



***transico***®



***emotional logistics***®



## ***„The authenticity of the self-replicating contradiction“***

**Vision:** overcome the functionalisation of art for the benefit of corporate processes.

We are artists who use corporate processes to express ourselves in the same way as, for instance, a sculptor uses a hammer. The insight into the underlying transicoherence of a commission drives our artistic process. The renewal of the artistic position is complex, as is the benefit for the companies. It results from the contradictory fusion of the organisational processes with the artistic processes. The finalised art is a spin-off of that fusion. It has neither use nor function for the organisation, but represents a value in itself as fine art.

The nucleus of our artistic conception is transicoherence. This neologism describes the state of the mentioned fusion at a given moment. We do not observe and explore the fertilising or restricting effects one process has on the other, but the constituent characteristics of the transicoherence. These characteristics differentiate themselves from those of the system of art as well as those of the system of business. An art spin-off is transicoherent, when its analysis requires a perceptive shift of the discourse in both systems.

### **Conditions for transicoherence**

1. It is not possible to commission art, but to assign an organisational task defined by an open process of preliminary exchange of expectations, perceptions, understanding, experience, requirements, and needs; like an empirical process of cognition.
2. Only current or planned organisational objectives of communication, innovation, change, productivity, sustainability, etc. are a mandatory pretext for the artistic process.
3. Despite the clear orientation on the objectives, all the managers and employees involved in or affected by the assigned task must be aware that an art project will be realised.
4. The forces set free by the objectives along the value chain evoke significant attitudes and actions amongst concerned managers and employees. These are the motives and actants, used by and crucial for the shaping of the artistic process.
5. What is conceived is the fusion of the organisational with the artistic process. The artistic process thus monitors the organisational process, while the organisational process finalises the art spin-off through the achievement of the objectives.
6. To obtain the highest potential from that fusion for the organisational process, the resulting art spin-off must be absolutely without any function or use. In an economic sense it is just waste.
7. The research for an authentic aesthetic form of expression through the organisational process drives the artistic process. The art spin-off evolves thus its own aesthetic meaning.
8. The fusion cannot abolish systemic blindness, if the objective is to abolish it. This always happens beyond or contrary to expectations.
9. The finalised art spin-off is the property of the artist, but remains on loan at the company. If a collector shows interest in it, the company decides on the sale and determines the price.



## ***„The benefit of aimlessness“***

Even if the execution seems the same as, for instance, for painters, sculptors, musicians, or conceptual artists working within organisations, there is a substantial difference in artistic research. The means of production of those arts are not organisational processes. This is significant for every single project and for our overall conception.

In opposition to the economic characteristics of services and products, the notion of art becomes an obvious designation, withdrawn from the recursive art defining instances, especially the art market. Our existential dependence is displaced from the result into the preparation, from the art product to the procurement of the means of production, starting from the very beginning of the contact to a client. His intention is of major importance for the emerging open process of preliminary exchange. Though the focus on certain objectives is relevant, pure curiosity for our approach, without any preconception, is the most fertile ground to define the task.

We never know beforehand what the art spin-off will be, but its autonomy, its liberation from every functional or monetary reference, is crucial for the artistic process. The art spin-off is our property. The client purchases the artistic process producing it. Artistic processes are always functional. The challenge is to perceive the form of the art spin-off induced by the specific context of the organisation.

As we use the organisational process as the artistic process, the progression of both processes correlates. Thus, the aesthetic appraisal allows detailed conclusions about the organisational process, and vice versa, which relate to skills, communication, operative or productive procedures, resources, etc. For example, during the artistic process, circumstances, constellations, or activities may appear which compromise the final autonomy of the art spin-off. This simultaneously shows a lack of coherence in the organisational process, and indicates precisely where and how it can be adjusted, in order for it to become optimal.

One process discloses what in the other would immanently remain hidden. This is possible despite the fusion of the artistic and the organisational process, because they are profoundly distinct by the purpose of the respective discourses. The economic or organisational discourse is obviously predominant due to its existential claim for profit. In defiance of that biased exclusivity, the coherence of the artistic discourse must assure the autonomy of the art spin-off.

The resistance of the artistic discourse uncovers the organisational discourse as being a discourse too. This disintegrates its evidence, and what seemed to be fact, appears as the consequence of a latent system of values, opinions, beliefs, fears, hopes, convictions, etc.

That is the juncture enabling the articulation of transicoherence as an attempt to reveal the specific aesthetic and beauty of the organisational process. Not embellished, downplayed, or arranged, but as it is.

