

lecture on the occasion of the eacwp (european association of creative writing programme) conference "the art and the craft", may 2023

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about (christian) ide hintzes 7fold

my talk is about one of the founders of our organization, the eacwp, christian ide hintze, who died almost exactly ten years ago. ide, whom many of us knew, is interesting to us not only for sentimental reasons, but also because he found a personal way to reconcile his practice as a writer, poet, artist with that as a teacher and cultural bureaucrat as the head of an educational institution.

many of us are also in the situation of having to find an arrangement between the artistic and the bureaucratic. ide's method of transforming the bureaucratic into something artistic, thus maintaining an unbroken artistic identity, is worth telling.

first, some facts about ide himself: christian ide hintze was born in vienna in 1953, the son of a upper middle-class family. after school he first led a bohemian existence as a street musician and so-called "zettel poet" - a handbill poet. he wrote poetry and distributed it on handbills in the streets to strangers. he thus became a local viennese celebrity. in the 70s and 80s ide transformed himself into a serious author of "expanded poetry" concepts: tape and video works, performances, etc.. at the same time he seeks and finds contact to the classic beat poets like ed sanders and allen ginsberg. in 1987 he publishes "die goldene flut" – "the golden tide", his most famous work, which was very well received.

the book contains nearly a hundred poems of different natures: long, short, pathetic, laconic, ironic, polemical, enigmatic and those in explicit language.

each poem is headed with a brief reference to the work of another author: this can be a piece of poetry, a story, a letter, but also a piece of music or a pop song: it becomes clear in which cultural space hintze wants to see himself located: american beat poetry, pop and rock music, austrian avant-garde, the classical, bourgeois canon.

at the same time he prepares the foundation of the school of poetry in vienna, which is founded in 1991 and immediately begins to network internationally.

at the end of the 90s, ide starts working on his 7fold concept, 7fold, which ide himself considered his theoretical opus magnum.

i will now deal with this mysterious 7fold-poetics of ide hintze and, in doing so, try to describe one of its aspects, the so-called "infrastructural poetry" as the core element of pretty much all of ide hintzes activities.

7fold[4]

7fold is a theory, or better, a theory-like construct by ide hintze, his attempt to structure and shape poetry work according to its occasions, genres, objects, its forms of distribution and effects.

7fold exists only in rudimentary descriptions. there are some sketches, tables, the notes of lectures, but nothing completed. there is also no definition of the poetic in the strict sense - the term remains in creative blur. instead, there are descriptions of contexts and constellations of poetic acts, this in a certain austrian avant-garde tradition (hc artmann). in short, 7fold is a rather flexible affair and highly situational.

for ide hintze, 7fold has been an important component of his readings and performances, a vehicle of self-assurance and legitimation, also - and this is a guess - to create an interface between the poetic and all the interests that drive him.

the most powerful tool for this is the so-called "infrastructural poetry."

with this ide hintze describes the handling of technical and social operating systems, which the poet has to take into account in his work, and which he may also have to produce himself, if this should be necessary for the unfolding of his work[5].

under the sign of infrastructural poetry, the poet can let life and poetry interpenetrate each other in a very practical way. diverse and wide-ranging adventures of poetization can be experienced.

ide hintze uses infrastructural poetry like aladdin uses the genie:

- ide likes to swim? why not hold a poetry class in the swimming pool of the viennese oberlaa spa?[6]

- ide likes to travel: and already poetry schools are being founded in spain, colombia, and indonesia.

- or - attention anecdote! - ide is interested in football: and already a delegation of the school of poetry is in the underground parking of milan's san siro stadium to invite referee pierluigi collina to a reading in vienna. ide hintze was impressed by collina's style of officiating matches - quote, "mr. collina, you are poetry in motion!"

collina agrees and a photo showing him and the vienna poetry school delegation in the san siro garage can be found two days later in the soft news of the kronenzeitung, the biggest austrian tabloid newspaper[7].

ides hintzes' somewhat shamanic attempt to poeticize potentially all areas of life is at the same time an attempt at self-poeticization. he thus stands in a long, eventful and controversial tradition of perceiving art and life as an aesthetic totality.

around the year 2000, when he began to develop his 7fold concept, this theme had just become popular again under the catchphrase lkw[8] - ide was thus quite up to date. lkw stands for lebenskunstwerk (not for lastkraftwagen, die german word for truck), a neologism coined by the art theorist and exhibition organizer paolo bianchi and made the subject of various publications and exhibitions.

similar to ide hintzes 7fold, there are no rigid aesthetic-biographical methods in lkw, but elastic to fluid connections between artist biography and work.

bianchi presents many different forms and strategies of the lkw, most of which are subtle and non-confrontational. the inward look - a nice keyword by bianchi is "self-subversion" - and the casual infiltration of the work into the world seem to be way of choice[9]. similarly, ide's 7-fold poetics is also not aggressive and rather recommends the judo-like transformation of existing forces and swings into art and aesthetic experience.

this is already a principle in ide hintze's „zettelgedichten“ - handbill poems from the 1970s[10]: an example: he writes a poem to give to workers in front of a factory gate.

