition of ‘good taste’.

Through these entanglements, the question regarding reform of artistic education is closely connected to the issue of the potentialities of substantial social change. In this sense, it was no coincidence that Daniel Buren inverted Joseph Beuys’ invocation of a general creative potential: “Everybody is an artist!”. In his essay *Is teaching art necessary?*¹⁴ of 1968, Buren finally arrived at the statement that academies of arts in their given form actually are not able to educate artists at all. For Buren, this was due to the fact that the traditional art academies fail to provide art students with the knowledge they need to develop their own creativity, but instead seek to keep alive a stiffened ideal of artistic expression. To implement an effective arts education, Buren concluded that a renewal of society as a whole would be needed and that artists would inevitably have to be involved in this process.

Therefore, examination of institutions of artistic education in the context of the student movements of 1968 is of interest in at least two regards. First, it offers the possibility of analysing artistic statements on current social events. Second, it allows observation of how social movements and categories of artistic self-understanding interact, and how these factors affected notions of artworks, the learning and teaching of art, the creative production process, and artistic self-positioning within a given society.

In fact, art students often directed their rebellious acts at public spaces to visualise the institutional impact on what currently is defined as ‘art’. This, for instance happened in February 1969 at the Kunstakademie München. As the Munich students saw themselves exposed to the allegation of wilful damage to property caused by unauthorised wall paintings in the corridor of the academy, they defended the anarchic work by declaring

12 Cf. Jochen Schmidt: *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens in der deutschen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik 1750–1945*, Heidelberg 2004, vol. 1, pp. 1–4; Katia Tangian: *Spielwiese Kunstakademie: Habitus, Selbstbild, Diskurs* (PhD thesis Karlsruhe 2008), Hildesheim et al. 2010, p. 54.

13 Cf. *Ibid.*, p. X, p. 98.

14 Daniel Buren: *Faut-il enseigner l’Art?*, in: *Galerie des Arts*, 10 (1968), n.p.; German translation in: Marie Luise Syring: *Kunst in Frankreich seit 1966*, Cologne 1987, pp. 62–67.

the art academy's walls to be a medium of their artistic language.¹⁵ The students thus kept their rebellious acts within the frame of "artistic working practice"¹⁶ and legitimised them by their own artistic authority.

Jörg Immendorff's *LIDL-academy* (1968–1970): The Fictional Academy as Alternative Space

This paper particularly focuses on 'fictional academies', a crucial form of artistic intervention in the educational turmoil of the 1960s, which has not yet been considered in art historical research as such. For this purpose, I discuss two examples that differ in their temporal and spatial positioning with regard to the events around the symbolic year of 1968. The manifestations of *LIDL*, mainly the so-called '*LIDL-academy*', under the auspices of Jörg Immendorff took place in Düsseldorf and other West German cities during the heyday of the student movement between 1968 and 1970. While *LIDL* hence evolved in the direct context of academic education and student revolt, Gérard Gasiorowski's *Académie Worosis Kiga*, established between 1976 and 1982, in its temporal distance took a rather reflective position toward the events around 1968 and their consequences.

From 1963 to 1968, Jörg Immendorff studied art education at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf; from 1964 on, he attended the class of Joseph Beuys. Subsequent to his academic formation, he worked as art teacher in various schools in Düsseldorf. The

- 15 Birgit Jooss: Zu den Studentenunruhen von 1968, p. 87–88, quotation p. 88. In this regard, it must be mentioned that the above-cited term marks an integration of language formerly specifically used in the art field into general language. This is the case, for instance when press articles name trials caused by rebellious attacks as "Justizhappening" or "Teach-Ins".—Cf. Wolfgang Kraushaar: 1968: Das Jahr, das alles verändert hat, Munich 1998, p. 45.
- 16 Cf. Exhibition catalogue, Um 1968: Konkrete Utopien in der Kunst und Gesellschaft, Düsseldorf, Städtische Kunsthalle, 1990, p. 223; Birgit Jooss: Zu den Studentenunruhen von 1968, in: Wolfgang Ruppert/Christian Fuhrmeister (eds.): Zwischen deutscher Kunst und internationaler Modernität: Formen der Künstlerausbildung 1918 bis 1968, Weimar 2007, pp. 81–102, p. 87; Wolfgang Kraushaar: 1968: Das Jahr, das alles verändert hat, Munich 1998, pp. 193–194.

activities developed under the designation of *LIDL* cover the period between 1968 and 1970. As a “variation on Dada”¹⁷ the fancy term *LIDL* was intended to recall the sound of a child’s rattle, thus defining childlike simplicity and directness as an artistic method.¹⁸