This is for the organisation's sake. However, we see our quest for authenticity associated with the context of sustainability and the related paradox of economic welfare by consumption destroying resources and diversity.



## State of affairs

1. As shown in the supporting document, we are already realising projects.

Our approach is at present appreciated to a surprisingly limited extent of its entire scope, and our free artistic expression is unfortunately still restricted. The art spin-offs resulting from our projects mostly adapt already existing forms of art. As soon as our conception and approach finds broader acceptance, we are convinced that the form of the art spin-offs will attain completely new artistic dimensions (e.g. using the electronic infrastructure in organisations).

The limited appreciation applies analogously to the management processes, so that we have to draw on existing management models, although our approach is very suited to generating new forms in this respect.

2. We carry out presentations, workshops, study groups and artistic actions, etc. to promote our approach. The objective is to share our experience in initiating, developing, planning, executing, and controlling the fusion of artistic and organisational processes.
3. At the end of September 2008 we are organising a symposium in Berlin.
4. This will allow a comprehensive publication, with documentation and contributions from different people and perspectives of art, science, and business.
5. The homepage in English and French and a blog will soon be available.
6. We are active in many different networks: AACORN, econsense, SCI, EMWD, etc.



## Supporting documents

### Examples



#### **1. THE ACCELERATOR** (also the name in German)

(Oak, construction steel, bricks, plummet, signal tape, Perspex panels, aluminium-spacers)

After years of preliminary exchange, we finally developed this object for one of the leading and most rapidly growing European companies in the field of construction project management.

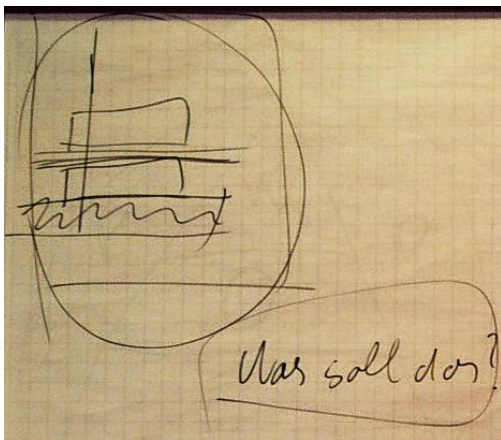
The impact of the corporate values on the company's operational growth is exceedingly significant. Concurrently, the important growth challenges the transmission of the relevance of these values to the likewise growing, newly hired, and highly qualified staff.

Actually, the object monitors, as part of the artistic process, the internal transmission of the corporate values.

As long as the object has any value or use for this organisational process, the process will achieve the final material form of the object by accelerating the transmission of the corporate values. Only afterwards does it become an art spin-off. At least until this time, it remains on loan at the company.

The following instructions for use, integrated in internal organisational processes, describe the handling, the function, and the symbolic meaning of the Accelerator. To formulate, discuss, and clarify these instructions for use, workshops for all employees were organised. Essential for the success of the artistic or organisational process is not the object as such in its material presence, but the compliance with and the execution of the instructions for use.

- **Instructions for use** (translation of excerpts of the original document)



The three layers of the oaken plywood represent Exchange, Openness, and Appreciation (EOA). Vertically anchored in that block, the construction steel symbolises the main principle of the company's philosophy: EOA is profit-oriented because of the maxim that trust is more profitable than control.

Symbolising growth, including new staff, the bricks can move along the steel, which fortifies their orientation and identity within the overall construction.

The plummet between the bricks, aligned to the vertical of the steel, cannot move freely. It stands for the commitment (obligation) to sincere communication.

"What's that?" If EOA following that question empowers new employees, customers, or guests to transmit on their own the significance of the Accelerator, according to these instructions, they add, as proof, a new piece of signal tape between plummet and brick.



Responsibility for EOA is constitutive for the health of the company.

In any critical situation generating a lack of communication and affecting EOA, the Accelerator and its artistic discourse offer various and playful opportunities to bypass destructive conflicts.

For example:

- A bouquet of flowers with a signal tape bow
- An invitation written on signal tape
- A special gift wrapped in signal tape

The conflicting parties likewise clamp these pieces of signal tape between plummet and brick as a sign of mutual appreciation visible to all.

The communication of the Accelerator's significance, manifesting EOA, achieves its intention. Not arbitrarily, but as a guarantee everybody can point to when, for example, reproaches are not openly expressed.

Articulating the invulnerability, inviolability, and transparency of the principle between them, the two Perspex panels are therefore an inseparable component of the overall conception

In this sense, the Accelerator represents a tangible symbol of the philosophy of the company with respect to the desired cooperation and togetherness.

