A project by Institut für Alles Mögliche, co-organized by Joanna Turek.
Review by Joanna Turek.

STORAGE TREASURES

150 (one hundred and fifty) – with this amount of usb sticks we shuffled
for three days between January 24th and 26th 2014. Winter frost did not
discourage the visitors, who at the opening night were running around the
city in search of the exhibitions and projects organized within the
framework of the TRANSMEDIALE VORSPIEL 2014 (transmediale festival's warm-
up), of which the USB-SHUFFLE-SHOW (TWO) was a part of as well.
The Institute's archive has been enriched with usb devices from the United
States, Australia, Russia, Poland, Italy, Germany, Spain, Sweden and some
other parts of the world, containing video works, music compositions,
pictures, mesmerizing collages and generative art. Much to the I-A-M
cheerful delight guests who arrived at the exhibition's opening had no
doubts about the courageous shuffling, mixing the images with films or
music works, making their own narrations or simply going through one work
after another. Mini-shows arranged by the visitors were displayed with a
projector and screens installed on the wall with headphones attached, for
those who wanted to view the works for their own use and pleasure. Art
pieces hidden in the usb devices – in most cases being works of art
themselves – have not only been made with different types of media but also
represented different dynamics. Some of them demanded user's activity – as
the piece by Rebecca Baxter (I-A-M's resident) based on processing
(programming language), enabling the user to create its own work on screen
each time when clicking the 'refresh button'. Others demanded the viewer's
patience – like Stefan Riebel's sequentially displaying partitions
displaying words in random order that could be read as poems. Also its
topical scope was immense – Institute's guests have an occasion to choose
from illustrative or critical works, short documents as well as visual
ironic comments on everyday life and art itself – e.g. Rafał Dominik's gifs
made of classical Polish paintings flickering in the rhythm of electronic
music.
Some of the works could be correctly read only with the mysterious cards
and pictures attached to the letters…But how to properly interpret an
artwork that in one second can be transformed into something completely
different by the exhibition's participants? – or maybe better: the 'users'

of the show?

The USB-SHUFFLE-SHOW based on the idea of copyleft and collective practice once again posed questions concerning curatorial gestures and participation. The project perfectly matched with one of this year's transmediale events: an 'ecosystem of excess' that grows in the age of new media, real-time electronic communication and the infinite storage possibilities. In a micro-scale this ecosystem was built up in the Institute's space as well. Questions like: How much 'free space' does an usb-device provide? Are multiple usb-sticks an exhibition – or even an art fair? were raised during the USS and gained a new meaning in the context of the festival's events. Works displayed during the USS (TWO) entailed further questions concerning its quantity and quality – is this 'trash' or is this 'treasure' (to quote one of the festival's catchwords)? To what extent the space which a usb provides can be called a free space – in the context of the copyrights as well as the aesthetic norms and values – set by who? These issues are particularly current also considering the fact that works sent via USS (TWO) open call were not subjected to any selection. Every piece participated and has been part of the show.

After the opening night there were two more days for some reflection on the mentioned issues during the exhibition opening hours…which does not mean that we have managed to answer all these questions listed above…quite the opposite! Be prepared to collect more questions and usb-sticks for following edition(s)…