The first “*LIDL*-piece”¹⁹ was produced on 31 January 1968 in front of the German *Bundestag* in Bonn. The art student Immendorff tied a block of wood painted in the colours of the German flag and labelled with the inscription “LiDL” to his left leg and at 3:00 p.m. began to pace back and forth in front of the *Bundestag* building. After half an hour the police arrived and confiscated the “*LIDL*-block”, because the colours of the flag on the underside the block were abraded. After the police officers had left, Immendorff put another block around his neck and continued his action.²⁰

At the beginning of March 1968, Immendorff together with his wife at that time, Chris Reinecke, opened the first *LIDL-space* (*LIDL-Raum*)²¹ in Blücherstraße, Düsseldorf. The rented space, a former tavern’s dancing room, opened onto the street through large windows.²² On the occasion of opening of the *LIDL-space*, a flyer announced:

Inside the *LIDL-space* Chris Reinecke and Jörg Immendorff will elaborate and examine their artistic models. The *LIDL-space* offers the platform for the work and cooperation of the real forces in art and politics. Information will be available within the *LIDL-space*.²³

- 17 Translated by the author. Cf. Helga Meister: Als die Kunst auf den Klotz kam—“*LIDL*”: Immendorff und die Folgen/Ein Wort als Programm, in: Düsseldorf Hefte 18 (1992), Sonderthema: “Mit Haut und Haaren”, pp. 8–10, p. 8.
- 18 Cf. Jörg Immendorff: Hier und jetzt: Das tun, was zu tun ist: Materialien zur Diskussion: Kunst im politischen Kampf: Auf welcher Seite stehst Du, Kulturschaffender?, Cologne 1973, p. 54.
- 19 “*LIDL*-Stück” (translated by the author), Harald Szeemann: Der lange Marsch oder Ausreizungen aus der Zeit heraus. Ein Kompilat, in: Exhibition catalogue, Immendorff, Zurich, Kunsthaus, 1983–1984, pp. 8–34, p. 15.
- 20 Cf. Susanne Rennert: Ein doppelter Strang, 1968–70: Konzepte, Aktionen und Strategien von Chris Reinecke und Jörg Immendorff, in: Barbara John/Susanne Rennert/Stephan von Wiese (eds.): Chris Reinecke: 60er Jahre—*LIDL*-Zeit, exhibition catalogue, Düsseldorf, Kunstmuseum, 1999–2001, Cologne 1999, pp. 35–64, p. 35.
- 21 Translated by the author.
- 22 Cf. Helga Meister: Als die Kunst auf den Klotz kam—“*LIDL*”: Immendorff und die Folgen/Ein Wort als Programm, p. 9; Exhibition catalogue, Jörg Immendorff, *LIDL* 1966–1970, Eindhoven, Van Abbemuseum, 1981, p. 18.
- 23 Translated by the author. Cf. Jörg Immendorff: Hier und Jetzt: Das tun, was zu tun ist. Materialien zur Diskussion. Kunst im politischen Kampf: auf welcher Seite stehst Du, Kulturschaffender?, p. 55.

Immendorff specified this purpose in a letter to Gisela Krause, dated 4 April 1968: "The LIDL-space is an object of art, the LIDL-space is permanent artistic action, the LIDL-space is architecture as we can desire. A regular exhibition program thus has become unnecessary for us."²⁴ In a later interview with Pamela Kort, Immendorff indicated a prior quarrel with the renowned Düsseldorf gallery owner Alfred Schmela and the subsequent lack of exhibition opportunities as a flashpoint for the foundation of *LIDL-space*. The *LIDL-space* consequently was seen as an alternative environment for the exchange and discussion of cultural, social and political topics as well as a place for various kinds of events.²⁵

In August 1968, the *LIDL-space* became the setting of a utopian city project. According to the movements of Immendorff's turtle, the "LIDL-ambassador",²⁶ the outline of a so-called '*LIDL-city*' was traced on the floor of the former dancing room. Changes in the city plan's disposition corresponding to different needs of the animal inhabiting it were discussed with visitors and these conversations were recorded. Eventually, a final city map was handed to the Düsseldorf office of urban design as a proposal for further development of the regional capital.²⁷ According to the artist's own statement, he intended to visualise an alternative to the bureaucratic process of urban development that, in practice, did not take into account the actual requirements of Düsseldorf inhabitants.²⁸

LIDL-academy was created on 15 November 1968 at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste Karlsruhe, after the local students' organisations *Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss* (AStA) and the group PUYK, an anarchic group of art students at the Karlsruhe art academy, invited Immendorff and Reinecke to an evening event. Yet, the day before the meeting, AStA and PUYK unexpectedly resigned due to an unsolved disagreement with the academy's head office. The latter consequently cancelled all events planned by the groups. Immendorff and Reinecke, who arrived unaware of the situation at Karlsruhe, decided to stay nevertheless and proclaimed the occupation of the art academy

24 Translated by the author. Cf. Harald Szeemann: *Der lange Marsch oder Ausreizungen aus der Zeit heraus: Ein Kompilat*, in: Exhibition catalogue, Immendorff, Zurich, Kunsthhaus, 1983–1984, pp. 8–34, p. 15.

