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I BELIEVE IN INTERNET

What do Google and Wikipedia have in common? Well, if we have a question or are not sure, then we go online and type in the words or even whole sentences in our computer. Algorithms and related computer services are responsible for ensuring that we get results, in our search for knowledge and truth that are based on contributions and regulation of innumerable people. However, we don´t know the algorithms behind it, or let´s say the intentions of Google and why we just read this and get to see what we get. How can I understand these selection systems that are deciding for me what I can see? Who says what should be where? As we know that it´s actually people like you and me sitting behind their computers that are actively shaping knowledge when writing their own websites and blogs, set posts, rate and vote, and we trust them in the same way as we trust the person around us we have confidence in? Who or what tells me what I can believe? Or in other words: the Internet as a source of knowledge, or rather as a community of faith? And if such a person like an Internet Atheist exists, can one survive?

...the Internet as a source of knowledge, or rather as a community of faith?

I Believe in Internet is an ironic attempt using artistic ways to pursue these various issues in an exhibition format on a former farm in Leonding. With SUBURBIA the association Urbanfarm has developed an exhibition format, where global, continents and cultures cross-cutting issues are discussed very locally. It´s not about generating an exhibition for a big audience (a pressure under which usually museums and exhibition venues have to act), but to give deals for information and discusion with the local residents. For example, the group of artists h.o wrote a letter to Google and asked why the star (*) called *Asterisk* isn´t gaining any results in Google? Heath Bunting tries in his *Status Project* to give us to understand that we are all recorded, classified and divided and that it (almost) is really no way out. Manu Naveau bought online hundred ideas for works of art and while offering these artwork ideas in a back room in the exhibition, she wonders who now actually can call this artwork his or her own? José Pozo is researching the color that stands for the Internet and the T-shirt-research project *I Believe in Internet* examines the images on Wikipedia that illustrate and maintains selected terms such as faith and knowledge, confidence and conviction in the various languages, and that the enlightened view of the online encyclopedia brings discrepancies in the way of representing the world.

List of presented projects:
*Asterisk by h.o (JP) Emiko Ogawa, Hideaki Ogawa, Taizo Zushi
The Status Project. by Heath Bunting (UK)
What`s the colour of the Internet? by José Pozo (ES)
Turked Ideas. A back room project. by Manu Naveau (AT)
T-Shirt edition **I Believe in Internet** by Naveau (FR/AT)

http://www.urbanfarm.at/SUBURBIA/

h.o (JP) *Hideaki Ogawa, Emiko Ogawa, Taizo Zushi*

* ASTERISK

* ASTERISK

Google is asked of us almost daily and it is beyond controversy the dominant search engine in the western world. We believe that Google has the answer for everything. And so the philosophy of Google leaves no question unanswered when being stated: „Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it accessible and usable for all and at all times." Does this sentence even imply that Google has all the information of the world? This was the question and motivation of the artist collective h.o. and they discovered that the star (*) called Asterisk generates no Google results. Asterisk- as a typographic character that often is in use, especially on the Internet- symbolizes for example „born", or it is marking mandatory fields for online documents to be filled in, and it acts as a placeholder for encrypted notes. Given words in embrace of two stars, we already learned that in this case a variation of the spelling may even be possible. Anyway, the group wanted to know more, and wrote a request to Google, why the star does not provide any results. Google- of course- did not reply and it is exactly this fact (that once Google provides no evidence and apparently has no interest in changing this) which is actually very positive and interesting for h.o. They could find a very human character in this circumstance, when somebody or something is not always being able to answer everything. „*It's good to know that not everything can be answered*," confirms Hide Ogawa.

It's good to know that not everything can be answered.

In the presentation of the project the star turned out to be a spiritual metaphor for protection of the mysterious, the unexplained, and the unknown. The artist group developed a ** Translator* that can convert any information into a star code, which vice versa can be read only by those persons who are themselves in possession of the automated translation tool. With the 2D cutted and prepared asterisk stars, the visitors can leave messages about what they never want to be searched for on the internet in the near future. This idea is actually based on the EMA system in the sacred Shinto shrines in Japanese culture and in Buddhist temples where small, single-painted wooden tablets can be bought, carrying pre-printed images and to whom requests can be written to the deities. Smallest stars are formed in the image of a deer, which (in the inherent divinity) is a kind of divine communicator between nature and humans in Japanese culture. And an Asterisk as a necklace shall protect it's carrier from too much knowledge in order to preserve the mystical of the person.