*ohne diesen zettel,
hätten wir beide
eine bewegung weniger gemacht*

—

without this piece of paper
you and i would have
made one movement less

in this poem, the place and moment of its delivery are anticipated as a kind of frozen impulse that unfolds into a social poetic miniature at the moment of delivery in front of the factory gate.

in fact, the shaping of social processes with poetic methods remains a characteristic of ide hintze, even if ide changes with the success of the viennese school from a poet to a literary impresario with an office and staff. in this way, a trivial problem of housing an organization can also become a question of poetic representation.

castles and institutes

ide hintze dreams of a worthy address for the school of poetry. the address on the posh mariahilfer strasse in vienna is not enough. he imagines something peripatetic: an ancient academy, preferably with a neighboring park. or a castle, renaissance, baroque, whatever....

hintze decides: the school of poetry must grow, it must operate worldwide, it needs space! allies are sought to whom this vision can be blown.

there is the neugebäude in simmering, an imperial residence from the 16th century. a ruin. but imposing [11].

or the palais rasumowsky, a rather brittle empire box, but large![12]
walk-throughs are arranged, to which ministerial bureaucrats and potential donors are invited. the cause is growing!

here is a quote from the 1999 annual report of the school of poetry:

representatives of the federal government, the city of vienna, the viennese arts organizations, the sfd and related viennese literary organizations take part in the inspection. the object is judged to be ideal. plans for its use and costs are drawn up.

what seems like a megalomaniac phantasmagoria is basically a harmless reverie, which ide never risks having to turn into reality.

to say it with robert musil: his sense of reality (wirklichkeitssinn) recognizes in time when his sense of possibility (möglichkeitssinn) has to be limited.

ide navigates very securely in his very own world of dreamy hypotheses. he, an entertaining tour guide in this sphere, finds many people who are very happy to be led around in it: ministers and architects, investors and politicians are charmed by ide hintzes caprices and play along. they all think: this rasumowsky would be a wonderful poet's nest!

the projects all fail, but strangely enough, these defeats, do not diminish ide hintzes reputation, because a side-shoot of these efforts unexpectedly bears fruit: the foundation of a university institute for literary writing suddenly comes within reach. a committee of proponents around ide hinze emerges, powerful confederates appear, and a very austrian process blossoms: former ministers and other gray eminences pull strings. official and unofficial meetings with important people take place. suddenly, an invitation to a parliamentary enquete!

the president of the parliament, a petite person, receives in her office a delegation of poets[13] under ide hintzes leadership - behind her a huge hermann nitsch action-painting - the lady obviously has a heart for the modern arts. but still she has trouble following the very artfully ornamented plea for a poetry university that unexpectedly bursts out of gerd jonke, prominent writer and member of the delegation.

ide hinze translates into social democratic for her and thus saves the situation. a general consent is emerging . even more talks with delegates, even more consent.

all this leads to an institute for language arts at a viennese art university[14].

but suddenly ide hinze hesitates.

now that an institutional position, even a professorship, is within reach, this smooth networker becomes an unpredictable troublemaker who snubs his university negotiating partners. that takes him out of the running. he leaves the reaping to others. hintze, who wants to see a poetic act in the mastery of institutions - see 7fold - seems to fail precisely here.

later it became apparent that ide found the conversations with the university hierarchs unpleasantly petty. behind all the academic pomp, he had discovered the oppressively bureaucratic rulebook of large state institutions: meager budgets, committee work, exclusivity clauses, compulsory attendance.

ide hintzes relationship to institutions is, to use a fashionable term, polyamorous: he likes to feel committed to an institution, but not exclusively and only on his own terms. he recognizes: the university is a trap, the new institute a poisoned fruit.

the school of poetry, on the other hand, is the generous companion that accepts, indeed demands of him, his eccentricity and volatility.

after more than ten years of preparation, a university language arts institute finally comes into being, in which ide hinze, the spiritus rector, will play no role. he writes off the project.

infrastructural poetry in detail

ide hinze's poetic eros could not always assert itself in the ritual of readings and performances, but it unfolded reliably on the occasion of his budget and cooperation negotiations. he was not in the habit of attending these meetings alone, but embedded

in the ensemble of a delegation, which gave these encounters a ceremonial, almost theatrical color.