25 Cf. "Jörg Immendorff im Gespräch mit Pamela Kort", in: *Kunst heute*, nr. 11, ed. by Wilfried Dickhoff, Cologne 1993, p. 44.

26 "LIDL-Botschafter" (translated by the author), Jörg Immendorff: *Lidlstadt*, own publication, 1968, n.p.

27 Cf. Harald Szeemann: *Der lange Marsch oder Ausreizungen aus der Zeit heraus: Ein Kompilat*, p. 15. For a wider context concerning the artistic practice of mapping and its revival in the 1960s and 1970s cf. Guillaume Monsaigon (ed.): *Mappamundi; Art et cartographie*, Exhibition catalogue, Toulon, Hôtel des Arts, Centre d'art du Conseil général du Var, 2013; Katharine Harmon: *The Art as Map*, New York 2009; Johan Frederik Hartle: *Der geöffnete Raum: Zur Politik der ästhetischen Form*, Munich 2006.

28 Cf. Dorothea Dietrich: *Lidl*, in: Exhibition catalogue, Jörg Immendorff: *Frühe Arbeiten und LIDL*, Galerie Michael Werner, Cologne, 1992, pp. 13–17, p. 15.

by renaming it *LIDL-academy*.²⁹ A banner announcing the corresponding change of name was installed on the front of the academy's building, and packets of telegrams were transmitted to the federal state's ministry of culture, local press offices and other art academies in the Federal Republic of Germany. Art students sympathising with the *LIDL* representatives gathered at an information desk set up on campus. According to a press release, the two Düsseldorf artists dismissed the academy's headmaster Hans Kindermann and his senate.³⁰ In reaction to these events, Immendorff and Reinecke were evicted from the premises.

Taking up the spontaneous activity in Karlsruhe, Immendorff proclaimed the *LIDL-academy* inside the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf on 2 December, 1968. On 9 December, the first *LIDL-class*—a crate made of cardboard, paper and wooden slats—was erected in a corridor. By this time, Immendorff and his teacher colleague Klaus Beck, who was also a former student of Beuys, had already presented an exhibition of student paintings in the academy's building. They both intended to install a permanent working room for students within the public art academy that would give future art teachers the opportunity to gain practical pedagogical experience during their studies.³¹ Just one day later, Eduard Trier, as head of the Düsseldorf academy, banned Immendorff from entering the academy's premises and ordered the immediate removal of the exhibition.³² Academy staff thereupon destroyed the *LIDL-class* on the morning of 24 December.³³ It remains unclear whether the director effectively intended the destruction of the *LIDL-class*, or whether it was a mistake by staff members, who were in fact told to dismantle the exhibition. Whatever the case, *LIDL* was expelled from the academy's site and was then set up in the meadow in front of the art academy's building—on the same ground where Joseph Beuys, in 1967, established the *Deutsche Studentenpartei*. The *LIDL* members mounted an information desk and installed a miniature paper shed with the inscription *LIDL-academy*; this was confiscated by the academy's board. Responding to these events, Reinecke published a press release that explained the key ideas of the *LIDL-academy*. Therefore, the *LIDL-*

29 Cf. archival document: "2 Tage in Karlsruhe, Immendorff, Reinecke: Bericht über Ereignisse an Kunstakademie am 14.–15.11.1968", in: Archiv Sohm, Stuttgart, box 272: Jörg Immendorff: *LIDL-Akademie*, p. 1.

30 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 5.

31 Cf. archival document: press article "Kritik und originelle Vorschläge" by Yvonne Friedrichs, 12 December 1968, in: Archiv Stiftung Museum Schloss Moyland, inventory number: JBA-Z-1968-12-06/89-01.

32 Harald Szeemann: *Der lange Marsch oder Ausreizungen aus der Zeit heraus: Ein Kompilat*, p. 18.

33 Cf. archival document: Open letter from Jörg Immendorff to the direction of the Staatlichen Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, 4 February 1969, in: Archiv Stiftung Museum Schloss Moyland, inventory number: JBA-B-026151(Ex 1/12)r.

academy, in terms of a democratically working platform, offered a possibility to exchange ideas and served as a site for critical review of the “validity of the proper work”.³⁴ Any form of hierarchy or instructive differentiation between master and student had to be avoided.

