

Daniel G. Andújar (Valencia/E), Rachel Baker (London/GB), Kayle Brandon (Bristol/GB),
Heath Bunting (Bristol/GB), Minerva Cuevas (Mexico City/MEX),
Marcus Valentine (London/GB) u.a.



THE WONDERFUL
WORLD OF
IRATIONAL.ORG

AUGUST 30—OKTOBER 29, 2006

Opening: Sunday, August 27, 2006, 16:00

WWW.HMKV.DE
Hartware MedienKunstVerein

PHOENIX HALLE DORTMUND, GERMANY
Hochofenstraße/corner Rombergstraße, Dortmund-Hörde
Wed 11:00—17:00, Thu until Sun 11:00—20:00

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF IRATIONAL.ORG TOOLS, TECHNIQUES AND EVENTS 1996-2006

Have you ever taken part in International Tree Climbing Day? Did you know that there is a genetically modified "superweed" resistant to current herbicides such as Roundup? How would you react to the statement "Remember, language is not free?" Have you ever heard of "Public Sculpture Climbing" or the "Tour de Fence"? All of these are projects that have taken form around the server *irational.org* in recent years.

On August 27, 2006, the Hartware MedienKunstVerein in the PHOENIX Halle Dortmund is opening a unique exhibition project called *The Wonderful World of irational.org Techniques, Tools, and Events 1996-2006*. The show will run from August 30 to September 29, 2006.

Irational is a loose grouping of six international net and media artists who came together around the server *irational.org*, founded by the British net artist Heath Bunting in 1996, going on to make decisive contribution to early net art from the mid-1990s onward. They include Daniel Garcia Andújar/Technologies to the People (E), Rachel Baker (GB), Kayle Brandon (GB), Heath Bunting (GB), Minerva Cuevas/Mejor Vida Corporation (MEX) and Marcus Valentine (GB).

With dry humor and minimal aesthetics, *irational* commented the Internet hype of the mid-to-late 1990s, competing with the commercialization-euphoria of the new market by developing its own pseudo-ventures. Net art was immediate during this period, neither needing nor enjoying the safety of a mediating space or instance. This is why *irational* often hit upon humorless trademark attorneys, who wanted to keep *irational* from using brand names such as 7/11, American Express, Sainsburys and Tesco. These encounters, which the exhibition documents extensively, were little more than a prelude to more recent developments on the field of copyright, intellectual property, and brand protection. Heath Bunting was the first net artist to retire in 1997, putting an end to his exclusive work in the net and turning back to more intensive work in public space, which the Internet has become such an important part of today. If the activities of *irational* during its "net phase" were dedicated to calling virtual boundaries into question, its members now experiment with interrogating and overcoming economic, political, and social boundaries in real space, producing a great deal of comic relief, among other things.

Never before have so many complex and relevant artworks from around *irational.org* been shown in such a comprehensive exhibition. Its goal is to use the media of a large-scale showing, workshops, and a comprehensive documentation to make these artistic-activist pieces more accessible to a general public.

The Hartware MedienKunstVerein, which—like *irational*—is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year, has received significant funding through the Federal Cultural Foundation of Germany.
Inke Arns

The works presented in the exhibition can be divided into seven thematic chapters:

TAKING CORPORATE AESTHETICS TO ANOTHER LEVEL

In the mid-1990s, the new economy bubble provided a good target for poking fun at capitalism. Therefore, many *irational* projects make use of corporate aesthetics in a subversive-affirmative way. In the high times of net art, i.e. around 1996-1997, commercial and artistic projects basically shared the same space—the Internet. Sharing that very same space made possible many irritating pseudo-corporate self-presentations, like CERN, the Mejor Vida Corporation, the American Express and the 7/11 mailing lists, and the like. 14

Heath Bunting, *CERN*, 1997
Technologies to the People
Mejor Vida Corporation
Heath Bunting, *7/11 mailing list*, 1997
Rachel Baker, *TNI Club Card*, 1997
Rachel Baker, Heath Bunting, *Cultural Terrorist Agency*, 1999
Rachel Baker, *Personal Data Fairy*, 2000/2001
Technologies to the People, *Awards Mejor Vida Corp., Del Monte International Media Campaign*, 2002/2003

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF IRATIONAL.ORG TOOLS, TECHNIQUES AND EVENTS 1996-2006

PROGRAM

Sunday, August 27, 2006, 16:00

Opening *The Wonderful World of irational.org Tools, Techniques and Events 1996-2006*

Friday, September 15—Sunday, September 17, 2006, all day
Irational Action Weekend in the framework of the exhibition
(see program at www.hmkv.de)