a delegation had little to say; it listened to the dialogue between guest and host, both an attentive audience. often ide and his vis-à-vis fell into a chamber play tone and seemed to forget their audience. but the delegation members knew of their dramaturgical necessity and were not irritated. sometimes ide invited someone from his entourage to contribute something to the conversation, a little solo to which he added his accents as conductor of the whole.

ide hintze's conversation partners always seemed delighted to meet him: he was able to subtly sense moods and respond to needs without necessarily having any discernible opportunistic motive. the rare mixture of narcissism and generosity, benevolence, letting live, yes, sometimes even a consoling undertone, lured people out of their reserve: a sektionschef - a high governmental executive - who forgets himself and laments about the superior minister, a cultural official, this time from vienna, who drops all bureaucratic airs and graces ide with his true existence as a fine mind and home de lettre or (attention, anecdote!), moving, a meeting with franz morak, state secretary for culture in the right wing government of 2000, whom ide hintze still knew from a time when morak was also a musician in addition to his profession as an stage actor[15].

morak had some similarities with ide hintze: the interest in pop with simultaneous proximity to the classical canon, the exhibitionist temperament, the play with institutions - but - in contrast to ide - precisely in this without fortune: morak, a strange figure who seemed to unite the entire spectrum of the cultural scene - from burgtheater actor to punk musician - in one person, had incurred the wrath of the hostile cultural scene as the scapegoat of the „wende“-government.

when ide invited to accompany him to the art section of the federal chancellery, he was asked if he really wanted to visit this outcast ("no one with self-respect, talk to him"), the surprising answer: this was a mystification, almost all cultural institutions were queuing up and hoping to benefit from the expected reallocation of funds; morak was only taking his time out of old friendship.

at the meeting, ide managed an astonishingly agile and multi-layered performance in which he gave the exhausted and obviously unhappy minister repeated opportunities for self-development. the concerns of the sfd were spread out like an annoying triviality that also had to be done. morak, who was facing some humiliations or better self-humiliations in the coming years, was reluctant to let ide and us, his small delegation, go after a long audience.

the visit was successful in that the interests of the vienna poetry school were respected, but ide also did not seem particularly ambitious to make undue use of the favor. this visit had been one of the duties of the head of the school of poetry. at the same time, it showed ide's conception of loyalty that was personal rather than political. morak did not have a bad reputation with ide. not even when morak's star had sunk.

much like ide in his final years, morak as an older gentleman attempted an evocation of the old rocker myth. however, under much more melancholy auspices - here's a little digression from the ide theme - four song lines from franz morak's last record:

*räumen wir den schuppen
leeren wir die bar
die party ist geschichte
und alles nicht mehr wahr*

let's clear the shed

let's empty the bar
the party is over
and everything a lie

an now an other example for the interplay between the infrastructures of the school of poetry with ide hintzes lkw:

ide hintze always wanted to be a pop star...

...at first a bit shabby, in the 70s as a street musician and more serious, from the 90s, as a sampling and recycling virtuoso of soundbites that falco, nick cave, allen ginsberg and other heroes had left to the media archive of the school of poetry.

2004, the climax in the battle for musical glory: ide hintzes wants to win the eurovision song contest! and at least manages third place in the preliminaries for the austrian contribution. the song is called "linked love!" and is based on a - well, let's say - media art concept: in months of work, the phrase "i love you!" was collected by the sfd-staff in all languages and dialects of the world, captured and recorded on video. the lyrics of "linked love!" consist of all these word donations, which have been strung together to form a mid-tempo song. the music video shows ide in his usual everyday clothes with a guitar, plus a singing partner, patricia ferrara, and the love god cupid, portrayed by a half-naked ephebe.

the song plays and cupid scatters sheets of paper with the multilingual declarations of love like allan ginsburg did with bob dylan's song lyrics in 1965, in pa pennebaker's famous dylan documentary "don't look back" - this was probably meant as a reverence of the former ginsberg student ide hintze to the late master, who had often performed as a singer himself[16].

ide had with "linked love!" not only a surprise success with the large audience, but also something like a „success by confusion“ with the critics, who didn't seem to know quite what resentment could be brought against him this time.

ide hinze's stroll between high and low, between hippie sentimentality, pop, art and tabloid was not always welcome. often, a smug undertone was unmistakable in the press reports, which could rise to open hostility. this was the case with his most astonishing coup to date, the academy theater appearance of nick cave as a school for poetry teacher. ide, too, had appeared briefly on stage. the next day he was allowed to read in the cultural page of the „standard“ that his habit of wearing woolen caps was a great and ridiculous bad taste - to present nick cave as a poet in vienna: a good thing, but not by these people!

