

Museum moderner Kunst  
Stiftung Ludwig Wien  
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien

**Symposium**  
Saturday, February 13, 2016  
3 to 7 pm  
mumok Lounge  
Admission free  
The symposium will be held in English

**In conjunction with the exhibition**  
*to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer. Artistic Practices around 1990*

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## The Corporate Alternative Symposium on Saturday, February 13, 2016, co-organized with Pablo Larios (*frieze d/e*)

How are corporate and alternative practices linked today – from company branding to artistic practices to community-making efforts? What's the corporate alternative?

Unlike many of the inclusions in the current exhibition *at mumok, to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to offer: artistic practices around 1990* – which take critique, self-organization and resistance as common poles of positive aesthetic and theoretical advancement – the participants in this symposium probably grew up with hybrid/schizoid relationships to ideas of alternative practices. In some cases – in the wake of our digital 'nativity' – resistant, avant-garde or self-organized micro-communities were not always seen as politically or aesthetically desirable, or even possible; but neither was a full assimilation into the corporate sphere. At times, resistance was laughed at, like someone's 'cool' dad at a punk bar; corporate was sometimes preferable: waterproof, more clear in its limits, with the (bought, aspirational) look of advancement. 'We don't listen to indie – we listen to Top 40' an artist told me during a 2011 visit to his Berlin studio, an echo of Margaret Thatcher's slogan: 'there is no alternative'.

At the same time, after the failure of post-2008 reforms, corporations continued to recruit younger and younger 'cool-hunters' for insider's perspectives onto authentic culture. Who could afford to say no? Or yes? Some of us made a kind of refuge or escape in the old-school, vestigial structures of the European art network (as long as it lasts). Others had our youth capitalized upon, again, or actively sold it, under the guise of a generational shift, a la 89+. Whether as a long troll, or just a short opportunity, we watched many retreat into a new, bohemian-bourgeoisie. For most, the freelance economy that once promised to liberate us as 'independent creatives' felt closer to a neoliberal imperative to promote yourself as your work, to 'prosume' your way to happiness, to turn every waking hour into a smirking unit of project-to-project labour. The artist as entrepreneur – if you made it that far. In short, we all became members of the *Lumpenproletariat*, a creative class that even seems annoying to self-designate as such. As often as such questions have been posed for some years now, perhaps these contexts have already changed sufficiently to merit their re-assessment. What comes after 'mass indie' (K-Hole)? Well, we do what we do – but what do we do now?

Ironically, many of the self-organization initiatives of the 1990's have congealed into territorialism and self-canonization – who can speak for such a thing, such a history, today?

And who cares?

Unlike after-the-fact curatorial or canonical projects of inclusion/exclusion, which must deal with their own structural parallels to the inclusions/exclusions of the

communities on which they are grounded, I have organized this symposium with deliberate exclusions in mind. Territorially, geographically and even generationally foreign to many of the artists on display, we are somewhat relieved of the burden of addressing ourselves through or against (foster) parents. Whether this is Oedipal blindness or simple solipsism, or the tough love of an outsider, I can't yet say. I can only speak for myself. (Pablo Larios)

Participants: Jesse Darling, Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff, Pablo Larios, Huw Lemmey, and Emily Segal.

Concept by Pablo Larios, *frieze d/e*

## Participants' Biographies

**Jesse Darling** is an artist based in London. JD has recently shown at the Serpentine Gallery, London, and has forthcoming projects at MoMA Warsaw and Arcadia\_Missa. Darling also teaches at the Sandberg Instituut and is an editor at *The New Inquiry*.

**Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff** are artists based in Berlin, where they ran the New Theater from 2013 to 2015.

**Pablo Larios** is a writer and an editor of *frieze d/e* magazine. He lives in Berlin.

**Huw Lemmey** is an artist, writer and publisher. He is the author of *Chubz: The Demonization of my Working Arse* and director at Zed Books. From 2008 to 2014 he directed the project space Limazulu in London. He lives in London.

**Emily Segal** is an artist and writer, and former Creative Director of Genius. She co-founded K-Hole, the trend forecasting group and art collective. She lives in New York.

**On the Exhibition *to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer. Artistic Practices around 1990*  
Through February 14, 2016**

On three levels, we are showing installations, publications, objects, projects, films, and interventions by more than 50 artists and artists' groups. They all question traditional forms of exhibiting and address the pressing social challenges of their time. The words to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer may seem to define the functions of an exhibition very clearly, but around 1990 there were many open questions as to what art should be offering, how it should be exhibited and made public.

In the context of larger societal changes around 1990, artists increasingly discussed the social functions and base of their work. Reflecting on the conditions of artistic production and art's presentation was, in various ways, intertwined with work on actual social issues. The status of the object of art and its economic foundation was a subject of contentious debate, as were the mechanisms of social exclusion, identity politics, and gender issues—and the AIDS crisis was reaching a pivotal point. In addition, the consequences of the fall of the Iron Curtain as well as a rapidly advancing globalization left their traces throughout.

*to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer* brings together artworks and projects that, around 1990, focused as an investigative site modes of display and conditions of reception. The exhibition will be shown on three levels of mumok, presenting internationally renowned artists and also positions and projects that to date have rarely been considered in museums.

Curated by Matthias Michalka