Saturday, September 16, 2006, 20:00

"10 Years Hartware MedienKunstVerein" Party in the context of the 6th Dortmund Museum Night at PHOENIX Halle Dortmund with *irational* DJs from Valencia, Bristol, London and Carsten Helmich (Dortmund)

Sunday, October 1, 2006, during the day
PHOENIX Safari Weekend: Guided tour by KJ Conze
(check www.hmkv.de for more details)

Saturday, October 28, 2006

Catalogue presentation *The Wonderful World of irational.org Techniques, Tools and Events 1996-2006*, edited by Susanne Ackers/Inke Arns/Francis Hunger/Jacob Lillermose

Saturday, October 28—Sunday, October 29, 2006
Symposium (see detailed program at www.hmkv.de)

Guided tours through the exhibition
Sunday, September 3, 10, 17, 24, 2006, 16:00
Sunday, October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2006, 16:00

PROVIDING GATEWAYS AND PROTECTION

This topic bridges the gap between online and offline activities developed on and around the *irational* server community. The projects selected for this category provide secure passages, tunnels and gateways running in parallel or subverting the political, economic or social divisions of existing territories. *Irational* techniques transgress these fenced-off spaces and provide secure and entertaining ways from point a to point b. Previously unconceivable spaces are being made accessible in simple and intelligent ways. Protection and surveillance systems are detoured and made to serve as alternative passage ways. 14

Heath Bunting, *CCTV*, 1997
Rachel Baker/Heath Bunting, *CCTV Sabotage*, 1998
Daniel Garcia Andújar, *Armed citizen*, 1998
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *D'fence cuts*, 2002
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *Tour de Fence*, 2002
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *Tour de Fence Techniques*, 2003
Marcus Valentine, *How to be a Community Radio Station*, 2003
Heath Bunting, *London Pirate Listening Station*, 2004
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *Sponsored Influenza Pandemic Evacuation Rehearsal (SIPER)*, 2005
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *Public Sculpture Climbing*, 2006



SUPERWEED 1.0
Hartware MedienKunstVerein

SMART TOOLS FOR A NETWORKED SOCIETY

Irrational's works of art often take the explicit form of cultural tools that work on both practical and conceptual levels. The tools are smart in the sense that they take advantage of the newest technology and can be used for all possible and unthinkable purposes. You can print out "Unfare" to travel around the London underground for free, use Bar Code Stickers to make shopping a cheaper but more fun and daring experience or you can explore the amazing logic of TTTP's calculators to compute things you did not know were important. In a more abstract sense you can use the tools to figure out and play with the world. And if applied to the right context you can even make some money. The tools are made for you so they are, of course, free and open source. JL

Heath Bunting, *Skint—the internet beggar*, 1996
Mejor Vida Corp., *Public Donations Technologies to the People, Street Access Machine*, 1996
Heath Bunting, *Unfare*, 2000
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *RED#NET*, 2003
Kayle Brandon, *Lunch packs*, 2004
Kayle Brandon, *Irrational Transfer Stall*, 2006
Irrational memorabilia, as iron-on transfers for your clothes.
Bring in your own clothes or buy a T-shirt from the stall.

ATTENTION! CREATING SITUATIONS

Whether in the form of material objects or conceptual information irrational likes to create adventurous situations in public space that you can participate in. Through their work they invite you to join them in exploring and experimenting with the laws of nature and the politics of social structures. The character of the situations varies from the playful collective climbing of trees at the annual International Tree Climbing Day to subversive bio-activism in "Natural Reality Superweed", "a genetically modified anti-capitalist weed" designed to resist herbicides and thus threaten the production of genetically modified crops. As works of art, irrational's situations are conceived as open-ended fields of action where you can experience freedom as well as empowerment. Furthermore, they give you an idea of the multiple possibilities the world contains if you use the right, alternative means. JL

Heath Bunting, *Vulnerability*, 1996
Heath Bunting, *Cybercafe*, 1996
Mejor Vida Corp., *MYC Products*
Rachel Baker, *Cramley Election*, 1998
Rachel Baker, Heath Bunting, *Natural Reality Superweed*, 1999
Kayle Brandon, *International Tree Climbing day*, since 2003
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *The World Downhill Skate Championships*, 2005
Heath Bunting, *Memorial Stone—Quest for the Forgotten Art*, Video/DVD, ca. 180 min., 2006
Rachel Baker, *Towards Death: Aerobics with Antifamily and Cindy Crawford*, 2006