"linked love!", however, had so much chutzpah that one could only refuse respect to ide at the price of self-harm: an established avant-garde poet who cool and confidently changes operating systems and still cuts a good figure is actually politically/aesthetically scandalizable, but no one seemed to dare.

following "linked love!", writing and speaking are becoming more and more questionable for ide hintze. he returns to his sound and performance projects, with which he wants to explore and dissolve literary traditions. he works with his old material from the eighties and nineties, which he digitises and transforms. you could say he is working on his self-historicization.

he is particularly interested in foreign or alternative alphabets again, intensifying his sound poetry adventures and systematizing his body poetic experiences, which leads him to collaborations with dance festivals.

all this flows into his 7fold concept; he further complicates and puzzles it.

under the label 7fold dvds with body-poetic performances and sound poetry are published, among them again and again works that have song character. apparently the pop star-chapter was not yet closed.

looking through these dvds, one is struck: ides' body-poetic exercises[17] have echoes of glam-rock guitarists' moves, his call-and-response poems could also work as metal growling & shouting.

perhaps, and i conclude with this speculation, hidden in the 7fold myth is also a concern to reconcile ides' avant-garde self with his pop&rock anima - as he approached this as a young man in the "golden tide".

thank you for your kind attention.

[1] fig.: portrait christian ide hintze (ide)

[2] fig.: cover "the golden tide

[3] fig.: cover "on the teaching and teachability of literature".

[4] fig.: organigram 7fold

[5] video quote ide

[6] fig.: class in the swimming pool

[7] fig.: ide, collina, delegation in milan

[8] cover kunstforum no. 142, truck

[9] fig.: picture ian h. finlay, from kunstforum no. 142

[10] fig.: ide as a note poet, facsimile note poem

[11] picture: castle neugebäude

[12] fig.: rasumowsky palace

[13] photo of delegation with prammer, jonke, mutonen, ide, etc.

[14] fig.: university of applied arts

[15] fig.: portrait of franz morak

[16] music video: "linked love!"

[17] fig.: ide performs body poems

Ide Hintze / 7fold poetics

lecture by orhan kipcak (vienna poetry school) on the occasion of the eacwp (european association of creative writing programme) conference "the art and the craft", may 2023



DIE GOLDENE FLUT

nach Bob Dylan, »A Hard Rain's A-gonna Fall«
und »Lord Randall«, englisches Traditional

Ich sage, es wird eine goldene Flut kommen. Eine Flut wird kommen, eine goldene Flut. Sie wird sich über schwarze Länder wälzen. Sie wird sich über Länder wälzen, silberschwarze Länder. Sie wird aus müden Poren strömen. Aus ascheweissen Poren strömen. Die Erde wird in Hitze atmen.

Die Erde wird in Hitze atmen, ich habe es erlebt. Ich bin abgebrannt. Abgebrannt gegen Katastrophen. Abgebrannt gegen Wunderheilung, Auferstehung. Ich war mitten in der Flut. Ich bin vergoldet. Die Flut ist hinter mir. Ich warne euch. Ich war in einer verbotenen Gegend.

Ich war eingehüllt in Nebel. Ich habe den Kopf hochgehalten. Der Nebel hat ihn wieder gebeugt. Ein zweites Hirn