• **Neutral contribution**



To ensure the aesthetic meaning, a neutral art historian not knowing anything of the context and the background of the project analysed the object.

Her analysis, made available to all employees, confirmed the functional discourse. This emphasised the identification with the project, because it pointed out an artistic meaning of the Accelerator rooted in a context beyond the company.

The motivation to actively take part in the art project increased, and thereby the discussion, and internalisation of the corporate values.

Excerpts of the analysis

“The composition appears almost playful, with the motionless signal tape, but also timeless, due to the slack way in which the tape hangs down smoothly. The tape underlines the building site connection of the object, but at the same time seems helpless and useless because there is nothing supposedly dangerous from which to be protected.

All four elements: the wood, the steel, the bricks, and the plummet, are in contact with each other, put pressure on each other, or ‘communicate’. In this way, they adopt a social component. All four elements, which are building materials, seem to be alienated from their purpose, removed from their real purpose and function. However, their combination achieves a new function in the way that they interact with each other. The object doesn't seem to be completely finished, but at an intermediate stage which will change.”



## 2. PERFORMANCE

The defined task was to find a solution for the benchmark affecting tensions between the three divisions of a public limited company. (28,000 employees, 6 weeks to realise the project)

After a profound analysis of the internal situation, we developed the concept for a company specific performance, representing each division by a different genre: Division A = expressive painter, B = conservative actor, C = progressive saxophonist. Our artistic objective was to find a structure to simulate the cooperation of the divisions. When required, the management board gave feedback.



At the beginning, it was perfectly unclear how the artists could express the situation of the company. There was no text, no plot, and no reference. After some days, the intensive search for a solution leads to heavy tension. The saxophonist wanted to give up. The actor was accused of being a failure. To prove that she is a good actor she recites, in a last desperate attempt, a monologue from her casting repertoire (Heinrich von Kleist: Penthesilea), instead of improvising textually the situation of the company.

Suddenly the conflict is resolved. Painter and saxophonist use instruments: paintbrush, and saxophone. Therefore, the actor must use an instrument too: a poetic text. Thus, it separates the functional language of the context of the company from the language of the performance itself. The structure of the performance lies open: the saxophonist and the actor are in sequential dialogue, which the painter expresses in parallel by painting.

That meant for the company:



1. The identity of the company stems historically and verbally just from division B. (Actor) All divisions are not equally represented. Therefore, all divisions must consciously formulate by mutual consent a neutral corporate identity, using it as an instrument of communication on a common level.

2. A matrix structure is more suitable than three separate divisions: B and C are combined, A is crosswise.

The company checked and agreed these propositions and then implemented them. After the restructuring, executed by an external consultancy, the performance (EBIT) increased considerably.

The art spin-off is not the painting, but the artistic performance it-self.

One more detail

To find out who starts the artistic performance and how, it was necessary to know, who issues the primary information for the process of production in the company. This position was hitherto held by division B (mechanical engineering), represented by the actor, against the growing dominance of Division C (electronics), represented by the saxophonist. Aesthetically speaking, the best solution was to start with the saxophone in the dark. This proposition sparked off the repressed conflict of inherited privileges in the company. Finally, the actor appeared at first silently on stage, guided out of the dark by the invisible saxophonist.

At this level of differentiation, the artistic process becomes a simulation model.



### **3. TANGLES AND CLEWS** (*confused processes*)



When conscious or unconscious circumstances manipulate the open process of preliminary exchange, it is not possible to clarify adequately expectations, understandings, requirements, and needs. In most of those cases, the fusion of the artistic and organisational processes produces tangles and clews.

To reboot the open process of preliminary exchange, two options are possible: Either to realise the unconscious circumstances or to unmask the conscious manipulation.