MAPS FOR THE GLOBAL DIY PUBLIC

From the very beginning irrational have been occupied with visual and conceptual 'maps' that give directions to both creative and critical engagements with the world in which we live. The public poster is a popular medium for these maps that tell you "it costs more to be poor", or warn you that "equality is deceit". You can use the maps to learn how to cross the borders within Europe bypassing the official border crossings, read through the "Day Planner" to learn how "minimalise time spent working or waiting and maximise engagement with pleasure, happiness and growth" or consult the online database "Free Food" to find free natural food all year round in the city of Bristol. Rather than trying to picture the world as we know it irrational maps disclose hidden meanings or generate new meanings that allow us to perceive the world in challenging ways. Also the maps do not recognize rational separations between virtual, physical, symbolic and mental spaces, they operate in all these spaces simultaneously. Follow the directions and become part of the global do-it-yourself public. JL

Heath Bunting, *Corporate skip raider's manual*, 1996
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *BorderXing Guide*, 2001
Heath Bunting, *For Sale*, 2003
Heath Bunting, *Tag retrospective*, 2003
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *Botanists Guide*, 2003
Heath Bunting, *Poster retrospective*, 2004
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *BorderXing Slide Show*, 2004
Kayle Brandon, Heath Bunting, *Food for Free*, 2005
Heath Bunting, *Day planner*, 2006

LOOK OVER THE WALL

WE DEAL IN LANGUAGE PROPERTY

Over the last ten years language has been turned into a deadly serious commodity. Not only have wars been waged over intellectual property and over copyright infringement cases—today letters and words themselves have become properties of legal owners. This process has been especially visible on the Internet with the battles fought over ownership of domain names. Two irrationalists have very early on predicted this development and have reflected upon this in their own ways. Heath Bunting's piece "...readme" imagines a world in which each single domain name is sold, whereas Technology to the People's work "Language (property)" joyfully submerges itself in trademarked sentences—which are the property of their respective owners. Thus we come to realize: "Language is not free" (TP). JA

Daniel Garcia Andujar/Technologies to the People, *Language (property)*, 1997
Heath Bunting, *readme—Own, Be Owned or Remain Invisible*, 1998

COLLECTING DATA ALL OVER THE NET

Data represents a significant value in the information age. No one is more aware of that than irrational. The questions on the irrational questionnaire can relate to facts about Internet culture, involve philosophical reflections or concern experiences with violence in urban space. The data collections vary from simple statistics to rather speculative conceptual lists; in any case they are most probably to generate a surplus in the digital network. Through the questionnaires irrational not only challenges you to re-engage in the world by asking unexpected and impossible questions; irrational also challenges you to ask yourself: How do I want to invest my data? Or rather: How do I want to invest myself as data? JL

Heath Bunting, *The pleasure project*, 1996
Technologies to the People, *TTTP Research Department Technologies to the People, Preliminary Basic Application*
Marcus Valentine, *irrational dysfunctionality questionnaire*, 1999
Minerva Cuevas, *Violence Questionnaire*

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info@hmkv.de, www.hmkv.de

Venue

Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV) at PHOENIX Halle Dortmund, Hochofenstrasse/corner Rombergstrasse, Dortmund-Hörde (no postal address!)

Opening hours PHOENIX Halle

Wed 11:00—17:00
Thu until Sun 11:00—20:00
Tue October 3, 2006:
open 11:00—20:00

Guided tours Each Sunday at 16:00

Individual tours on request
(Tel. ++49.231.823 106)

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF IRRATIONAL.ORG TOOLS, TECHNIQUES AND EVENTS 1996—2006

A project by Hartware MedienKunstVerein in the framework of medien_kunst_netz dortmund at PHOENIX Halle Dortmund/Germany, August 30/October 29, 2006
Opening: Sunday, August 27, 2006, 16:00

Exhibition curated by Inke Arns, Jacob Lillemose
Documentation conceived by Susanne Ackers
Workshops curated by Francis Hunger
Exhibition architecture and technical director Uwe Gorski
Organisation, coordination Francis Hunger, Darja Simunovic
PR Roland Kentrup, Dortmund

A catalogue will be published at the end of October 2006: Susanne Ackers/Inke Arns/Francis Hunger/Jacob Lillemose (eds.) *The Wonderful World of irrational.org Techniques, Tools and Events 1996—2006*, Revolver—Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main 2006, ISBN 3-86588-299-4
Admission 4€/reduced 2€

How to get there by car B 54 exit Rombergpark, Norkirchenstraße direction of Hörde, left into Entenpoh (speed 30 zone), then left into Hochofenstrasse