To finally put these ideas into action, the *LIDL-academy* announced a *LIDL-week* at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in May 1969; this would mark the escalation of the quarrels. The *LIDL* members made provisions for discussions and roundtables on topics such as “function of the art academy”, “function of art pedagogy in schools” and “function of artistic work”.³⁵ Representatives of teachers and students as well as ‘experimenting groups’ and ‘cultural groups’ from all over the country were expected to participate. Since *LIDL* had no proper budget, arriving guests had to find accommodation inside the Düsseldorf art academy; art professors Beuys, Walter Warnach and Karl Wimmenauer offered to open their classrooms for visitors. To mark *LIDL-week*, Immendorff published an exhibition catalogue that reproduced several letters from different members of the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, demanding bans for all students of the *LIDL-academy* not enrolled in Düsseldorf, and requesting an investigation of disciplinary measures against all teaching staff, notably Beuys, who supported the members of *LIDL* and their activity. The letters reproduced in the catalogue were labelled as “painting”, “sculpture” or “drawing” according to the speciality of the respective author.³⁶ The unauthorised *LIDL-week*, scheduled from 5 to 10 May, was dissolved on 6 May. One day later, Düsseldorf’s public art academy closed due to “expurgatorial works”.³⁷

Immendorff subsequently rented a room in Greifsgasse 52, which he declared to be base I (*Stützpunkt I*)³⁸ of the *LIDL-academy*. Besides events similar to those of the first *LIDL-space*, Immendorff there organised drawing lessons for children.³⁹ By 1970, the activities of *LIDL* slowly began to disperse in the more practical politically orientated projects of *Büro Olympia* and *Mietersolidarität*, both a collaboration of Jörg Immendorff and Chris Reinecke.

34 Translated by the author. Cf. Archival document: Letter to the editor Karlheinz Welkens by Chris Reinecke in reaction to his press article “Trotz Hausverbots wird weitergelidlt”, Rheinische Post, 3 January 1969, in: Archiv Stiftung Museum Schloss Moyland, inventory number: JBA-B-023754.JPG.

35 Cf. Susanne Rennert: Ein doppelter Strang: LIDL, 1968–70: Konzepte, Aktionen, Strategien von Chris Reinecke und Jörg Immendorff, p. 52.

36 Cf. archival document: Jörg Immendorff (ed.): Katalog einer Ausstellung zur LIDL-Woche mit Werken von Geiger, Hoehme, Trier, Kricke, Weber, Bobek, Breker, Götz, Grote, Sackenheim, self-published 1969, in: Archiv Sohm, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, box 272.

37 Translated by the author. Cf. Harald Szeemann: Der lange Marsch oder Ausreizungen aus der Zeit heraus: Ein Kompatil, p. 22. The German term used by the directors of the academy inherits a strong resemblance to the Nazi jargon used for homicide.

38 Translated by the author.

39 “Jörg Immendorff im Gespräch mit Pamela Kort”, Kunst heute, nr. 11, ed. by Wilfried Dickhoff. Cologne 1993, p. 43.

According to the ideal of a democratic, cooperative and emancipated way of working, the *LIDL-academy* was conceptualised as the alternative to official art academies, with their strict hierarchy and a relation between master and student that often turned into a state of dependence. Taking form in ephemeral realisations, the potentiality of this alternative way of artistic formation became palpable. *LIDL* in the beginning obtained the space needed for this experiment through regular renting as well as through the cartographical depiction of a utopia. Only the shape of the parasitic *LIDL-class* within the official academy's corridor demonstrated an assault on the public institution and its mechanisms of power; it was therefore immediately rejected. Moreover, the events of *LIDL-week* fuelled quarrels about Beuys' pedagogical methods. He was finally expelled from the Düsseldorf academy in 1972 when he once again challenged the quota system by taking on all students who wanted to learn.⁴⁰ One year later, Beuys created his own institution, the *Free International University for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research*, in the form of an open, non-competitive academy.⁴¹

One month after the defeated *LIDL-week* and the interim closure of the public art academy, Reinecke published a comment on the events of May 1969 and established a direct connection between them and the former *LIDL-space*:

The concept of the *LIDL-week* is the continuation of our work which was until now realised within the *LIDL-space* [...]. Our insights gained within the *LIDL-space* and the products of our work should meet the condition of the building of the public academy during the *LIDL-week*, that is to say we intended to relocate our work for one week into the premises of the academy, into [the sphere of] the producers.⁴²

40 Cf. Johannes Stüttgen: *Der ganze Riemen: Der Auftritt Joseph Beuys als Lehrer: Die Chronologie der Ereignisse an der Staatlichen Kunstakademie Düsseldorf 1966–1972*, Cologne 2008, pp. 545–559, pp. 983–1016. For a broader critical review of Joseph Beuys' tenure and dismissal from the Düsseldorf art academy cf. Jan Verwoert: *The Boss: On the Unresolved Question of Authority in Joseph Beuys' Oeuvre and Public Image*, December 2008, published by e-flux, Journal #01, at: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/01/68485/the-boss-on-the-unresolved-question-of-authority-in-joseph-beuys-oeuvre-and-public-image/> (accessed on 10 June 2018).

41 Cf. Johannes Stüttgen: *Die Freie Internationale Universität: Organ des erweiterten Kunstbegriffs für die soziale Skulptur: Eine Darstellung der Idee, Geschichte und Tätigkeit der FIU*, Wägen 1987; Claire Bishop: *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London 2012, p. 243.

