Shifting Gravity – and Then What?
18 October 2014

Ute Meta Bauer
Word Biennial Forum No.1
Shifting Gravity

Gwangju Biennale Foundation
Biennale Foundation
IFA Germany

Kim Dae-Jung Convention Center
Gwangju, South Korea

27-31 October 2012

Co –directors: Hou Hanru, Ute Meta Bauer
Opening Ceremony of the WBF1 “Shifting Gravity” with City officials.

Welcome by the Former Mayor of Gwangju, Korea, Kang Un-tae who contributed the majority of funding for the WBF1
Hou Hanru, Co-Director World Biennale Forum No. 1
Venue design by Korean artist Choi Jeong Hwa replacing the convention center furniture with roundtables and casual plastic chairs and national flags around the globe. The stage stayed empty and speakers shared the floor with all participants of WBF1.
Yongwoo Lee, President of the Gwangju Biennale Foundation Opening talk at the convention center, that is named after Kim Dae Jung, the 8th President of South Korea who participated in the Gwangju civic uprising in 1980.
Welcome by Marieke van Hal, initiator of WBF and the Founding Director of the Biennial Foundation
Keynote speaker Professor Wang Hui, Professor in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, University Beijing, China delivering the Keynote ‘Rethink Equality: The Decline of Representation’.
Case study 1: Asia Pacific Part a
Jonathan Watkins, Director of the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK talks about the Sydney Biennale, 1998 that he curated.
Alia Swastika, Director, Biennale Jogja on the Biennale Jogja XI, Indonesia, 2011 that she co-curated.
Special conversation by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Co-Director of the Serpentine Gallery with South Korean artists Kyung-won Moon and Jeon Joon-ho on their practice related to their dOCUMENTA (13) Project titled “News from Nowhere”.
Zhang Qing, Previous Director of Shanghai Biennale, China
Ou Ning, Curator, Artistic Director of the 2009 Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi City Biennale of Urbanism and Architecture, China
About 120 international guests representing more than 60 biennales joined this first forum that intended a critical reflection of the impact of the increasing numbers of art and design biennales around the globe.

Case Study 1. Asia Pacific – part a  Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT) founded in 1993: Caroline Turner, Senior Research Fellow, Australian National University and previously Deputy Director of Queensland Art Gallery that is home of the APT.
Previous gallerist and curator of many biennales René Block, Guest of Honor, WBF1 who is since the early nineties engaged in the decentralization of the so called global centers of art, such as New York highlighting the phenomena of new biennales around the globe, and in particular throughout the Asia Pacific region.
CAFA Museum Director Wang Huangsheng, previous Director of the Guangdong Museum of Art where he also served as the Founding Director of the Guangzhou Triennial, China.
WBF1 closing day at SeMA, Seoul

Keynote Speaker Chantal Mouffe, Professor of Political Theory and Director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy at the University of Westminster, London, UK delivering the Keynote ‘Democracy, Human Rights, and Cosmopolitanism: An Agnostic Approach’ at the Seoul Museum of Art.
Documenta X, 1997

Artistic Director
Catherine David

Visitor numbers:
628,776
Documenta X, 1997

Artistic Director, Catherine David in front of Museum Fridericianum that has been a central location of all documenta editions.

documenta-Halle with artwork by Peter Kogler, Austria.
Artistic Director
Catherine David

David addressed global discourses and global “players” in the “100 Days – 100 Guests” – format that she invented.
Documenta X, 1997

Artistic Director
Catherine David

Review by New York City art critic Donald Kuspit of Documenta X.

**negative documenta**

by Donald Kuspit

*Documenta 10*, the major art show held every five years in Kassel, Germany, opened on June 21 and runs to Sept. 28. There's an air of self-righteousness to this exhibition, and nostalgia. While the curator, Catherine David, attacks "reactionary nostalgia" (*Art Press*, June 1997, p. 42), a great number of works in her exhibition are nostalgic for "68," more particularly, for a certain idea of "critical art," as David calls it.

The idea is conspicuously retrodataire, the world having changed a good deal since then. Critical consciousness has to re-adapt, not simply celebrate itself. Thus, David, who also attacks "the academicization of institutional criticism," has herself academicized critical art. For nostalgia involves a certain academic, not to say touristic attitude to the past.
Artistic Director
Okwui Enwezor

Reaction by U.S. art press on the extensive video and film programme of this documenta edition.

