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VOID (1-4)

English
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The project ›THE VOID (2/4)‹ describes the second phase/stage of an obviously bizarre incident: a downloaded HD-version of the extracted BluRay of ›Enter The Void‹ by Gaspar Noé [1] was the starting point of a chain of digital metamorphosis. As a result of the repeated conversion of this file to obtain a DVD/CD-R Master Image (intended to be burned later as a standard DVD), a surprising phenomena came to light. [2]

Obviously (in the literary sense derived from vision) – and directly by means of picture and sound verifiable – something unknown caused the regular black picture in the movie to be replaced by a single still (the protagonist's last view as a living person) accompanied by a pulsating audio track.

During the exhibition [3], self made copies of the ›Tibetan Book of the Dead‹ [4] can be acquired in exchange of a donation – in return they will be donated to the piratebay. The exhibition's guests are invited to actively participate in the project and are able to work autonomously in the gallery's buero at a regular computer (which was cleaned beforehand of all the gallery's working data), where they can experience the whole project and have an insight into the research materials. It is not a mere coincidence that the installation is a symmetrical situation of the de fatco working situation in the gallery (table, chairs, iMac) – the arrangement also symbolises the visitors' permanent possibility to enter this usually hermetic territory without any restrains or boundaries. Within this situation it is possible to act autonomously – just like the 'viral error'

within the file also had the capacity to do.

Instead of validating this installation as one whole entity and by avoiding the temptation to support something "social", "humanitarian" or just "good" in general with the donations, an alternative decision and again self-referential gestus was chosen. There is no pre-decided amount that symbolises the project's value; it is a systematic addition of particular small segments which correspond to the booklets' individual edition. [5]

The piratebay as a platform initiated the project's whole development and will be legitimised by the re-seeding of ›VOID (1-4)‹ into it's inner system (this time by means of financial values). This gestus also will point ot it's own autonomy.

After the exhibition INTIMATE‹ is finished the whole project will be compiled back to a torrent file and uploaded to the piratebay – as soon as the first copy has been made all the source files will be deleted.

Resulting from the performative circulation ›THE VOID (2/4)‹ focuses on the way we handle intellectual property, asks questions about individuality/identity, loss of control, rules of creativity and the possibilities inherent in the reproduction of values – speaking in general terms. As one (favourable) option, this ground forces one to opt for a very individual statement regarding the circulation of cultural values and the reflexion about its contemporary determinations.

Somehow we all are permamantly choosing the moral grounds for our actions and judging all the time – aren't we? But what are the relevant factors for such a decision? Personal cravings, the opportunity to duplicate without any material

limits, society's legal limitations as a result of powerful lobbies? The boundless interest in the free circulation of cultural values? Egomaniac longing for enrichment? Freedom of art?

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Gaspar Noé's movie ›Enter The Void‹ focuses in very direct manner on the death of an individual person considering spiritual and psychedelic experiences. ›The Tibetan Book of the Dead‹ as well as tantric buddhistic subjects are at the core of this almost three hour long filmic journey.

The first part of the movie consists of a approximately 25 minutes long scene, showing the ego-perspective of a young man. After the protagonist's death the camera detaches itself from this individual perspective, leaves the dead body behind and hovers effortlessly and without boundaries over the once commonly inhabited, remaining world, the friends left behind, the nightly city. That's what happens in ›Enter The Void‹ and what is part of its plot and from this point on the movie actually starts.

But as a consequence of the file's conversion the second part of the movie was being replaced by something unexpected and uncontrollable: coinciding exactly with the protagonist's death the movie's picture holds on and remains almost completely black [6], being further accompanied by a meditative and suggestive audio track, woven together by final audio traces and noises like an endless looping mantra. In the real movie there are also black pictures at exactly the same point in the timeline – the difference is that they are symbolic and a narrative element of the movies's plot.

What can be considered to be valid factors in a chain of dependencies resulting in semantic

statements understandable for us users? How can it be, that the death of the movie's protagonist is being overlaid or replaced by the transporting media's negation?

Can it be considered to be just an error, a logical result of the unique parts of a single computer and its current components? Is it a profound game which the director of ›Enter The Void‹ has planned from the beginning on? A coincidence, occurring in another movie being completely irrelevant? Digital rights management geniusly applied? [7] Maybe a self-provoked product of bad karma, the user's self-fulfilling projection situated between the boundaries of the computer display? A secret eso-/exoteric code of a negating or even self-reflexive programm?