42 Translated by the author. Quote from archival document: *Klärungsversuche zur LIDL-Woche vom 5.5.69 bis ca. 12.5.69*, typing from Chris Reinecke dating from 14 June 1969, facsimile in: *Interfunktionen* 3:1969, n.p.

The fragile paper cover of the mobile crate of the *LIDL-class* confined an inner space for the exchange of ideas and information. Moreover, it visibly marked an opposition to the outer environment. Through the act of occupation, the paper *LIDL-class* thus uncovered the invisible borders of institutional and territorial districts of power.⁴³ At the same time, Immendorff kept the ideal sphere of an autonomous art that can be spread independently from real demarcations of space and power by relying on playful behaviours and invoking the freedom of art. By oscillating between artistic setting and realised alternative, the fictional institution *LIDL-academy* as a participative concept, in consequence, pushed spectators to consciously take a decision, since, in the end, it was their reaction that fixed the reality and obligation of a given status.

Gérard Gasiorowski's *Académie Worosis Kiga* (1976–1982): The Fictional Academy and the Art Market

On 2 June 1982, the exhibition *L'Académie Worosis Kiga, observée par Gasiorowski* opened at the Galerie Adrien Maeght in Paris.⁴⁴

In contrast to the *LIDL*-project, the exhibition *L'Académie Worosis Kiga, observée par Gasiorowski* was created at some temporal distance to the events around 1968. The exhibition opened at the Galerie Adrien Maeght in Paris with three exhibition rooms that might have astonished even the keenest visitor. Display cases presented piles of drawings, snippets of papers and photographs of landscapes and interiors. Several rows of long rectangular frames covered the walls of the gallery. Each contained four acrylic paintings on paper depicting grey felt hats followed by one yellow sheet of paper presenting three horizontal brown lines. A large-sized "list of subjects"⁴⁵ and an organisation chart, displayed next to the entrance area, corresponded to several photocopied pages of a notebook above the showcases of the first room and next to some photographs inside the showcases of the last exhibition room.

43 For a wider context concerning the occupation and appropriation of public space as a practice of social movements cf. Susanne Schregel/Sebastian Haumann: *Andere Räume, andere Städte, und die Transformation der Gesellschaft: Hausbesetzungen und atomwaffenfreie Zonen als alternative Raumpraktiken*, in: Hanno Balz/Jan-Henrik Friedrichs (eds.): *Eine Kulturgeschichte europäischer Protestbewegungen der 1980er Jahre*, Berlin 2012, pp. 53–72.

44 The invitation for the opening night in contrast was titled *OIPAHHOOIPAHSTRA observée par Gasiorowski*.

45 Cf. reproduction of the work, in: Exhibition catalogue, *L'A.W.K. observée par Gasiorowski*, Paris, Galerie Adrien Maeght, 1982, n.p.

The exhibition catalogue was of likewise enigmatic appearance; devoid of any explanation or description, it provided some black-and-white reproductions of single exhibits. Only a short caption on the last page offered a key to decode the complex *oeuvre*: “Information bulletin of Gérard Gasiorowski, observer of the A.W.K. from January 5th until November 16th 1976 and companion of the professor Hammer until his last days.”⁴⁶

In fact, Gérard Gasiorowski, between 1976 and 1982, created the pretended remains of a fictional art academy. During those six years, the artist regularly reported on the events at the *Académie Worosis Kiga* to his friends, acquaintances and relatives.⁴⁷

According to his narration, the mentioned academy was founded on 5 January 1976 in a mountainous region in the south of France. Under the dictatorial regime of the professor Arne Hammer, the academy admitted 100 students to artistic formation each year. Among others, the enlisted students were named Joseph Beuys, Gilbert & George, John Cage and Andy Warhol. The single task of the academy’s curriculum was the production of hat paintings. After successful completion, an accepted student’s work was stamped by the director and provided with the cut signature of another student.⁴⁸ Only one applicant constantly failed at the entrance examination. All of his works were refused. The name inscribed beneath those *Refusés* is “Gasiorowski”.⁴⁹

Soon, disturbances arose at the draconically directed institution. One student emerged from the masses and led the rebellion. Her name was Kiga and she originated from the Indian tribe of the *Worosis*, whose territory bordered on the academy’s premises. The professor tried to elude the riots but died on the run, according to a press release of 2 September 1981. After the director’s death, the students of the academy were deported to various camps.