7fold

ide
7fold

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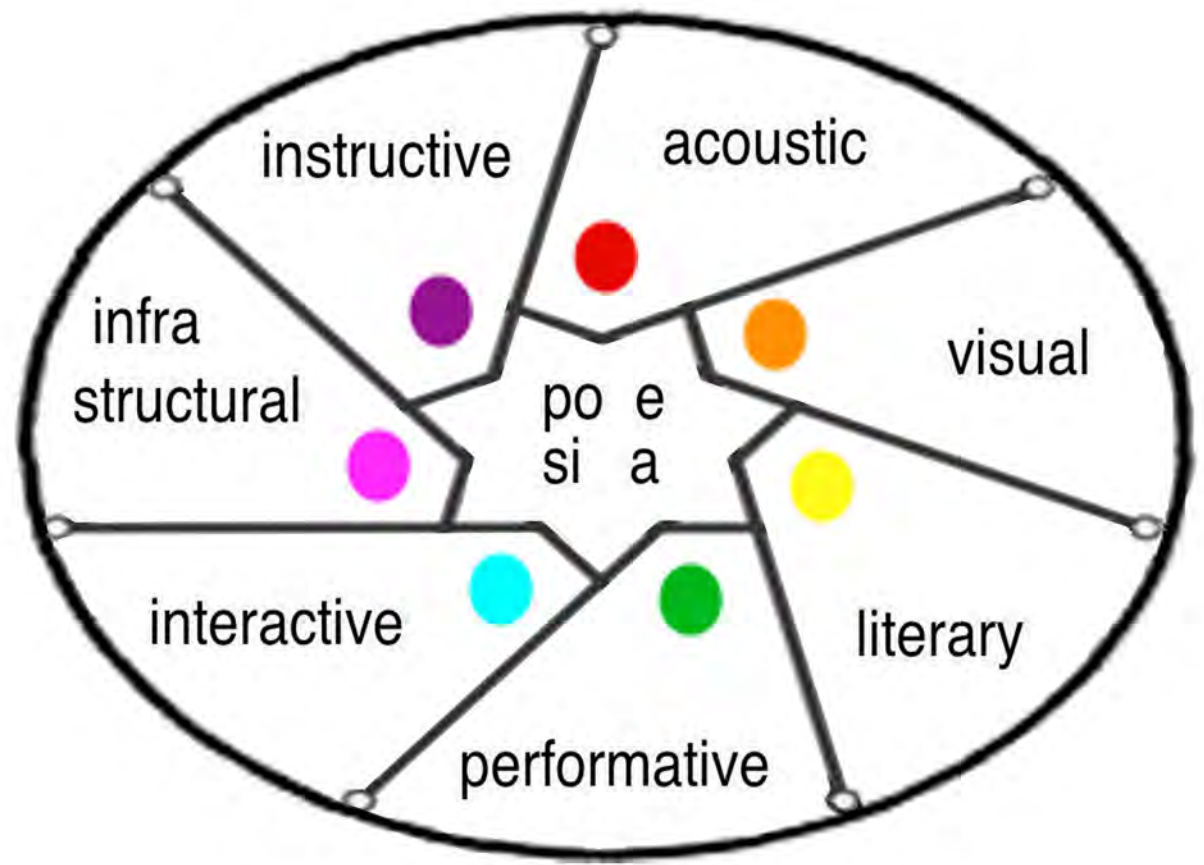
infrastructural poetry examples