This **Asterisk* installation celebrates the ignorant, the mystical, the risk for not knowing or that, for which there is no explanation in a world heading for notoriously knowledge just by clicking a button.

h.o (JP) *Hideaki Ogawa, Emiko Ogawa, Taizo Zushi*

* ASTERISK

* transla

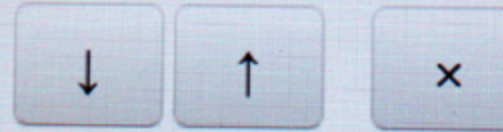Don't search me

Gmail
by Google

*

1 message

Ogawa Hide <ogawahd@gmail.com>
To: press@google.com

Dear Google,

I can't search * on Google.
Why?
Would you answer this question?

Best Regards,
Hideaki Ogawa

Manu Naveau (AT)

My Turked Ideas. A back room project.

My Turked Ideas. A back room project.

It was in 2006 when I got to know the projects of Aaron Koblin for the first time. Koblin was the first artist working with Amazon Mechanica Turk, when nearly nobody had a clue what actually this platform is about. For Koblin all began in November 2005 already when he heard that Amazon is working on an innovation that combines the human intelligence and labor of various people around the world on an online platform and attempts to offer new services, such as writing product descriptions, or doing search, tags or reviews promptly; work that still cannot be performed by a computer. Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) – a name based on the faked chess playing machine from Wolfgang von Kempelen from the late 18th century- was just born and the art student Koblin was curious and wanted to know: can therefore also be art realized? He used the platform Amazon's Mechanical Turk to produce projects like *The Sheep Market, Ten Thousand Cents* or *Bicycle Built for 2.000* and bought thoughsands of workers who realized his work for him. Even that Koblin actually criticized the precarious working conditions on this platform, there is no novelty in the art that purchased workers, who make the works of art. What is new is that the workers can gather together easily and exchange thoughts on respective platforms, and diskuss matters like copyright and co-authorship. However, the Amazon Mechanical Turk platform itself clarifies the facts, as in the accompanying participation agreement the conditions under which the Turker do their work contribution is discribed. In particular, it looks even so that with the use of the platform, they leave ownership and this even relates to the intellectual property that is transferred to the client.

Capitalist systems create in turn capitalist-oriented tools, which is obvious. In my work on the platform, this resulted in the question: what is, when I drive the situation to the extreme? What, if I ask to give me an idea for an artwork? Now, the question is actually not new as there are crowdsourcing platforms existing, that ask for new ideas and innovations already. However, when it comes to art, authorship and intellectual property still has a particular relevance. I asked for a Crowd Art idea, a quick illustration, and I offered USD 3,- per contribution in return. In the period from December 2013 to June 2014 I was sent to 100 ideas and almost all ideas have a serious debate on the issue of Crowd Art as a base. Some outstanding refreshing ideas have been sent and only two submissions had to be declined because I could not open the uploaded file. The participation of men and women has been 39 to 37 in scale, the rest were ideas from workers without appropriate labeling of sex or age.

Basically ideas can not be covered by copyright in Austria, but they are in the United States. And because it is not just about ideas, but also to the transmission of data such as scribbles, illustrations, or work instructions, the situation looks different and according to copyright experts in Austria, I should not- although Amazon Mechanical Turk clarifies this in their terms and conditions – take chances and prefer to specify the source. Of course, in respect of the work of the various Turkers i am forced in my moral imagination that the people behind the ideas have to be mentioned; even when names cannot be found in a simply way as each worker has to be registered and represented by a number on the platform. However, it was interesting to see that some ideas submitted were signed with names. Knowing, that the plattform actually promotes anonymity and communication-less labor, it was nice being approached personally by some of the workers. But who are these people doing anonymous Micro Jobs to arrive at a reasonably monthly fee? Isn´t this form of employment supporting rather precarious work or has the option of flexible timing, performing work from home and the possibility of selection of work orders such an interesting form of additional employment that even minimal payment is accepted? In which kind of legal gray area are we acting when using such platforms? Why are ideas and scribbles in Austria not protectable under law? And why can an internet giant like Amazon override the nationally applicable legal decisions?

My *Turked Ideas. A back room project.* scrutinizes authorship and the copyright situation via the online crwodsourcing platform Amazon Mechanical Turk. The titel itself questions in addition the political correctness of the name itself in an ironical way.

...when it comes to art, authorship and intellectual property still has a particular relevance.

Manu Naveau (AT)

My Turked Ideas. A back room project.

José Pozo (ES)

WHAT IS THE COLOUR OF
THE INTERNET?

José Pozo (ES)

WHAT IS THE COLOUR OF THE INTERNET?

