



“anders tun”

“anders tun” (“doing things differently”) is the name of the Berlin-based artistic working group of Stefan Krüskemper, Michaela Nasoetion and Christiane ten Hoewel, which experiments with new formats of cooperation and dialogue. The objective of the working group is to explore questions on working and being active in a changing work-based society.

The questions revolving around a concept like “work” have changed fundamentally. Where in the past, workers’ representatives were primarily concerned with working conditions, the issues at the forefront in today’s neoliberal times are, by contrast, pressing personal questions such as: To which extent am I prepared to adjust to the increasing demands of my job without losing my dignity? Which skills are important for me to learn these days? How can I engage in voluntary social work in order to find fulfilment there? How can I turn my weaknesses into something productive and valuable and what is the cost of these efforts towards self-improvement?

In this regard, individual viewpoints often tend to ignore the wider societal context. What is missing are more productive forms of communication, motivating experiences in the context of collaborative thinking processes and faith in the power of creative visions. Our society needs new and different processes of collaborative speaking and envisioning, deciding and acting. The specific practice of artists and today’s artistic strategies offer great potential for “doing things differently”, which may be unlocked when representatives of various social spheres enter into a direct dialogue.

Therefore, we focus on the following questions:

- How can we act responsibly in the future – as individuals and as a society?
- Is there an aesthetics of work?
- How to develop possibilities for communication and options for action by means of art?
- How can art as a process effectively contribute to creating political awareness?
- How to devise artistic forms for generating new forms of interaction that may impact societal development in a meaningful way?

The search for new forms of dialogue with different societal groups has turned out to be of central importance in participatory artistic practice. The canon of familiar forms of dialogue is insufficient for reaching people as it is unable to convey or represent the artistic level of a project. In our art projects, we – as a working group but also as individual artists – experiment a lot with sensory, visual, sculptural and corporal communication as well as different forms of verbal communication. When considering society as a whole, there is an urgent need also for these forms of dialogue, because segregation, migration or simply political apathy have caused the various parts of society to have a profound lack of understanding for each other.

The key approach of “anders tun” consists in closely involving various societal stakeholders in the process of developing new forms of dialogue as practical artistic tools. The objective is to explore different options for action without preconceptions about the outcome and to develop practical “possibility spaces” for sustainable forms of dialogue. The underlying goal of these artistic dialogue experiments is to get a deeper understanding of specific problem areas in order to formulate interventions, which may then be tested together in practice.

In the course of the projects carried out by our working group so far, we have already devised various settings and tools for developing ways of “doing things differently” together with the participants. Our work takes a collaborative approach. As our formats are geared towards communication, so are our processes leading there. Thus, we engage in a dialogue to develop the idea and the first prototype. This prototype is then tried out together with a number of selected interested test persons and the experience gained from these trials as well as the feedback received are used to refine the concept. The formats developed so far by “anders tun” include the “workshop”, the “party” and the “game”.

The “game” is a tool which we have been working on since 2015 and whose objective is to bring about a focused, personal dialogue in a playful manner, allowing the participants to interact with one another in order to jointly develop a tangible, ideal vision of a successful future.

The projects of “anders tun” currently take the format of a game, which could also be understood as a different kind of conversation or as an unusual way of organising one’s thoughts. In any case, the format offers a playful platform for thinking about questions of working and being active. It engages the participants in a collaborative thinking process that provokes thoughts and ideas going beyond the participants’ individual situation.

How to play:

In the first stage of the game, the participants are given keywords to discuss their expectations and their personal questions on the topic such as: Do you love your work or is it a burden? Are you currently undergoing a period of change or are you asking yourself where your life’s journey will take you? Where do your interests lie at the moment? Understanding where they are at in life and being aware of the viewpoint from which they answer the questions is helpful to the participants. In the second stage, the game provides for questions aimed at stimulating the discussion. When it is a participant’s turn to speak, he or she is encouraged to take his/her time to organise his/her thoughts and to try to be open and honest to himself/herself and the others while the other participants are to listen actively and attentively in order to support the person speaking. At its different stages, the game offers many playful opportunities to discuss and comment on what has been said.

As the game progresses, the “picture of the discussion” spreads like a mosaic on the playing area, gradually taking shape. The objective of the game is to serve as a platform for sharing one’s thoughts and for finding a playful approach to “doing things differently” in the future. The fourth and final stage of the game starts once all participants have drawn three questions each or when one participant plays the so-called “essential” card. The game then concludes with a free discussion giving participants the opportunity to provide feedback.

For further information please visit: www.anderstun.info.