

Joint Symposia 2011

Unfolding the Academic – A critical Site Analysis in three Loops

Against the background of the current state of crisis increasingly permeating all areas of cultural production, a critical site analysis of the humanities seems to be of crucial importance. Where do we locate ourselves? Which are the conditions of the sites we are speaking from and performing in right now? Which shifts are those sites undergoing in the face of the crisis and by which means can we respond to them?

Unfolding the Academic – A critical Site Analysis in three Loops ventures a rethinking of the agency of academia in times of crisis. It intends to take a sounding in the current conditions of academic production while at the same time practically probing alternative scopes for action.

The three-step site analysis is constituted as a self-reflexive and dynamic assemblage of practices defining the current state of academia with respect to the particular environment in which each joint symposium takes place. On the basis of three core methodological perspectives, each symposium is aimed at the production of a set of practices gauging and mapping new rooms for manoeuvre within the realms of its proper milieu.

Specifically, these three interweaving perspectives are:

1. Practices of knowledge production and performance

The aim of this perspective is to create academic formats that spawn a performance of knowledge which simultaneously reflects on its own performativity in the sense of an applied theory.

2. Collective knowledge development

The aim of this perspective is to experiment with different forms of collective knowledge production and presentation and thereby shape new academic formats.

3. Boundaries of academia

The aim of this perspective is to explore the boundaries of academia as well as the benefits of linking it with the non-academic.

Once this mapping has taken place, it will respectively denote the point of departure for the next joint symposium. That is, each symposium is preceded by a postprocessing, critically reflecting on the set of practices created throughout the previous symposium. The three joint symposia hence follow a non-directed movement of continuous, collective and participatory learning, negating the idea of a fixed re-location of academia as well as that of an evolutionary refinement of academic practice.

According to this, instead of a final documentation of results of research, the aim of *Unfolding the Academic – A critical Site Analysis in three loops* is to collect all interim findings in form of a dynamic user manual which will change continuously over the course of its taking place. This user manual will address academics as well as all others involved or interested in practices of collective knowledge production and performance.