

## WORKaffAIR exhibition - Texts on the participants

### **Oliver Ressler · Artist, Austria**

*The Fittest Survive* - video

*5 Factories–Worker Control in Venezuela* – film

Many of Oliver Ressler's works are collaborative productions. After working on *Venezuela from Below* (67mins 2004), Ressler again teamed up with Dario Azzellini to work on *5 Factories-Worker Control in Venezuela* (81mins 2006). Here, they captured the changes in Venezuela's productive sphere and use as locations, five large companies in various regions: a textile company, aluminum works, a tomato factory, a cocoa factory, and a paper factory. In all, the workers are struggling for different forms of co- or self-managements supported by subsidies from the government. The protagonists portrayed at the five production locations present insights into ways of alternative organizing and models of workers' control. Mechanisms and difficulties of self-organization are explained as well as the production processes. The situation in the five factories varies, but they share the common search for better models of production and life. Oliver Ressler, born in 1970, is an artist who is doing projects on issues of racism, genetic engineering, economics, forms of resistance and social alternatives.

[www.ressler.at](http://www.ressler.at)

### **bankleer · Artist group, Germany**

*deregulated* - video

*raus mit der arbeit rein mit der realität* - video

With performances, docu-fictional videos and the techniques of Expanded Cinema, we create installations on the subject of labor and economic critic. We frequently change contexts, switching between public space and artistic institutions, interweaving political initiatives with artistic actions. We also use activities and performances in order to transform current discourse into practice and to create an active interaction with our audience. During WORKaffAIR we like to discuss our experiments – attempts at opening up new dimensions in the concept of work by means of artistic intervention. At the beginning of this series of projects is an examination of our own deregulated and “flexibilized” economic situation, one where we are increasingly threatened by the impossibility of pursuing our own artistic work. The precariousness of the life of an artist is currently being marketed as cool and used to justify underpaid work as a new model for society. Necessity is the mother of invention: The more intense the strain, the greater the innovative force of subjects left to their own devices, left to discipline themselves. Every unemployed person an artist!

[www.bankleer.org](http://www.bankleer.org)

### **Sine Bang Nielsen · Artist, Denmark**

*Business Tarot* – interactive work

Sine Bang Nielsen graduated from The Jutland Academy of Fine Arts in 2005, with the final examination work *Corporate Citizen Church* that focused on the relation between spiritual values, work ethic and new philosophies of management. Ideas from this became the work *Business Tarot*, in 2006. *Business Tarot* deals with language and the attempts of companies, via courses that often have religious or personal development training as a background, to tap into the hidden potential of employees. *Business Tarot* aims to show the linguistic fusion between New Age and modern management and, thus, a fusion between private, spiritual space and the labour market.

Language is Sine Bang Nielsen's primary interest. How companies adopt language that is usually linked to spaces outside of the market economy - private or public - and in this way reinforce relations to employees and customers. The way in which market forces play with words, spirituality and feelings can create unlimited loyalty and erase all spaces, forms of logic, grounds for action and work that does not have economic growth as a catalyst. Sine Bang Nielsen is invited to produce new text pieces and make visible some of the research for WORKafAIR in collaboration with the organizers Anja Raithel and Grete Aagaard.

**Kristina Ask · Artist, Denmark**

*Drawings*

What is a professional art worker? Self-organising and notions of work. An artist receiving a monthly salary including social benefits? An artist running a "1"-business? On the basis of dominating parameters of 'quality', notions of 'professionalism' and the demands for 'self-sustainability' in the field of art, would it be relevant for art workers to self-organise? And even more radical to take the step and organise as workers across artistic, social and political working fields on the basis of a common passion toward and engagement in the potential of offering alternatives to the present world order? The question is if organising is at all possible for the role models of flexibility within the new liberal regime. In the scattered field of no/low-budget projects and research based art, self-organising is yet again becoming a strategy by which to navigate without having to fully accept the logic of capitalism. On the other hand, notions of freedom and autonomy in the art field threatens to limit our movements, actions and thinking if we dare not challenge continuity by for instance talking about feminism as experiences of conflicts and power games with both activism, organising and theory at the core. Does this make us amateurs?

[www.kristinaask.net](http://www.kristinaask.net)

**Organisers: Artist Grete Aagaard and curator Anja Raithel, Denmark**

*Text and research notes*

-both members of the collective non-profit exhibition space rum46 founded 1995 in Aarhus, Denmark. Grete Aagaard's artistic practice and Anja Raithel's curatorial practice focus on opening up a space for ethical and aesthetic reflection that is able to problematize static formations of opinion, to affect the foundation for exclusion and inclusion and to encourage the acceptance of differences. Together we have been investigating conceptions of work as related to power, freedom and community and conceptualized the project WORKafAIR. WORKafAIR is based in rum46. The exhibition space is run by 9 artists and theoreticians. The projects and art practices rum46 presents often focus on social dialogue, communication and action, which put important social and political problems in play. Among long-term projects are: Gæstebud - Feast/Hospitality (2002/2003), Solidarity UNLIMITED? Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (2004/2005), NEOTRIBES (2005) and ROSTA-fenster (2006), which have taken place in public spaces and in rum46.

[www.rum46.dk](http://www.rum46.dk)

[www.greteaagaard.net](http://www.greteaagaard.net)

[www.rum46.dk/collective/forside.html](http://www.rum46.dk/collective/forside.html)