In contrast to the *LIDL-academy*, Gasiorowski’s *Académie Worosis Kiga* comprises a coherent story. Archive photographs suggest that Gasiorowski also summarised oral transmissions and fixed the academy’s story in a written text that was kept in four identical ring binders. Furthermore, it can be reconstructed that the artist was looking forward to an exhibition opportunity in the well-known Galerie Adrien Maeght by 1979 and therefore conducted this notation intentionally.⁵⁰ As the records of the gallery records reveal, the above-mentioned photocopies of the 1982 show can be identified with fragmentary parts

46 Translated by the author. Cf. *ibid*.

47 Cf. Record of an interview between the author and Jan Voss, Paris 2014, in: Archive of the author.

48 Cf. Exhibition catalogue, Gérard Gasiorowski: Recommencer: Commencer de nouveau la peinture, Nîmes, Carré d’Art - Musée d’Art Contemporain, 2010, ill. p. 113.

49 Cf. reproduction of the work, in: Exhibition catalogue, L’A.W.K. observée par Gasiorowski, n.p.

50 The timeline and different stages of the progress of the work could be reconstructed by the author in her not yet published thesis “Die fiktive Institution als ästhetische Strategie: Gérard Gasiorowskis ‘Académie Worosis Kiga’ im zeitgenössischen Kontext”.

of the handwritten saga of the academy. In fact, these photocopied fragments of the whole narration were the only source available to gallery visitors for establishing a connection between the various works and objects in the exhibition.⁵¹ The viewer thus had to actively search for information about the presentation and was involved as an active part in the reconstruction of the story of the academy.

In this respect, one detail about the gallery exhibition in 1982 must be stressed. As has been said, Gasiorowski elaborated his project of the *Académie Worosis Kiga* between 1976 and 1982. In 1979, his companion at that time, Colette Portal, introduced him to the artistic director of the gallery. Soon, provisions for an exhibition were made and it was the artist himself who proposed and realised the show's display in 1982. While in later exhibitions of the *Académie Worosis Kiga* the four ring binders were shown next to the described paintings and photographs, Gasiorowski apparently set a high value on the absence of those written sources from his solo show in 1982. Correspondingly, one file within the archive of the gallery accentuates the fact that the artist explicitly wished his written documents to be shown in the form of photocopies.⁵²

During the process of reading, the material of the photocopies marks a difference between the original source—the handwritten script—and the present copy. This material disparity simultaneously uncovers the gap in time between the past act of writing and the repeatedly actualised lecture. Therefore, in the 1982 show of the gallery, the proximity of written accounts and obviously handmade artworks had the effect of creating coherence between the written data of a fictional art institution and its displayed objects, which entered into a circle of apparent mutual confirmation. The viewers, during their exhibition visits, consequently had to decide again and again whether to take the presented information as genuine. The potential reality of the exhibited materials thus lent the character of a museum to the actual economic space of the gallery, whose function it was to collect and exhibit *historic* items. Regarding the gallery display of 1982, this impression was strengthened by the eye-catching quantity of one specific museum prop: the showcases. Within a museum, glass cabinets serve to protect their precious content and at the same time visibly signal the value and uniqueness of their contents. Due to this

51 Otherwise he must—in advance—have carefully read one of the few articles published on occasion of the exhibition's opening and that gave the main information on the story of the fictional academy. Cf. Anne Tronche: Gasiorowski et l'Académie Worosis Kiga: qui porte le chapeau?, in: *Opus international*, 85:1982, pp. 38–40; Gaya Goldcymer: La disparation de Gérard Gasiorowski, in: *Art Press* 59 (1982), pp. 32–33; Michel Enrici: AWK Gasiorowski, in: *Artistes* 12 (1982), p. 89.

52 Cf. file referring to inventory number BAC 5019, in: archive Galerie Maeght, Paris.

effect, the display case became an inherent part of department store marketing strategies.⁵³ Like the merchandise in warehouses—and in contrast to those of a museum—the exhibits at the gallery normally are purchasable. The simple photocopies presented in the display of the *Académie Worosis Kiga* show in 1982, however, neither required artistic skills nor did they represent a high material value. They thus contradicted the main interests of the commercial gallery space. Moreover, the remaining works were likewise realised in rather poor materials. While the long-term preservation of light sensitive and fragile paper drawings and Polaroid photographs demands much greater precautions than the conservation of oil paintings, experience concerning the aging process of the industrial acrylic colour and its possible reactions with its supporting materials are still rare.⁵⁴ The technical state of Gasiorowski's artworks thus opposed their traditional assignment to endure,⁵⁵ a rather negative effect on a potential buying interest.

Authentic artworks, according to Adorno's definition, are products of the empirical world that "bring forth another world, one opposed to the empirical world as if this other world too were an autonomous entity."⁵⁶ The showcase as transparent barrier encloses an autonomous space wherein a proper classification system can unfurl. At the same time, its framing structure consistently refers to the function of exhibiting, presenting and visualising content. In the case of the *Académie Worosis Kiga*, written text and art objects complemented one another. The narrative information in the course of the visitor's perception, hence, transformed the artworks into pseudo-historic documents.

