

Organising Discourse Open Lecture

Silvia Franceschini (IT)

Time: Thursday 12 February 2015, 5 - 6 PM

Venue: Konstfack, Mandelgren (next to Svarta havet)

LM Ericssons väg 14, Stockholm. T-bana: Telefonplan



Global Tools workshop at Sambuca Val di Pesa (Firenze), 1-2 November 1974
Courtesy Archive U. La Pietra-A. Raffo

The first 2015 Organising Discourse Open Lecture explores approaches to research and education as forms of discursive platforms. Here through the historical example of how Global Tools was developed as an experimental art and design counterschool in the early 1970's Italy.

GLOBAL TOOLS 1973-1975: When Education will coincide with Life

Global Tools was a multidisciplinary experimental program of design education founded in 1973 in Italy by members of the Italian Radical Architecture - including Ettore Sottsass Jr., Superstudio, Gianni Pettena and Andrea Branzi among others - in conversation with exponents from Arte Povera and Conceptual Art, such as Germano Celant, Luciano Fabro, Giuseppe Chiari,

Franco Vaccari and Davide Mosconi, and hiddenly linked with the avant-garde movements in Europe and North America.

It was conceived as a diffuse system of laboratories (firstly in Florence, Milan and Naples) promoting the "[...] study and use of natural materials and their behavioural characteristics" with the support of media (namely the magazine *Casabella*) and aimed to establish an alternative relation with the Italian Industry.

The movement developed in the complex socio-political and cultural Italian context of the early 1970s, oscillating between the vivid intellectual environment of operaist theories and the critical political moment of terrorism known as "Anni di piombo" (Years of Lead).

The idea underpinning this counterschool was to conjugate the most utopian and intransigent aspirations of Radical Architecture with alternative life solutions inspired by Stewart Brand's *The Whole Earth Catalog*, in order to invent new operational "tools" for the upcoming era of globalization. Global Tools initiators invested in building a program of research and education outside the institutional frame of university and a notion of industrial design never renewed, with the goal to free individual creativity from cultural superstructures that hindered or slowed its expressive capacity. But, in 1976, Global Tools had already entered a new period in which the avant-garde would be a mass phenomenon, laying the foundations for a conceptual and transgressive design destined to outlive the school itself.

The lecture of Silvia Franceschini *GLOBAL TOOLS 1973-1975: When Education will coincide with Life* anticipates the homonymous upcoming e-publication with SALT Istanbul (March 2015) co-curated together with Valerio Borghonovo.

Silvia Franceschini is a curator and researcher. She is currently a PhD candidate in design and art theory at the Politecnico di Milano, Milan. Her recent curatorial projects include: *Sources Go Dark* (Center for Contemporary Art FUTURA, Prague, 2015); *Global Tools. 1973-1975: Towards an Ecology Of Design* (SALT, Istanbul, 2014); *The Way of Enthusiasts* (V-A-C Foundation at La Biennale di Venezia - Architettura, Parallel Program, Venice, 2012); *Mazama Residency Program* (Mazama, Washington, USA, 2011). She has previously worked as assistant curator for the Archive for Spatial Aesthetic and Praxis ASAP (Berlin, 2011) and at the Design Department of the Centre Pompidou (Paris, 2009). Her articles and interviews have appeared in *Afterall*, *Alfabeta*, *Domus*, *Abitare*. She has lectured at SALT in Istanbul, Cittadellarte Fondazione

Pistoletto in Biella, Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design in Moscow and The Architecture and Urbanism College of University of São Paulo among others. Silvia Franceschini is a member of the curatorial team of the upcoming Second Kyiv International Biennale of Contemporary Art 2015 led by Georg Schöllhammer and Hedwig Saxenhuber. She holds an MA from Politecnico di Milano and a post-graduate degree from the Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design in Moscow.

ORGANISING DISCOURSE is an independent postgraduate course at Konstfack, exploring and developing platforms for discourse within the crafts, design and architecture. It aims to support and invigorate the development of new conceptual and physical spaces for presentation and display, meetings, discussions and debate, research and modes of production, etc. Within the crafts, design and architecture, it focuses on experimental, investigative and critical practices. Course leader is Magnus Ericson, project coordinator, curator and guest teacher at Konstfack, University College of Art, Crafts and Design.