First, it appears very difficult to set the Internet on a specific color.
I began my search and was scouring different pages online.
According to Wikipedia, for example, search engines are the most visited sites on the net.
At first glance it is striking that these very pages as well as large forums such as Facebook and Wikipedia always tend to the color blue. Blue is usually seen as a pleasant and peaceful color; very dominant or aggressive colors such as orange or yellow are avoided online.
In addition, there is a behaviour that is of deep impact for me: People on the Internet are looking mostly pictures of other people. Especially in the virtual world there are unlimited possibilities of voyeurism. You can watch other people in violent scenes or looking at them during sex and even killing other people through large, wide open windows.
In search engines like Google or forums like Facebook habits and physical environment of the related persons are observed and analyzed by their everyday life. Known and prominent people can be traced to specific sites to the smallest detail and thousands meaningless messages and pictures I can find here.
As a global color I would most likely select the color gray therefore. However...

The internet smells like meat!

DIGITAL LOVE
In this exhibition I show two images that complement each other and build on certain togetherness. For the first image I combined information from various Wikipedia pages on the subject of pornography on the Web and analyzed them. I came to the conclusion to use dark pink, the human skin color, the naked body alludes. The internet smells like meat!

MY FRIEND FACEBOOK
(Facebook es mi amigo del alma)
My second image relates to Facebook, which is ranked at the second place of the most visited web pages currently. The background is always held in a friendly, inspiring blue and the Facebook pages are filled with photos, especially laughing portraits or groups of people. Also suggestive and erotic photos are allowed and posted en masse and present Facebook-sites as a door-opener to real pornography online.
So what would be the colour of Facebook? Apparently from all its colors and images I mixed a tone in violet. That Violet is for me a colour represendting digital friendship without human contact.

With my pictures I want to question what there is to see on the Internet, what is shown here unconsciously and consciously? Of course, Facebook and Wikipedia alone are not representing the Internet. Questions of morality and ethics occur even more when realizing that the Deep Web with its access to weapons, pornography and other criminal networks is way bigger than the webpages we see on the surface of the Internet. Therefore smiling faces and cat photos on facebook tell us nothing, but just are part of our reality; the Internet as a kind of mirror of our reality.

José Pozo (ES)

WHAT IS THE COLOUR OF THE INTERNET?

Heath Bunting (UK)
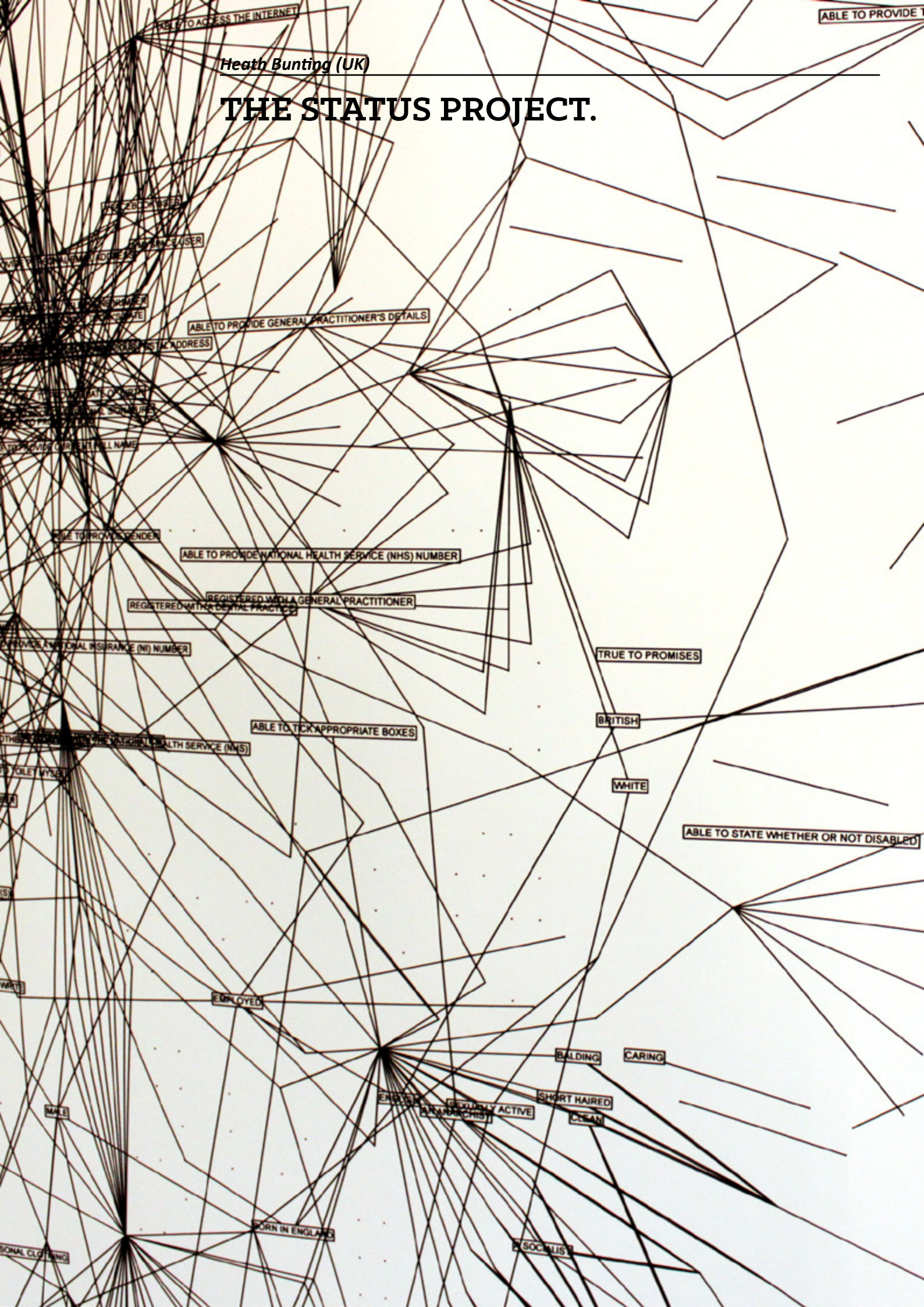
THE STATUS PROJECT.