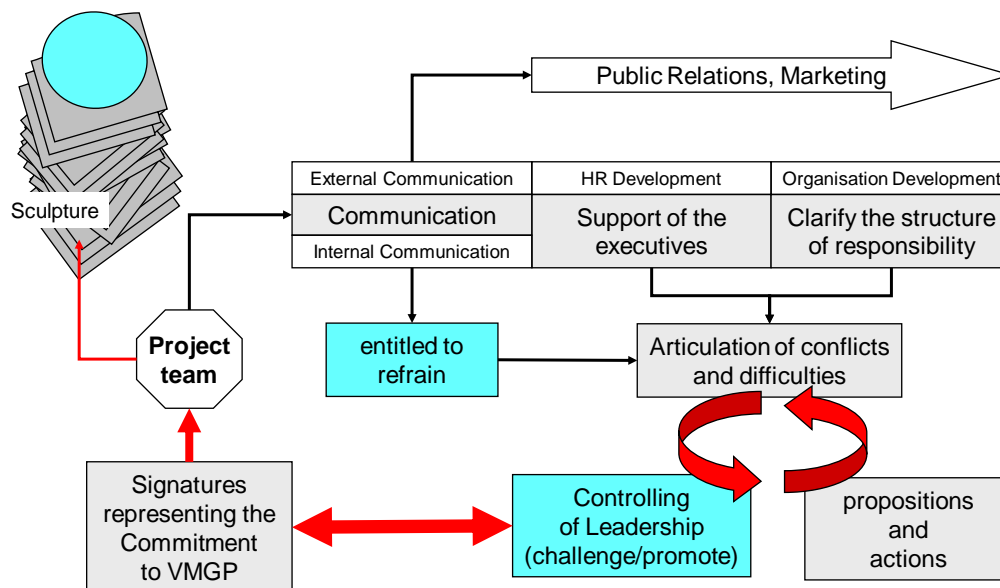


#### 4. NEW SPIRIT

(At the final vote, the management board decided against the realisation of that concept)

After a merger, the defined task was to clarify the structure of responsibility, to strengthen leadership and to secure the commitment of the executives and the 50,000 employees to the new Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles (=VMGP) of the company.

Concept: A Perspex ball, manufactured on that behalf by a production section of the company, wanders worldwide from top to bottom through all departments and all levels of responsibility. Starting at the Board of Management, each executive has to hand over the ball to the next lower level of hierarchy. Before doing so, each executive and his/her colleagues sign a blank piece of paper, confirming, that by touching the ball they are committed to the corporate identity agreed with the VMGP.



The respective executive submits this paper to the project team before handing over the ball to the next executive. This way it is always clear who is responsible for the ball at any given moment. Internal communications inform from the very start and throughout the entire corporation that anybody is entitled to refrain from signing. Thus, conflicts or difficulties may be articulated and the project team, if requested, can propose specific help, moderations, or actions. The concept is integrated in all programs of organisational and personnel development. In all, the Perspex ball "travels" more than 2 years.

The art spin-off of the fused processes is an aesthetic and unique sculpture: A 63 cm high stack of grey papers (200g/m<sup>2</sup>) with some 48,000 signatures. On top sits the translucent, cyan coloured Perspex ball of 21 cm in diameter. (≈ 6,3 kg ≈ 4,800 cm<sup>3</sup> ≈ 10 employees per cm<sup>3</sup>)



## 5. AUTHENTICITY OF MARKETING (a project on our own behalf)

The initial question was, “Is there such a thing as authentic marketing?” In the search for a solution to this apparent contradiction, it became clear, according to our approach, that the marketer must remain completely or at least largely anonymous.



### • The Cubes

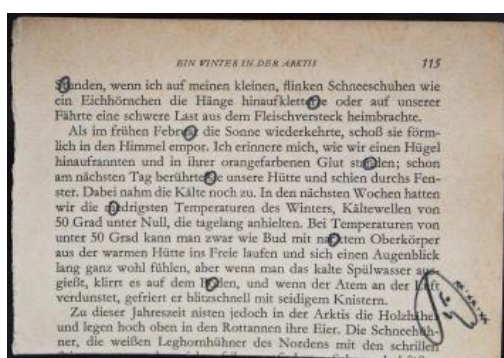
We sent these hand-made cubes anonymously to top-mangers engaged particularly in art. On the six inner sides of the large cube are the words: authenticity of the self-replicating contradiction. On the six outer sides of the smaller cube, loose inside the large cube and when shaken, making indefinable noises, are the words: Trust needs time. We received no replies, and we assume the security services destroyed the cubes.

### • The Cards

Over a period of two years (2004-2005) we sent 375 handmade, registered, signed, and dated cards by post to executives.

The cards are comprised of pages from old Readers Digest Select Editions books stuck together. We dated and signed one side and ringed the letters t, r, a, n, s, i, c, o. On the other side, we wrote the recipients address by hand in pencil on an additional label glued to the card.

A surprising 16.8%, equal to 63 people, responded to the card by e-mail, telephone, or letter. The contact with the respondents showed, without going into detail, that the high response rate was due to three factors:



1. The playful element with the letters motivated their curiosity to find out who was behind the card.

2. The unsettling element of anonymity and the unusual card sought clarification.

3. They often connected the different text excerpts with their own situation, although we sent them randomly to each recipient.

