

Old and new Behaviours of the material and immaterial

** Curated by Azotea (Ane Agirre and Juan Canela)*

If we think about the immediate context of this exhibition, there are certain aspects that lead us to the post-fordism and the transformation of the labour paradigm shaped during recent years. ADN Platform is an industrial warehouse reconverted to an art project space located on the border of Sant Cugat, a peripheral city that belongs to the industrial belt of Barcelona. In recent times, there has been an increase in such spaces which seemed to have shifted from the industrial and material to the cognitive and immaterial. Old and New, takes its name from Sergei Eisenstein's movie, where he portrays the irruption of the industrial model in a rural subsistence economy and explores how the society tries to adapt to new life conditions.

In that sense, the show compiles the work of a group of artists which projects affect, from different perspectives and ways of doing, some of the problematic raised from this new labour paradigm of contemporary society. The aim is to reflect and critically think upon the causes and direct or indirect consequences of the end of industry as we knew it and question the new work formats of immaterial and cognitive labour, relating this matter to the place that art, culture, leisure and game occupy or can occupy.

All over the XII century the work organization, the production processes and the control of labour have shifted, generating different phases of capitalist production: taylorism, fordism, postfordism or cognitive capitalism. The industry (one of the strongest elements in the beginnings of the capitalist system - as well as in the end of the communist system-, from which one of its vertexes was the confluence of work, economy, production of raw materials and welfare state) is not primordial anymore. This panorama contributes to the shifting towards other scenes, without bearing in mind the importance that this one took as a social incentive/engine.

Therefore, the installation Goitik Behera, Behetik Gora (2012), by **Usue Arrieta and Vicente Vázquez** portrays the development of shared hobbies where diverse collectives develop capacities acquired in the factory. Different agents from the same industrial fabric enjoy their free time through leisure and game activities, which reflect upon their social class and industrial hierarchy. This logic is decoded and translated in nine sequences where these industrial capacities are transformed into tangible realities. The artists, from a poetic gaze, strip the reality of an industrial community that indeed construct the structure of society.

Nowadays, the possibility of the industrial defeat affects all Europe, the tertiarisation is a fact and the gravity centre of occidental economies seems to be displaced towards the immaterial and cognitive, with consequences such as the domination of the financial markets and the speculation of production.

The landscapes, once witnesses of a growing community, are now disintegrated and leave cavities behind not only in the horizon but also in terms of social community. **Diego Santomé** uses fluorescent lights -the industrial light by excellence and representative material of minimal art as well -in order to work with the ruins as part of the extinction of social utopia.

Capitalism arrived to the soviet bloc through moving image of VHS tapes which narrated the wonders of the Western World. Today the tertiarisation makes the "TV generation" the workforce of the post-fordist industry. In Production Line for the future (2010) **Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor** use the medium erased by the digital revolution to create a production space of the future, where broken tapes are piled on

a table and recycled using magnetic strips with metal bars. The installation reminds a constructive laboratory - even if the technique is used in Venezuela to mark the harvest field. Next to the table, a banner shows the distribution of wealth in the world, which form reminds a piece by KP Brehmer, political minimal artist of the 70s. It suggests that not only the distribution of land and property that is at stake in the future, but also the redistribution of those associated artistic languages, returning to minimalism its original political commitment.

The factories were the representation of the social utopia, but the lack of coherence between ideal and real tear down any indication of illusion. The economical plans, the budget of the benefits and the previsions are parameters in order to achieve a perfect economy but once again, reality manages to show the defeat of the essay. This exercise of statistic is what Adrian Melis explores. He gathers faults of the builder industry in Cuba. The Caribbean island, standard of the economical model opposed to capitalism: communism is presented here with its defeats, ready for an artistic revision.

Franco Berardi "Bifo" underlines that the result of neoliberal policies is a reduction of the labour cost and an impoverishment of cognitive workers.

Both industrial work (delocalized in the peripheral areas of the world) and cognitive work are devaluated and badly paid since the precarious state has fragmented and destroyed the social solidarity and the power of the emotion. Poverty, auto-exploitation and abuse of work (and we could even add leisure confused with work or vice versa) are conducts of cognitive workers. **Grupo Informació –Antonio Gagliano and Efrén Álvarez-**, spell out this reality from a critical consideration using humour as a trigger which reveals some of the difficulties of this new social class by the usage of control systems, technical developments adequate to our times, the distribution of information, Wikileaks and P2P.

It is interesting to understand how art is inserted in this capitalist spirit, especially in terms of labour dynamics but also understanding how the potential of its subjectivity creates spaces to share other work formats and different cohabitations apart from the established ones. **Adelita Husni-Bey** throws one question in her project Room For a Void: "¿What will we do if we were not consuming or producing?" The sentence is located in a banner in an emblematic industrial area of the city of Turin which lived different waves of industrial capitalism and which, after years of abandonment, was reused for fairs, events and conferences. The void that conquered these spaces between the phases of industrial development is the absence alluded in the project's title. The work is completed by a publication where three thinkers suggest three discourses around the first question. Utopian forms of economy and new capitalist dynamics arise from these voices that claim artistic practices as spaces to generate visions exceeding standards.

In this new context it is essential to rethink the question of subjectivity. Art, creativity and contemporary thought can have here a capital task. We need to be capable to propose a change of paradigm, a re-semiotisation of the social ground, attesting that we have a social, physical and socio-economical body.

Courtesy of galleries: Àngels Barcelona, D+T Project Gallery, Laveronica Arte Contemporanea, Parra & Romero