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[TRANSFORM > CALENDAR](#)

Self-Education. Exhibition and Workshop

National Center for Contemporary Art Moscow

6 September until 1 October 2006

Participants:

Marco Scotini (Italy)
 Alterazioni video (Italy)
 Etcetera (Argentina)
 Arte Callejero (GAC) (Argentina)
 La Comunitaria TV (Argentina)
 Contra File (Brazil)
 Bijari (Brazil)
 Andreas Siekmann & Alice Creischer (Germany)
 Oliver Ressler (Austria)
 Jakob Jakobsen (Denmark)
 Juan Pablo Macias (Mexico)
 WHW (Croatia)
 Bojana Piskur (Slovenia)
 Zanny Begg (Australia)
 Frédéric Maufra (France)
 Susan Kelly (UK)
 Marcelo Expósito (Spain)
 CAT group (Novosibirsk, Russia)
 Chto delat' ? What is to be done? (St. Petersburg, Russia)
 Found Clothes Factory (St. Petersburg, Russia)
 Radek Community (Moscow, Russia)
 Elena Kovylin (Moscow, Russia)

Dialectically, education is not the key to transformation, but transformation is in itself educational.

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

The show and workshop "Self-Education" will be opened on September 6th at the National Center for Contemporary Art in Moscow.

In recent years, one can observe a crisis of education all over the world. It is paralleled by a deep crisis in the formation of political subjectivity. Both are results of a deep transformation in globalized capitalism's overall mode of production. Many 20th century dispositions of engagement, solidarity, or participation in processes of governance have suffered a serious defeat, last but not least because of the standstill of any mass movement on the left. By the same token, the disciplinary humanist ideal of a well-

balanced education that empowers its holder with not only a sense of civic rights and responsibilities, but also the means for changing and overturning the present state of affairs has dissolved both in theory and practice: disciplinary autonomy seems all the more untenable when its basis (i.e. in state funding) erodes, when it is scrapped, privatized, or outsourced.

Both crises obviously find their reflection in contemporary artistic praxis. Even when it is critical, contemporary artistic praxis often lacks both the necessary professional competency and the political subjectivity needed to make a weighty statement. Yet, as we all know, art has the capacity for *transforming* and *constituting* reality in the sense of the German word *Bildung*, not only providing people with venues for political subjectification, but also re-weaving the very fabric of culture that conveys the resulting subjectivities, activating and forming their supposedly passive audiences. In other words, the quantity of politicized artistic practices has yet to take on a quality of its own.

What is to be done? How can we become more? How can we learn from the transformation currently underway? How important is the *constitution* or *formation* of political subjectivity under new conditions important to your aesthetic practice? How do you structure your dialogue, confrontation, or intervention with existing political, educational, and artistic institutions? Which role does self-education or “self-constitution” play of working beyond institutional or disciplinary strictures, beyond state and capital? How does this reflect back onto your aesthetic praxis? What are the political and aesthetic implications? Which new social forms arise?

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