- temple li-te**
5 media
- i-tetralogy**
8 media
- i-li-obo**
2 media

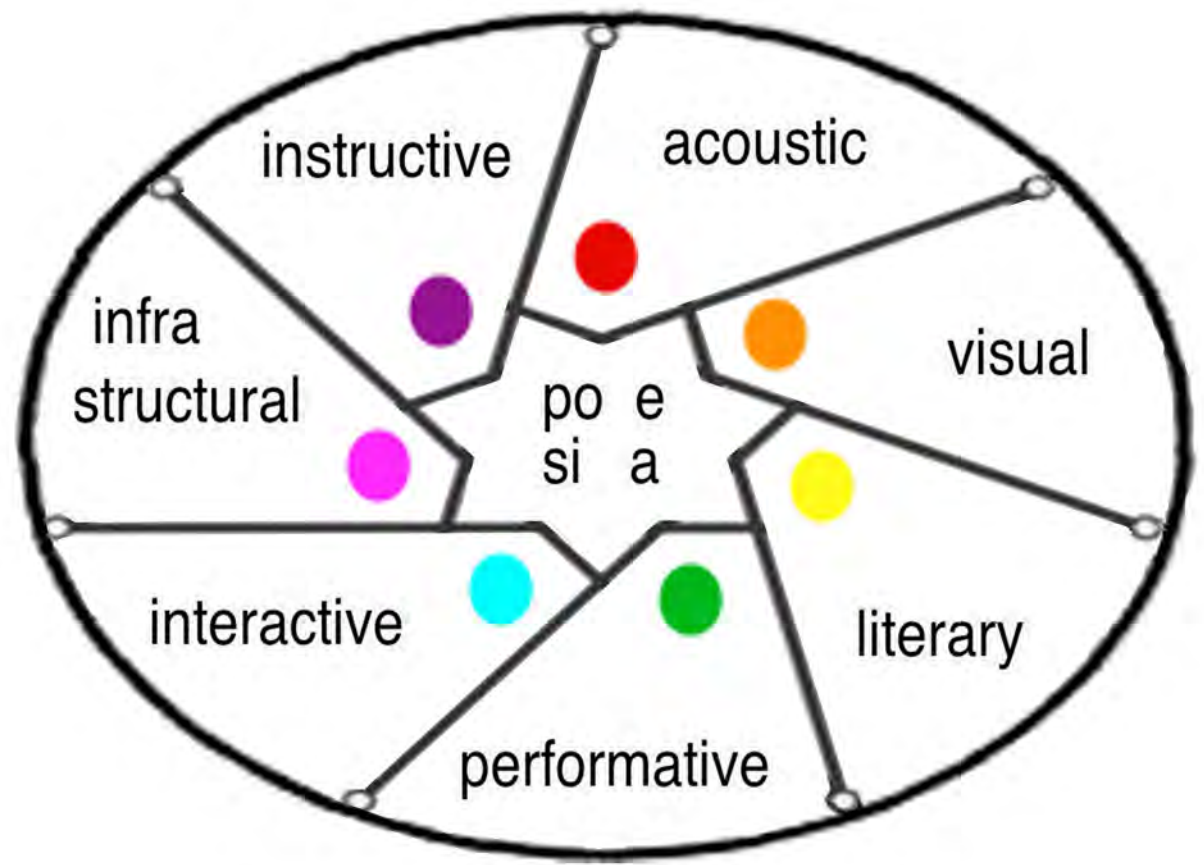
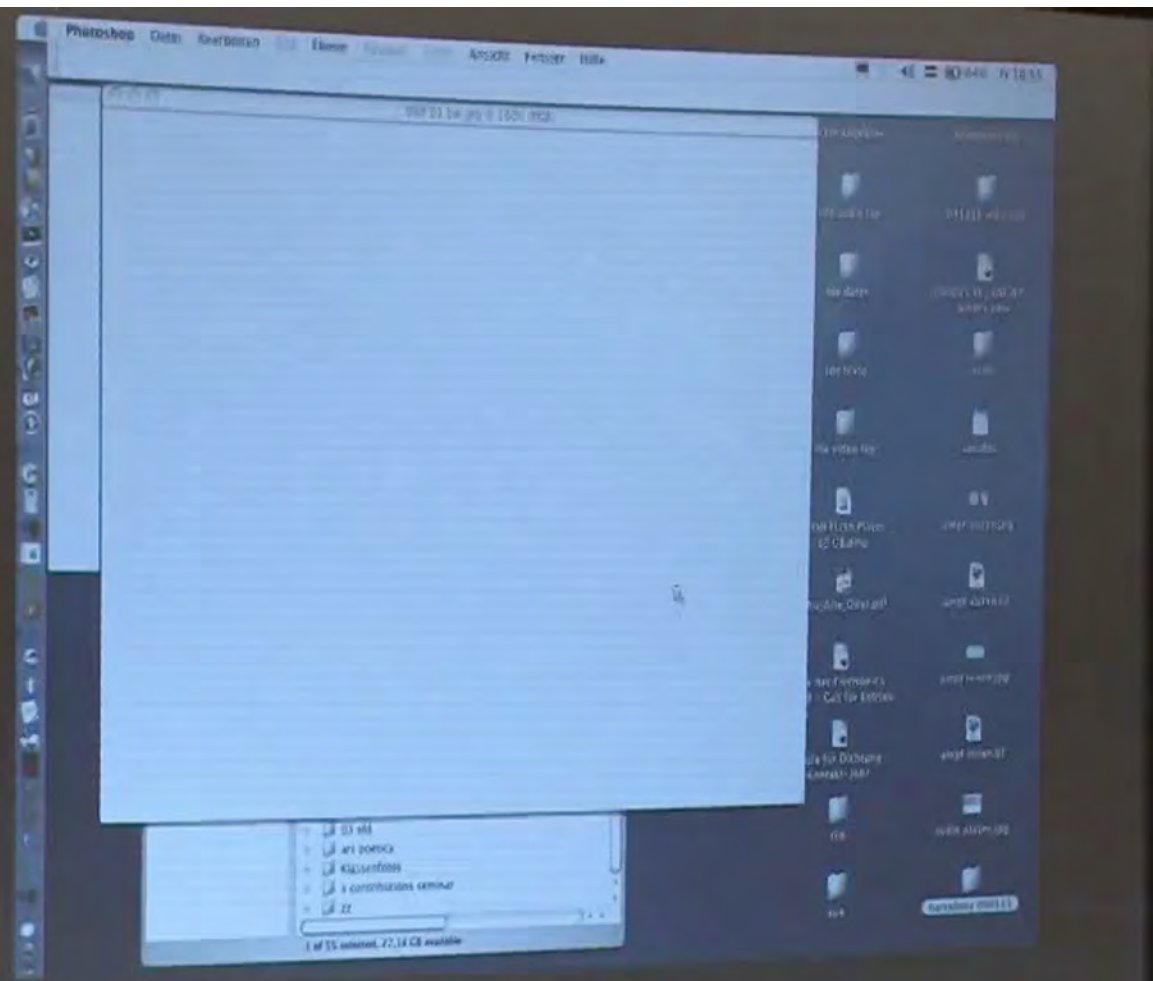
intro infrastructural