THE STATUS PROJECT.

The British artist Heath Bunting is not just a person who likes to climb trees or loves living in tree houses same like skateboarding and canoe riding, he is also one of the net artist since the very beginning and well known about his projects that he already realized in the 90s, when the Internet just started being – more or less difficult but at least- accessible for individuals. Since then and even bevore that he already critically examines networked systems, he questiones virtual spaces and connects them with the real physical one. Whether he hacked the phone booths around the King's Cross Station or created graffiti with appropriate database connections. What matters to him was always working with people in the places of intervention. This concern is felt very strongly in his workshops, for which he is travelling around the globe: In all his activities it comes to the questions of control and privacy in times of constant networking and unconscious participation mechanisms via the Internet. He is giving "Survival Training for Artists", where he can draw from a large box of experience, ranging from arrest through to crossing borders without proper papers. He equips artists with the right setting in order that our data tracks remain as unobtrusive as possible. He questiones what is called to be legal or illegal in networked systems, identifies the blurring boundaries and he even provides "Identity Kits".

...we all are divided and classified based on our data traces we leave behind...

„Our identity is constructed as human beings that can possess one or more natural persons and control one or more artificial persons. The higher up in the class system the better the access to status variety." (Bunting in an interview on http://www.furtherfield.org)

The Status Project by Heath Bunting pursues the thesis that we all are divided and classified based on our data traces we leave behind and that it goes to a class system that needs to see it through. The higher up in the class system, the better is the access to status variety and with this the situation of leaving more ambiguous information that cannot be easily traced down by automated algorythms. Basically, there are three classification schemes according to Bunting: We are born as Human Beings and as such are briefly free of any administrative data affiliations. Once our traces put direction or certain habits develop we are Natural Persons. And then there are the Artificial Persons like companies or associations, which can act as a placeholder for people and provide an additional level in the construction of complex identities. The Status Project, which is still an ongoing artistic research project, examines exactly this class systems and assignments, and Heath Bunting produced so-called „maps of influence" in order to present general influence factors corresponding to the three categories just mentioned. The fourth map in the exhibition shows a self-portrait of the artist, his own life and influence diagram at his age of 42. A portrait that does not show the superficial complexion of a person, but presents the facts, relationships, interests and experiences in the form of relational structures of the network behind the person Heath Bunting.