Visitor numbers:
650,924
Dismissal of Director Jack Persekian over the inclusion of controversial anti-Islamic artwork by artist Mustapha Benfodil, Algeria on a public square in Sharjah’s old quarters.

Visitor numbers: 80,000
The cost of globalisation: 19th Biennale of Sydney 2014

Controversy over Transfield sponsorship, a holding that is linked to the chairman of Sydney Biennale – whose family have been founders of the Sydney Biennale in 1973.

Visitor numbers: 623,000
The cost of globalisation: Guggenheim VS G.U.L.F (Global Ultra Luxury Faction)

Controversy over labour conditions in the UAE

G.U.L.F. is a coalition of artists and activists putting pressure onto museums to address lack of rights of migrant workers.
Key facts & figures:

- Raised over €100m in taxes for the government in the first 3 years of operations.
- The Museum self-funded 73% of its expenditure in 2001.
- 12.8% average annual return on investment.
- Total attendance 1997-2006: 9 million
- Visitor numbers in 2012: over 1 million, with at least 500,000 from abroad.
- Contribution to GDP 1997-2007: €212 million

Visitor numbers (2012): 1 million
Saadiyat Island’s Cultural District, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Key facts & figures:

• Saadiyat Island is a €21 billion development project.
• The cultural district has a land area of 28 sq km.
• The agreement between Abu Dhabi and Louvre amounted to a sum in the order of €1 billion over 30 years.
• Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will be the largest Guggenheim in the world when completed.
• The Cultural District will host the Art Biennale Abu Dhabi, the Architecture Biennale Abu Dhabi, the Art Fair Abu Dhabi and the World Cultural Forum (WCF).

“The aim of Saadiyat Island must be to create a cultural asset for the world.”
– His Highness Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed, the Crown Prince of the Emirate Abu Dhabi
The museum saw several extensions in addition to Danish a summer villa all overseen by architects Bo and Wohlert. Since 1958, with the last alteration done in 2006.

Visitor numbers (2011): 629,000
Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA


2009 – 3.1 million visitors  
2011 – 2.8 million visitors  
2012 – 2.8 million visitors  
2013 – 3.2 million visitors
Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA
Forthcoming extension designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, New York

The extension will provide 30% more space for visitors
Tate Modern, London, UK

Inauguration in 2000 at London’s Bankside with architects Herzog & de Meuron and Founding Director Lars Nittve.

2013 – 4.8 million visitors
2012 – 5.3 million visitors
2011 – 4.8 million visitors
2003 – 3.9 million visitors
2002 – 4.3 million visitors
2001 – 5.2 million visitors
Tate Modern, London, UK

New extension designed by Herzog & de Meuron scheduled to open in 2015 with Director Chris Dercon.

The extension will increase the overall size of Tate Modern by 60%.
Overall cost: £215 million
The Rise and Internationalisation of Art Fairs

Art Basel:
Art Basel
Art Basel Miami Beach
Art Basel Hong Kong

2014 Art Basel in Basel – 92,000 visitors over 6 days

2013 Art Basel in Miami Beach – 75,000 visitors over 5 days

2014 Art Basel in Hong Kong – 65,000 visitors over 5 days
The Rise and Internationalisation of Art Fairs

Frieze Art Fairs:
Frieze London
Frieze Masters
Frieze New York

2013 Frieze London & Frieze Masters – 70,000 visitors over 6 days

2014 Frieze New York – 40,000 visitors over 4 days
Asian Cultural Complex in Gwangju, South Korea: Promoting Gwangju as the centre of cultural production and presentation in Asia

1.4 million square foot public landscape designed by American based Kyu Sung Woo architects for may 18th democracy plaza in downtown Gwangju, South Korea.
Developments within Southeast Asia

National Gallery Singapore & Singapore Art Museum:
Positioning Singapore as a National and Southeast Asian hub for Visual Arts.

Architects: Studio Milou Architects
Adoption of the former City Hall and Supreme Court. Scheduled to be open in 2015.
Founding Director: Eugene Tan
Size: 650,000 sq ft

Singapore Art Museum is located in the former St. Joseph’s Institution, a Catholic boys school.
Current Director: Susie Lingham
Visitor numbers (2012): 656,090

Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum
Designed by Swiss architecture studio Herzog & de Meuron and situated in West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong taking up 40 hectares. Scheduled to be open in 2018.
Founding Director: Lars Nittve