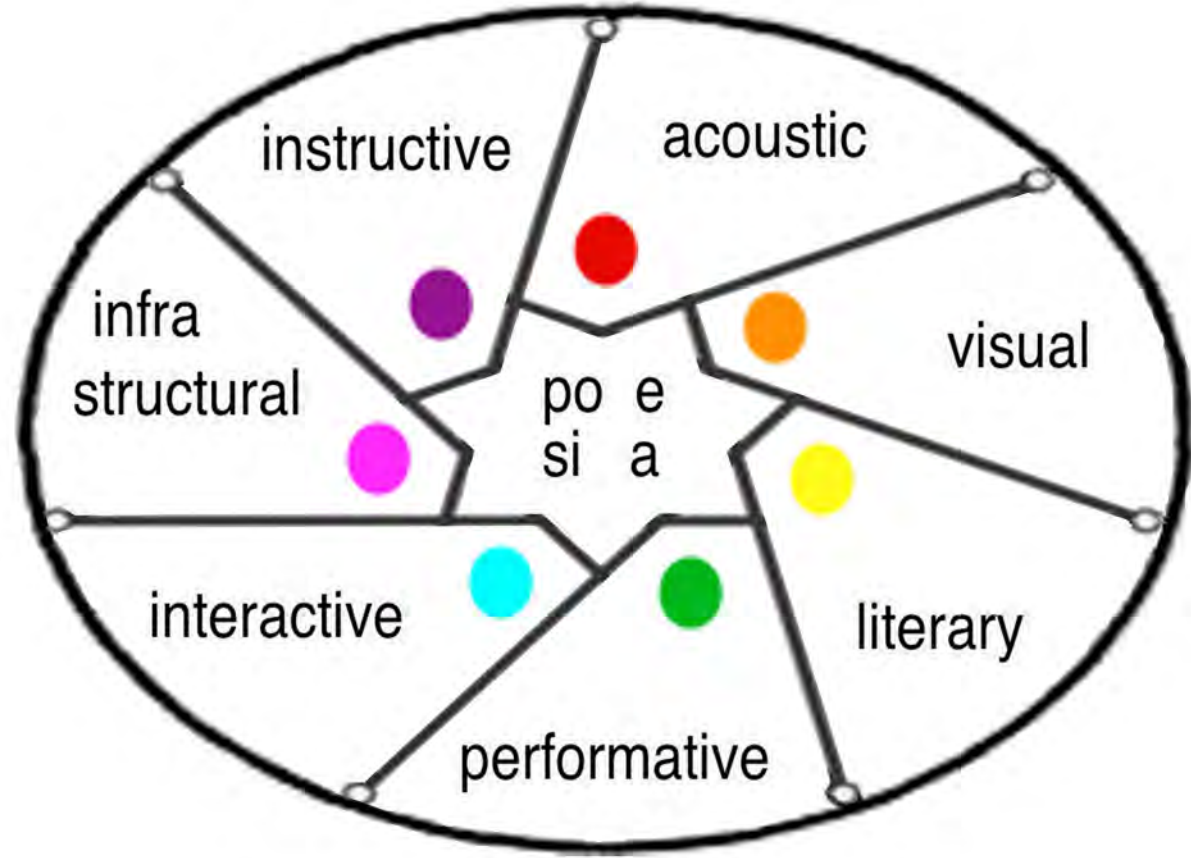
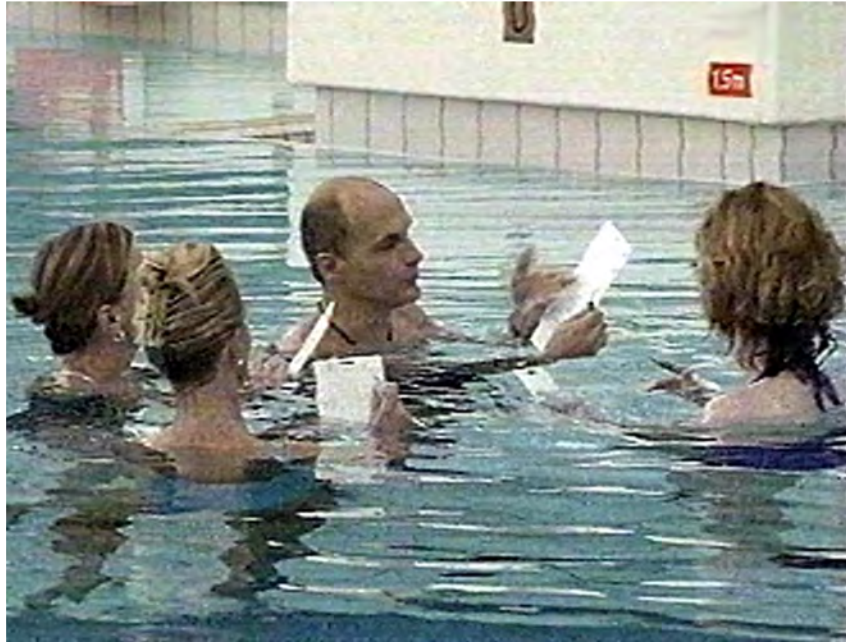
primary organizing principle: multitude of organisational principles
means of realisation: system of means / structures / features, infrastructure like public space, institution, internet etc.
means of composition: multitude of compositional means, any infrastructure
communication: 1-directional, 2-directional, multi-directional
media of publication: multitude of media, any media