Just as the term nothingness/void (shunyata) provides fuel to traditional buddhistic thinking (having actually what exactly at it's core?), thoughts about the relevance of this non-reproducible occurrence – situated within a totally normal surrounding – also do.

Issues like individual autonomy, liberation of illusions, (self-)obliteration, unconditioned separation from any kind of detachment, freedom of absolute and selfreferential negation (emptiness of emptiness) are not exclusively limited to buddhistic terms, they also express universal relevance. Not only are traditional philosophical schools based on this kind of terms, whole social systems or more or less abstract thought concepts in art, literature and film and in consequence, any sentient or thinking being is confronted with this kind of fundamental question. Sometimes these reflections are very conscious, sometimes they are uncontrolled reactions of spontaneous events in life, another time they are buried deep in the unconsciousness for a life-time.

For some individuals the insight into the volatility of things is never to be preferred to the state of a comfortable illusion of a totally self-determined life and the question asking for the essence, the true entity of personality. Even in case of a temporary disintegration of such catalogued values (as a result of rational reasoning, psychedelic experiences or life-crisis e.g.) these insights are distorted soon and shifted to a point thought of being located somewhere in the infinite: the point of death, the situation in which we're dying, the inevitable extermination of what constitutes us. Decisions are constantly being shifted, even illumination is anticipated as manifesting itself exclusively in future events.

The fact that complex systems react autonomously and withdraw themselves from external conscious control, can not only be witnessed in everyday phenomena – the computational necessity of emergence also is a paramount factor in modern science: chaos-theory, quantum physics, fuzzy-logic, the leap from dead materia to what is commonly regarded as living organisms.

Non-traceable causal chains also reveal themselves in the process of the whole project >VOID (1-4): not only is the decision completely left to the visitor, how they experience the installation, which image he or she makes him- or herself of the situation – they can also potentially manipulate the project or delete it right away. No visitor will be confronted with the exactly same situation; the individual decisions of the preceding predecessors is the basis of that personal perception. Life finds its way, blindly and without pre-defined goal, testing possibilities; that can be understood by the project's genealogy. Even though the project follows more or less strict rules and pursues the self-provoked self-extermination, it already

freed itself from this side-conditions: the USB-stick which was used to transport the data from one point (the home) to another (the gallery) was lost on the route. In this context the whole project has already failed. Somewhere unlocalizable and for future archeologists exploitable, all the data is captured/frozen in a state of limbo.

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Resulting from the movie ›Enter The Void‹, ›THE VOID (2/4)‹ is an installation, presenting a spontaneous phenomena and it's corresponding research-materials/sketches which (almost entirely) can be taken away by the visitors.

›THE VOID (2/4)‹ is being shown during the exhibition from June 22nd untill July 20th 2013 at the gallery EIGENT+ART in Leipzig, Germany. After a certain time, when the exhibition is finished, the whole project will be compiled to one single torrent and seeded back at thepiratebay.sx. As soon as the first complete copy has been remotely loaded, the original file will be deleted and all the remaining data on the source-computer will be destroyed – digitally spoken: overwritten with zeros.

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[1] ›Enter the Void‹. Directed by Gaspar Noé. Written by Gaspar Noé with the help of Lucile Hadzihalilovic. Dolby Digital, Colour, 2.35:1, 161 Min., IFC Films 2009.

[2] Until minute 26:56 the movie runs regularly, between 26:56 and 55:10 a single still image is being accompanied by the audio-track, from 55:10 on the audio disrupts. From 55:10 on there's no possibility to jump forward in the timeline because the DVD-player does not respond anymore.

[3] »INTIMATE« (group-exhibition) June 22nd – July 20th 2013 at the Gallery EIGEN + ART Leipzig, Germany.

[4] ›The Tibetan Book of the Dead‹. English translation by F. Fremantle & C. Trungpa, Shambhala Publications, Boston and London 2007.

[5] Total amount of donations on July 20th 2013, 6 pm: € 16,90

[6] A trace of the right hand is slightly visible.

[7] It is very unlikely that this may be a proprietary protection because the BluRay-file was not originally published by an official source and is a piratebay-user's own individual conversion.

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Gottfried Binder, Leipzig July 21st 2013