### Short-list of anecdotes

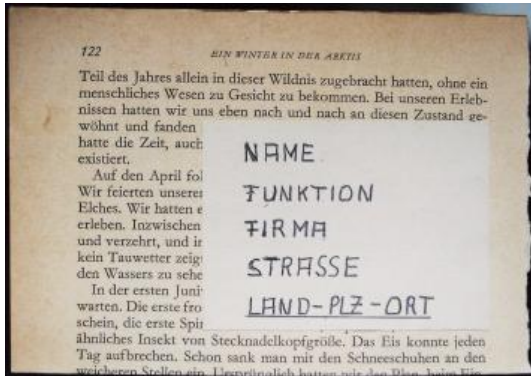
a. One person received the card at a time when she was planning a business trip to the Middle East. By chance, she received a text excerpt with a story entitled “collision course.” The few lines on the card told the story of a pilot seeing appear a plane out of the clouds and flying directly towards him.

If she had not find out who sent the card, she would have most probably cancelled the flight and informed relevant authorities. She thought that it could have been a conscious warning.



b. We sent cards to several executives in the same company at the same time. A few days later the security services employed by the company contacted us, threatening with the police, demanding a written explanation what the cards were supposed to achieve.

The title of the excerpt was, by chance, the sinking of the battleship Bismarck.



We compiled a comprehensive response and sent it to the security services. They communicated the statement to all the executives in the company who should have received the card. Shortly afterwards some executives, even those who were not on the list, contacted us, upset that they had not received the card. They would very much have liked to have had the scarce copy of something that had caused such agitation in the company! Unfortunately, there were no more pages with the Bismarck story.

c. The excerpt relates the feelings of a blind man, called Joseph Veith, overcoming his reluctance to trust a blind dog. When the executive, who received the card, contacted us, she asked what we had to do with one of her employees called Joseph Veith and what the card was insinuating about her leadership abilities. She admitted to have some troubles winning his confidence.

It is easily comprehensible that at first she did not want to believe that it was purely coincidence. The probability that she receives a card with the name of one of her employees is extremely small.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. Note the thoughtful absence of terms as creative or intervention.

2. The oldest story I relate explicitly to my artistic aspiration is an experience I had when I was seven years old.

In our neighbourhood lived a girl attending the same school class. Her father was an extremely violent man and often drunk. The last day when we received our school certificate, we went home together. I knew that she had failed and asked her compassionately: "Your dad will be angry with you?" She did not answer.

Half an hour later during lunch the bell rang. It was the father of the girl and he disappeared with my father in the adjoining room. Shortly afterwards my father called me in. I entered the room and without any comment, he gave me a hard smack. The only one I ever received from my father. I fled to my mother in the kitchen.

Some minutes later my father returned, took me immediately in his arms and said, "I love you, please forgive me, but this was the only way to prevent her to be beaten. She has told him you had been gloating that he will be angry with her. I know this is not true!"

Those phenomena of misunderstanding (P. Watzlawick: It is true what B understands not what A says) influence still profoundly my life. Marcel Proust comforted me, deliberating about Bergotte in the second volume of *A La Recherche Du Temps Perdu*:

»Enfin la qualité toujours rare et neuve de ce qu'il écrivait se traduisait dans sa conversation par une façon si subtile d'aborder une question, en négligeant tous ses aspects déjà connus, qu'il avait l'air de la prendre par un petit côté, d'être dans le faux, de faire du paradoxe, et qu'ainsi ses idées semblaient le plus souvent confuses, chacun appelant idées claires celles qui sont au même degré de confusion que les seines propres. D'ailleurs toute nouveauté ayant pour condition l'élimination préalable du poncif auquel nous étions habitués et qui nous semblait la réalité même, toute conversation neuve, aussi bien que toute peinture, toute musique originales, paraîtra toujours alambiquée et fatigante. Elle repose sur des figures auxquelles nous ne sommes pas accoutumés, le causeur nous paraît ne parler que par métaphores, ce qui lasse et donne l'impression d'un manque de vérité. (Au fond, les anciennes formes de langage avaient été elles aussi autrefois des images difficiles à suivre quand l'auditeur ne connaissait pas encore l'univers qu'elles peignaient. Mais depuis longtemps on se figure que c'était l'univers réel, on se repose sur lui.)»

Now, working within the context of corporate structures it is possible to manipulate certain conditions of perception and thereby to reduce misunderstandings. The projects are rather the stage to perform our poetry. Alas, the phenomenon persists as such when we try to give an understanding of our artistic approach.