

On Circulation

16 November 2018 - 13 January 2019

BERGEN KUNSTHALL

With Lewis Baltz, Anna Boghiguian, Tanya Busse & Joar Nango, Nina Canell, Tyler Coburn, Zachary Formwalt, Bodil Furu, Núria Güell & Levi Orta, Erik Holmstedt, Anton Kats & Maia Urstad, Daniel Keller, Sam Lewitt, Park McArthur, Sean Snyder, Diamond Stingily, Ulla Wiggen

Contemporary society is shaped by flows of capital, networks of people and information that connect distant parts of the world and various levels of social productivity. This winter, Bergen Kunsthall presents an extensive exhibition that deals with 'circulation' as a central notion in current socio-political and economic conditions, and presents the work of 19 international artists.

From early trade routes and migration paths, such as those of the Hanseatic League or the Silk Road, to today's social networks and other forms of digital communication, networks have not only circulated people and goods; they have also created innovation, hierarchies and exploitation. Since the 1950s, cybernetic researchers have envisaged a society governed through the connections and relations of its different parts, not from a centre. In today's perspective the infrastructure that supports or controls these flows becomes of crucial importance as the 'operating system' (Keller Easterling) that organizes the space of everyday life. Powerful but almost invisible factors such as norms, standards, policies and technical procedures determine how objects and content are organized and circulated. The works and projects in this exhibition look at the governing principles, the material specificities and the visual manifestations of these support systems and infrastructures. Drawing on specific examples, from globalized markets, copyright laws and image technologies to specific localities and sites of production, the artworks and projects in the exhibition investigate and analyse the paradigm of circulation and the infrastructures that create it.

The exhibition presents newly commissioned projects and engages them in dialogue with earlier artworks from the 1960s to the 1980s, thus making visible a continuity from a pre-digital age of mechanization to our current, late-capitalist and fully digitalized information society. Ulla Wiggen's paintings of circuit boards from the 1960s and Nina Canell's new installation of microchips and cucumbers, for example, both visualize in different ways the often-hidden materiality of mechanized and digital technology, as does Sean Snyder's photographic installation depicting the bare surface of a digital sensor. Sam Lewitt investigates a symbolic core of today's culture of mobility, the car engine, and the flows of fuel and exhaust inside the cylinder block, as well as the legal frameworks surrounding its design, in collaboration with an international car manufacturer. Park McArthur

follows the journey of marble from a quarry in Norway to a museum building in the USA.

The notion of circulation connects with aspects like the deregulation and expansion of the market, but also with the promise of emancipatory networks and self-organized distribution, such as counter-information and participatory platforms in magazines, radio, events and Internet formats. Many of the projects approach their subjects in an ambivalent way, involving themselves in the networks of power as a way of engaging with them critically and reflecting on the role of creativity and critique in the dynamics of contemporary society. Rather than documenting a phenomenon in its entirety, the exhibition offers a network of approaches and themes that circulate a topic, like a collage.

Curated by Axel Wieder, Steinar Sekkingstad and Eva Rowson

Events

On Circuits and Networks

17 Nov 13:00

Presentations and discussions with artists in 'On Circulation'. With Staci Bu Shea, Tyler Coburn, Zachary Formwalt, Sam Lewitt, Ellef Prestsæter, Sean Snyder, Ulla Wiggen

Live performance: Maia Urstad + Anton Kats

23 Nov 20.00

On Maintaining Circulation

24 Nov 14:00

Exploring and questioning the power structures that circulate and maintain histories and narratives. With Andrea Francke / Wish you'd been here, Anton Kats, Maia Urstad, Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa and Hannah Gillow-Kloster (Skeivt arkiv, Norway's national queer archive)

On Distribution

8 Dec 19:00

A discussion on self-organised distribution networks, with artists Joar Nango and Tanya Busse, their project 'The Nomadic Library' and more

On Infrastructure

Keller Easterling, Medium Design

12 Jan 14:00