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THE THEME OF THE MONTH (Jan/Apr 2014): »Reflections on MFRU-KIBLIX 2013 Cooperation«



»Reflections on MFRU-KIBLIX 2013 Cooperation«, *Tanja Grosman*.

The task how to go beyond the complexity of questions raised at Kiblix 2012 in the year of the [European Capital Of Culture Maribor 2012](#) was not easy. It was not just a question of money – namely the budget for 2013 was smaller than the year before – but also regarding the wide spectrum of artists and lecturers from all over the world, that succeed in merging the ideas of art, science and technological unconscious.



MFRU-KIBLIX Festival 2013. (Photo: Bostjan Lah).

»Technological unconscious encompasses mythological imagination, apocalyptic visions and utopian dreams are led through languages and ideas of our modern post-biological society that are capable of altering and reconfiguring the boundaries of our reality and our very dreams« - this was the paradigm of Kiblix 2012 curated by artist, researcher and art theorist [Dmitry Bulatov](#).

Kiblix 2012 program was sort of »once in a lifetime« prominent and rich. Aleksandra Kostič, head of MMC KIBLA (Multimedia Cultural Centre **K(C)IB**ernetic **L**aboratory) and art director of [Kiblix 2012 – Soft Control: Art, Science, Technological Unconscious](#) had really tough task solving the Kiblix 2013 festival scale. How to go beyond? How to represent relevant up-to-date content raising awareness, informing, educating, developing non-formal conceptions as “Workshopology” - but in a strictly open coded way? The solution was to cooperate joining forces (and money) with the MRFU (engl.: International Festival of Computer Arts IFCA). While respecting the autonomy of each partner, it was followed the common goal to provide a high quality event.

[Aleksandra Kostič](#) is not only a very keen observer but she also understands and lives the paradigm of the future in the 21st century. As Nina Hagen said in the eighties »Future is now«. She invited the co-curators Maja Smrekar, Robertina Šebjanič, Ida Hiršfenfelder and Saša Špical to rethink the acupuncture points of our collective conscious.

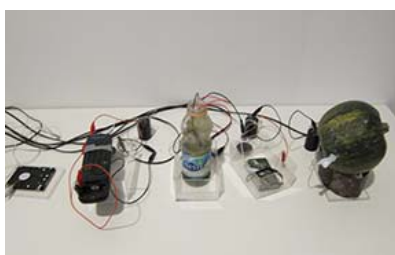


Kathy High, »The Blood Wars«, (Photos: Stella Veciana)

Their collective reasoning raised questions as how to transcend the nature-culture dualism with the aim to widen the view that deconstructs some of the norms related to the participatory understanding of various life forms. They placed issues evoking a reflection on the interdisciplinary possibilities for the (co)existence of bios and techne, for the perception of nature as an interdisciplinary field of biological, cultural and social phenomena.

They wished to have incorporated works like Ken Feingold's »Hell« or Sputniko!'s »Nanohana Heels - Healing Fukushima« that could probably reveal more questions and answers in its contexts whether they would be part of biophobic paradigm »un [Natural](#)«.

Aleksandra Kostič wrote in her festival preview that with the IFCA (International Festival of Computer Arts) - KIBLIX 2013 edition, entitled *When Worlds Collide*, »coding and contemporary interdisciplinary forms of artistic conceptions are intertwined inside complex junctions of different worlds and approaches, in the tension between the natural and the bio-technological, the virtual and the hybrid, the fake and the genuine principle, which – in an abundance of dialogs, contradictions and junctions – becomes visible in the form of artistic installations, digital records of process works, performances, lectures, presentations, workshops and audio-visual events«.



Karl Heinz Jeron, »Love of Things« (Photo:

One example for this artistic praxis is prominent artist [Kathy High](#). She participated with »The Blood Wars« installation that explores biological reactions in the form of a real tournament between different individuals' white blood cells. Festivals usually make those rare opportunities to get acquainted with some peculiarities that artists might share during non-formal conversation. So some of us were

Stella Veciana)



Dan Norton and Stella Veciana, »Revaluing Memory installation«, (Photo: Bostjan Lah).



Nataša Berk, »neagushi«, (Photos: Stella Veciana)



Panel moderated by Tanja Grosman, MRFU-KIBLIX Festival 2013, (Photo: Stella Veciana)



**Tanja Grosman** - studied Fine Arts Education at the Faculty of Education of the University of Maribor (2010) and Textile and Fashion Design at the Textile Faculty of the University of Ljubljana (1985). She worked as a theatre costume and set designer (1985-2001), teacher at primary and secondary schools (2002-2012), workshop coordinator at MMC KIBLA Maribor at Soft Control Kiblix 2012 and 2013 and curated the EU-PA conference »How to Transform Degraded Urban Space« (May 2013).

privileged to learn that sometimes, but very rarely, two types of blood don't fight - they apparently fall in love. So Kathy High said – and yes, the scientists in the laboratory were surprised, too.

Some works came out of apparently nothing. That kind of pleasant surprise was the installation of [Karl Heinz Jeron](#) »[Love of Things](#)« made of objects found in the proximity of the gallery. It was an interesting coincidence that only a partition wall separated it from the installation »[Revaluing memory](#)« that incorporated objects that had been brought by participants of the eponymous workshop led by Stella Veciana and Dan Norton. It took place before the official opening of the festival. During the one-day event, artists and scientist gathered to share their knowledge and develop their skills and resources to collaborate with each other and create a joint sustainable art network.

Artist [Nataša Berk](#) was one of the workshop participants but also festival performer. She stated that workshop inspired her include in her performance »[neagushi](#)« with the following quite provocative graffiti »I went to art school and all I got was that facqueen attitude«.

The high point of the festival was a fruitful mixture of art works, workshops, lectures, performances and concerts. Their juxtaposition created a feeling for the spirit regarding how to deal with the world we live in: by widening introspection and overview, by including interaction with various target audiences and by encouraging an active collaboration of everyone, from alumni, students to professionals with long-year experience. The challenging task was successfully put into scene through a constructive exchange between culture and science. The presentation intertwined the cultural models of critical thinking, activism and experimentation with scientific methods, research and knowledge.

More creative exchanges took place, as between Oscar Martin and Cedrik Fermont who were resident artists in Kibla for one month. Different in their approach to life, but both sharing a mutual lust for art experimentation, shared a living space during the residency. They managed to find their way of symbiosis and were at the end of the month quite inseparable as if following the slogan »When the Worlds Collide« that Aleksandra Kostič described at the end of her festival's clairvoyant introduction [Mundus Vade Intro](#): »This creative, multi-layered form of collaborations within the festival as such, has been named in the words of Dragan Klajič as 'the art of partnership'«.

The experience of being an active part of the coordination of the festival was a real privilege for me. While organizing the workshops and moderating the »Workshopology« panel discussions I met people and ideas that still broaden my horizons, beliefs, senses and understanding of the 21st century world(s).

comment