The renowned Galerie Adrien Maeght in Paris is an important institution in the history of the modern art market in France.⁵⁷ The described effect within the walls of this gallery underlined the tense situation of the general art field, which fluctuates between economic interests and long-lasting cultural value. Thus, the display of the 1982 show carried on the critical impact of the tale of the academy, where established contemporary artists figure

53 Cf. Werner Hanak-Lettner: *Die Ausstellung als Drama: Wie das Museum aus dem Theater entstand* (PhD thesis Vienna 2008), Bielefeld 2011, p. 170; Isabelle Graw: *Glasstürze: Kunst in der Vitrine*, in: *artis, das aktuelle Kunstmagazin*, 42 (1990), pp. 52–55; Thomas Lenz: *Konsum und Modernisierung: Die Debatte um das Warenhaus als Diskurs um die Moderne*, Bielefeld 2011, pp. 187–196.

54 Cf. Éric Suchère: *Gasiorowski: Académie Worosis Kiga*, Paris 1994, p. 10.—Declaring the "plastic turn" for the Western society after the Second World War, Roland Barthes drew his conclusions about social developments from his cultural analysis of the plastic material. Cf. Roland Barthes: *Plastik* (1957), in: Dietmar Rübel/Monika Wagner/Vera Wolff (eds.): *Materialästhetik: Quellentexte zu Kunst, Design und Architektur*, Berlin 2005, pp. 86–89.

55 Theodor W. Adorno: *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 38.

56 *Ibid.*, p. 1.

57 Cf. Markus Müller: *Maeght oder der unaufhaltsame Aufstieg eines Kunstimperiums*, in: Markus Müller (ed.): *Maeght: Das Abenteuer der Moderne: Exhibition catalogue*, Münster, Graphikmuseum Pablo Picasso, 2008, pp. 17–23; Yoyo Maeght/Isabelle Maeght/Franck Maubert (eds.): *Maeght. L'aventure de l'art vivant*, Paris 2006.

as students, whose names could freely be exchanged on the corresponding products. In the commercial art field, the value of artists' works depends on their names, which are measured in equivalence to financial outcomes. The *Académie Worosis Kiga* consequently marked the gallery space as a dominant territory in the social discourse of defining art, as a place where conventions, role allocations and the balance of power solidify. At the same time, Gasiorowski, by the absurd curriculum of his fictional academy, insinuated an interest in real institutions not directed toward aesthetic formation⁵⁸ of artists—the training of their technical mastery and the procurement of historical knowledge helping them to develop a distinct artistic language—but conducted through economic reasoning.

In a letter dating to September 1976, Gasiorowski ironically wrote to some friends: “I will come as soon as everything is ‘put in order’, in some time, but until then I have too much to do, I practice ‘my revolution’. It has been May for several, for me it will be September, surely because autumn better fits to me.”⁵⁹ The allusion to Parisian revolts in May 1968 here emerges clearly. Even though the first French minister of cultural affairs, André Malraux, openly discussed a possible closing of the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris and a restructuring of artistic education in 1968, that was partly realised by the installation of a less selective admission procedure,⁶⁰ Gasiorowski's *Académie Worosis Kiga*, out of its temporal distance, met the actual developments in this matter with scepticism.

Conclusion

In different ways, Jörg Immendorff and Gérard Gasiorowski appropriated the existing organisational structure of the predominant institution of artistic education. Claiming critical potential for their art works, they transformed the existing model within their fictional academies. The artists thus used the institutional model to reflect on established artistic practices and methods as well as conventional notions and meanings. By occupying given spaces of cultural power, the artists rendered their fictional academies accessible as present alternatives to the educational and distributing institutions of the arts. Thus, they criticised the paradox of an educational system whose members were simultaneously perceived as liberated but socially isolated individuals and capital-forming economic factors.⁶¹

58 Cf. Cornelia Bering/Kunibert Bering: *Konzeptionen der Kunstdidaktik*, Oberhausen 2003, pp. 69–106.

59 Translated by the author. Cf. Letter from Gérard Gasiorowski to Josette Villefranque and Roger Brancy, September 1976, in: *Archive Philippe Agostini*.

60 Cf. Gérard Monnier: *L'art et ses institutions en France: De la Révolution à nos jours*, Paris 1995, pp. 342–344, pp. 360–361.

61 Cf. Oskar Bätschmann: *Ausstellungskünstler: Kult und Karriere im modernen Kunstsystem*, Cologne 1997, pp. 228–232.

The complex structure of the fictional academies comprises distinct artefacts as well as their spatial displays during their ephemeral presentations and the artists' actions and self-stagings. All these aspects together create a narrative of the respective fictional academy. Its resemblance to real institutions as well as its emphasised divergences founded the pseudo-historic—we could say *hyper-real*—character that enabled the artists to comment on given facts and current events within their artworks. Thus, they could reflect on occurrences within the public space, like the general social critique on educational institutions. At the same time, their artworks were able to comment on the perceived inadequateness of contemporaneous artistic tendencies like 'Conceptual Art', 'Land Art' or 'Arte Povera' by adapting their methods and forms of appearance. In light of critical theories which saw a "culture industry"⁶² destroying all original creative potential, the fictional academies not only demonstrated the assimilating power of the organs of the commercial art market, but also stressed the vanity of artistic attempts to resist these inclusive mechanisms.