How to get there by subway U 41 direction Hörde until Dortmund-Hörde Bahnhof, 10 min. ride from Dortmund main railway station, then a 10 min. walk

Map http://www.hmkv.de/dyn/e_contact_roaddescription/

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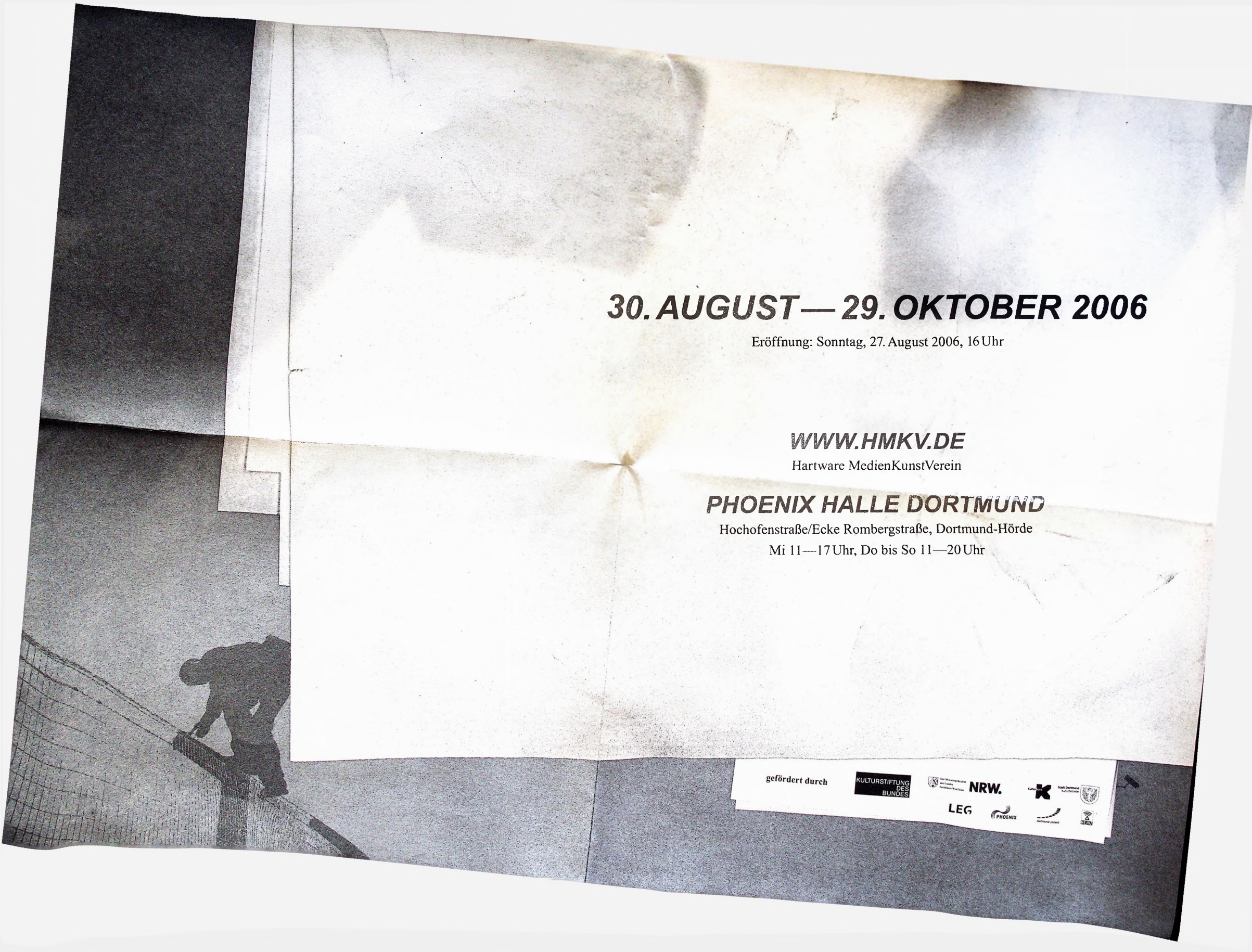
design www.laber.de

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TOOLS, TECHNIQUES AND EVENTS 1996—2006



IRATIONAL



30. AUGUST—29. OKTOBER 2006

Eröffnung: Sonntag, 27. August 2006, 16 Uhr

WWW.HMKV.DE

Hartware MedienKunstVerein

PHOENIX HALLE DORTMUND

Hochofenstraße/Ecke Rombergstraße, Dortmund-Hörde

Mi 11—17 Uhr, Do bis So 11—20 Uhr

gefördert durch



NRW.



LEG