welcome infrastructural
 on poesia infrastructural, orivesi 2008



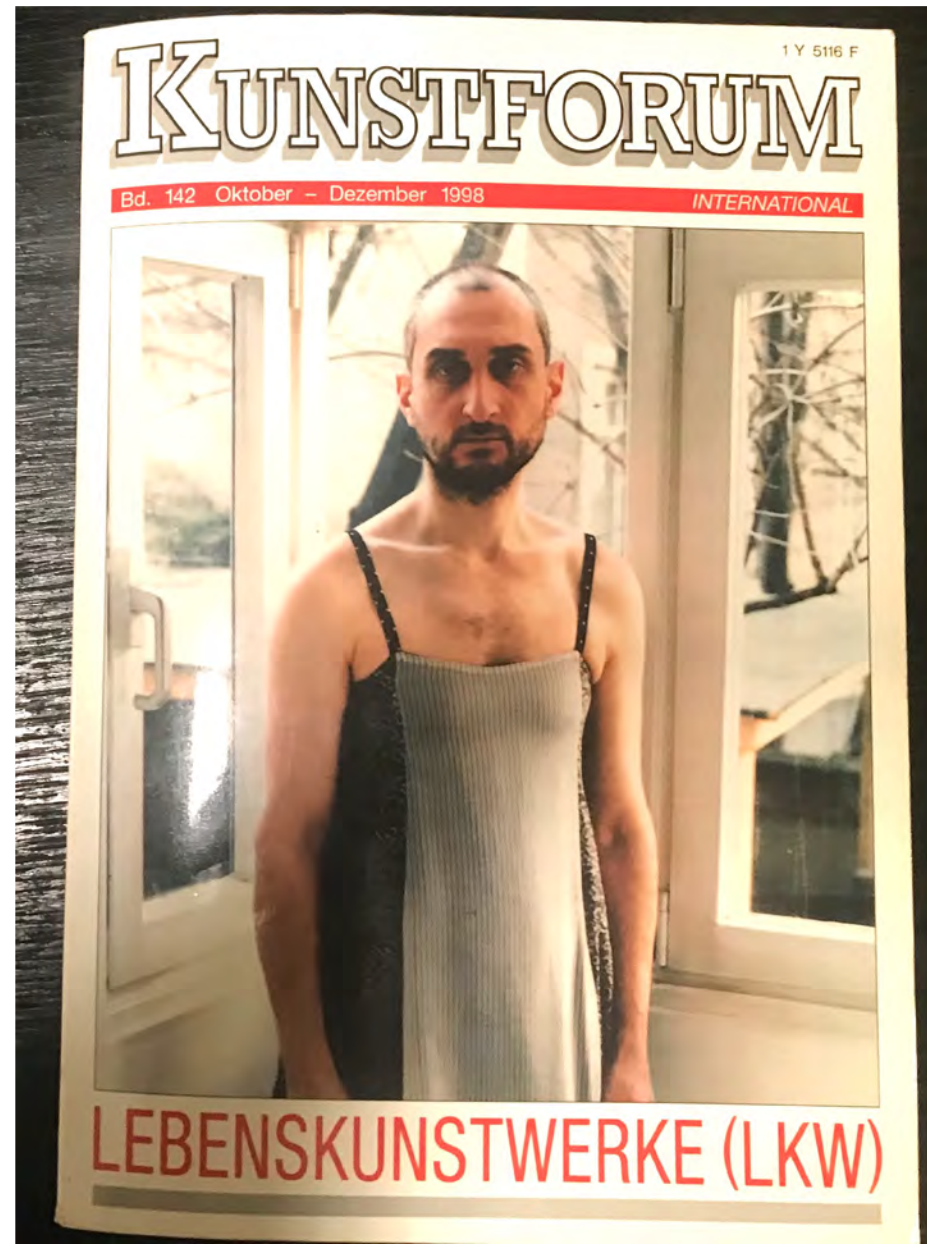
there is also a political aspect (artistic action related to the infrastructures of poets, the "polis of poets")







7fold





Lebendige Kunstwerke von Hamilton Finlay

IAN HAMILTON FINLAY (MIT PETER GRANT), Floating Poems (regatta - duffer, frogbit), 1968. Frühe selbstreferenzielle Poesie für eine Wasseroberfläche

Ide Hintze



DER ANLASS
FÜR DEN FORTSCHRITT

Ohne diesen Zettel
hätten wir beide
eine Bewegung
weniger gemacht.

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Without this piece of paper
you and I would have
made one movement less

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Castles & Institutes





Side Step



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