In contrast to the modernist longing for a pure, self-referential, essential art, the fictional academy consequently defined artwork as a genuinely collective practice, having evolved in a temporal process that influences and at the same time depends on its context. While the alternatives of the 'fictional institutions' state that change can be possible only arising from inside a given system, the artists also revealed that renewal inevitably merges with established conventions.

In respect to the spatial realisation of the fictional academies, both artists widened their artistic practice and exceeded borders between the conventionally divided fields of 'making art', 'scientific research', 'curatorial practice', 'art critique', 'promotion' and 'mediation'. A current result of these expanding tendencies, however, is not a loss of genuine artwork. It is rather a general transformation of the cultural field with its distinct traits. This transformation does not only concern the educational tendencies within art academies, but the artistic field and the perceptions of the arts in society in general. Although standards of artistic formation continued a long discussion of educational reform through the 1980s, they still often follow traditional admission procedures and division of genres.⁶³ One innovation, however, is that the education in the mediation, distribution and presentation

62 Cf. Max Horkheimer/Theodor W. Adorno: *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, pp. 94–136.

63 Cf. Otto Herbert Hajek (ed.): *Kolloquium: Werden die Akademien in unserer Zeit verdrängt? Die Fähigkeit der Akademien, kulturelles Bewusstsein für unsere Gesellschaft zu entwickeln: Wird künstlerische Kreativität als Kompensation zu den Zwängen der Arbeitswelt betrachtet?*, Karlsruhe 1986; Rainer Beck (ed.): *Kunst im Brennpunkt der Akademien (Festschrift)*, Munich 1988; Wieland Schmied: *Kunst, Kunstgeschichte, Kunstakademie: Von Geschichte, Sinn und Zukunft der Kunstakademien: Schriftenreihe der Akademie der Bildenden Künste*, Munich 1990, vol. 1; Johannes Stüttgen: *Der ganze Riemen: Der Auftritt Joseph Beuys als Lehrer—die Chronologie der Ereignisse an der Staatlichen Kunstakademie Düsseldorf 1966–1972*, Cologne 2008; Thierry de Duve: *Faire école (ou la refaire)? Nouvelle édition revue et augmentée*, Geneva 2008.

of artworks became an inherent part of today's academies' curriculum formation in the meantime.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the growing sensibility for intersections between scientific and "artistic research"⁶⁵ has led to new institutional forms. While the curatorial practice, for instance, emancipated itself by generating its own academic field of study,⁶⁶ recent discourse treats the results of artistic production not only in terms of its aesthetic value, but also as objects of knowledge, thus combining formerly divided practices of the academic and artistic fields.⁶⁷ Altogether, these scientific and artistic developments reflect and testify to the continuous opening of art inside the social structure. This repositioning was strongly supported by the participation of artists in the social movements around 1968 and the shared concern for educational change.

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64 Cf. Katia Tangian: Spielwiese Kunstakademie: Habitus, Selbstbild, Diskurs, pp. 73–74.

65 A term that despite its wide discussion in German sciences still is mostly ignored in German technical language. Cf. Elke Bippus (ed.): *Kunst des Forschens: Praxis eines ästhetischen Denkens*, Zurich 2009; Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB): *Research in the creative and performing arts*, in: *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 3:1 (2004), pp. 75–78; *Texte zur Kunst* 82 (2011): *Artistic Research*, at: <https://www.textezurkunst.de/82/> (accessed on 11 April 2018).

66 Cf. Description of the master degree's course "Curatorial Studies" at Frankfurt University, at: <http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/35791819?> (accessed on 7 June 2017); Description of the master degree's course "Critical and Curatorial Studies" at Columbia University, New York, at: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/arthistory/graduate/moda.html> (accessed on 7 June 2017). For further reflections cf. Paul O'Neill et al. (eds.): *The Curatorial Conundrum: What to study? What to research? What to practice?*, Cambridge 2016; Paul O'Neill/Mick Wilson (eds.): *Curating and the Educational Turn*, London 2010.

67 Cf. Description of the Society for Artistic Research (SAR), at: <http://www.societyforartisticresearch.org/society-for-artistic-research/> (accessed on 7 June 2017). In Paris this discussion is reflected in the recent foundation of the two exhibition spaces Bétonsalon—Center for Art and Research and Villa Vassiliev "with the ambition to question normalised forms of production, classification and distribution of knowledge". Cf. Presentation of Bétonsalon, at: <http://www.betonsalon.net/spip.php?rubrique19&lang=en> (accessed on 7 June 2017).