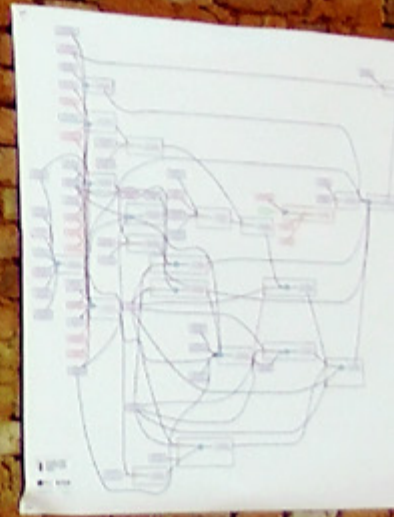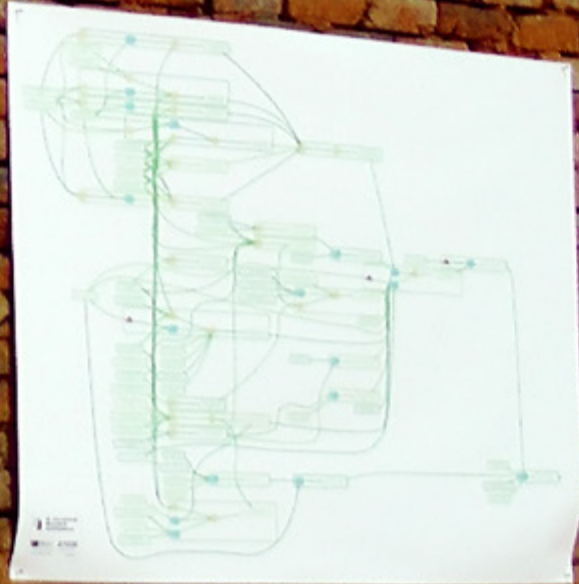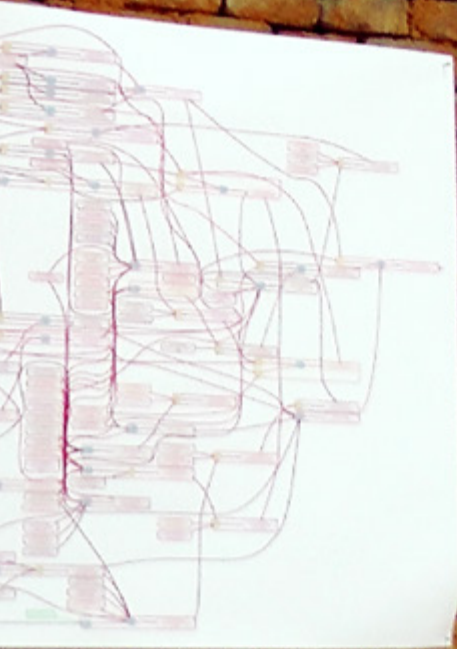
THE STATUS PROJECT.

I BELIEVE IN INTERNET

Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, which is sixth of the world's most visited sites at the time of the survey on 7 May 2014, is now regarded as a relevant source of information that is used millions of times every day and hardly questioned. 30 million articles in 280 languages are counted on Wikipedia up to this date and each topic is devided into different languages. The contributions on Wikipedia are designed in a multi-authorship way and free-working volunteers are writing and continually correcting, expanding, and updating jointly in accordance with the principle of collaborative writing. If you start to work with Wikipedia, it is surprisingly noticeable that the contributions to the same topic are sometimes of different nature in individual languages. The situation is similar also when it comes to the pictures provided per topic. A quick look through the languages per topic immediately shows the differences or equality in the access mode of presentation and some questions then arise by themselves: Why should this information get a general validity to this keyword and not others? Which pictures succeed in staying on Wikipedia? How does this for example look like in languages like Spanish or Portuguese, languages which are spoken in Europe and in South America, where cultural differences stand out blatantly? If these passed over rigorously the classification in languages, does this tell us something about the cultural differences in the understanding of the world? Or will the claim of the new Encyclopædia Universalis come to a limit? Is subjective selection sold as objective knowledge, which is based on a seemingly democratic confirmation process but based on a hegemonic structure behind? If we know, however, that participation in the Internet has to be understood in the frame of the so-called 1% rule, meaning that active contributions are made of about 1% of the participants and that the rest are the so-called lurkers, passive read-only participants online, does then the grassroots access promise way too much? And isn´t this westernized view of knowledge corresponding rather to a new form of colonialism?

The T-Shirt Edition *I Believe in Internet* is for us the first result of this field research, in which we want to question the trust relationship with the source of information on the Internet. The choices of words, their pictorial representation, which we examined in the different languages, have to do with the subject of faith, knowledge, trust and confidence. The presentation form of the T-Shirst underlines for us on the one hand the strategic irony of the project, and on the other hand it is used as a very personal information carrier medium, which communicates the subjective attitudes of people with their personal interests behind universal definitions in this installation version.

I Believe in Internet arose from the inspiring discussion with the artists Mushon Zer-Aviv and Galia Offri of the wonderful project „Wikipedia Illustrated".

...to question the trust relationship with the source of information on the Internet.