

# QUIET A DECAD SIDE JOH

## ROUNDTABLE

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**Among all the political upheavals, natural disasters, rank injustices, evil, and greed of the past decade, art somehow carried on, sometimes seeming to derive energy from challenges to its legitimacy and its assumptions launched both within and outside the old centres of power. To trace some of the shifts in artistic production and consumption since 2010, Spike invited artist *John Hill*, gallerist *Amadeo Kraupa-Tuskany*, and curator *Susanne Pfeffer* to talk about technology and democratisation, objects and images, networks and volatility.**

Photos: Maansi Jain

***Moderated by Caroline Busta***



John Hill

**Caroline Busta:** Until a few weeks ago, I had barely registered that we're at the end of the decade. So I thought to begin, we could first come back to the headspace of 2010 and consider that moment, with a degree of empathy: Who were we then? What kinds of spaces were we defending or wanting to open up? Maybe each of you could give some introduction to yourself and your practice by telling us where you were a decade ago, geographically but also politically and emotionally, to whatever extent you feel comfortable.

**John Hill:** In 2010 I was working as part of an art collective. We wouldn't have called it a collective at the time, but that doesn't really matter anymore. It was called LuckyPDF. We were making TV shows to be broadcast online, and very explicitly trying to make something that didn't look like TV but reminded people of television, to be broadcast on the internet. Which, in 2010, honestly seemed like a new idea, something that no one else was doing, because the ability to put live video on the internet was new and really excited us. We worked with an organisation in London called Auto Italia South East, where we did a TV show alongside a music festival that they were doing with a label called



Susanne Pfeffer

Upset the Rhythm. It was a weekend festival in a big warehouse complex, and Hans Ulrich Obrist and Stuart Comer turned up, and people were saying "Get Hans Ulrich on!" I said, "I'm not having him on my television show." I think that's maybe exactly where my head was in 2010: I was sitting in the front room of a closed-down car garage in South London not wanting to have anything to do with Hans Ulrich Obrist or Stuart Comer. The next year, though, we were doing the same thing inside Frieze Art Fair, so my youthful rebellion did not last long.

**CB** Susanne, where were you in 2010, what was on your mind then?

**Susanne Pfeffer** [tapping phone]: I just had to look it up .... In 2010 I was chief curator at KW [Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin], and I organised "Absalon", which was the institution's first retrospective of an artist from Israel, I organised a Renata Lucas exhibition, and apart from that it's quite blurry.

**CB** When was Cyprien's Gaillard's show?

**SP** Cyprien Gaillard's "The Recovery of Discovery" was in 2011. It was a huge show, for which he built a massive pyramid out of beer – 72,000 bottles of Efes – and the invitation

#### A TIMELINE OF THE 2010s

##### JANUARY 2010

- James Cameron's *Avatar* arrives in theaters. It will gross more than \$2 billion.
- An earthquake on Haiti has a catastrophic magnitude of 7.0. Some 1.5 million people are initially displaced.
- Opening of Anselm Franke's "Animism" exhibition, Extra City, Antwerp.

##### MARCH 2010

- Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano erupts, resulting in the second-largest air-traffic shutdown ever.
- Google search is banned in China.
- First politicians from the populist Five Star Movement are elected in Italy.

##### APRIL 2010

- BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, considered to be the largest marine oil spill in the history of the petroleum industry.

##### MAY 2010

- Greece austerity measures are introduced.
- Uber goes live in San Francisco.

##### JUNE 2010

- Elon Musk's Tesla company IPO.
- Drake drops debut album, *Thank Me Later*.

##### DECEMBER 2010

- Mohamed Bouazizi sets himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia.
- Apple launches the iPad



Amadeo Kraupa-Tuskany

card had a UNESCO logo on it. We used to ship monuments from one continent to another – when the Pergamon Altar came to Berlin, it was quite a big move – and Gaillard redid the gesture by bringing so many Efes beers from Turkey to Berlin. It was a really simply scaled show: a pyramid that you could sit on, and you could open one of the boxes and start drinking and be a part of the exhibition. Maybe the next day you tried to recover from your discovery of the day before. The title was referring to what we hold on to, which I think is quite important. The past ten years, through postcolonialism, we've been trying to recover from our discoveries.

**CB** And what was the state of this sculpture on the last day of the exhibition?

**SP** That was the day when the real archaeology started, because people would try to find some beer. Although the pyramid was pretty much destroyed, there were still a lot of bottles. It was quite awful, I can tell you, to clean it up,

as it involved mopping up lot of beer. It was interesting because with the Absalon retrospective the year before, we had to clean it



Caroline Busta

every Monday, and with Gaillard we hardly had to do anything during the show because we left everything as it was for two months. But I had to go to there every evening to throw the people out; nobody wanted to leave.

**CB** Amadeo, were you also in Berlin then?

**Amadeo Kraupa-Tuskany:** I had actually moved from Berlin to Munich for a short time around then because I had a scholarship there to finish my PhD in law and economics. In January 2010, I moved to Brussels to work for Jan Mot Gallery.

Together with my (now) wife Nadine, who was working for Kunstverein Munich with Stefan Kalmár back then, we came up with this idea that we wanted to start a gallery. I'd had a passion for art since I was a teenager and so that's what happened. Brussels was pretty interesting at the time – the gallery Tulips & Roses was still there, and a lot of people who are now in Berlin, like Lars [Friedrich], were around, with a lot of discussions going on.

**CB** I was in New York, and I remember the real decade break being in 2011, with Occupy Wall Street. I wonder, though, what are the specific moments during the past ten years

- Katja Novitskova publishes iPad-size *Post Internet Survival Guide*.
- Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg is named Time's Person of the Year.

##### JANUARY 2011

- Tunisian Revolution sparks Arab Spring.

##### FEBRUARY 2011

- Silk Road market launches on the dark web.

##### MARCH 2011

- Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactor has a meltdown.
- Civil war breaks out in Syria.

##### APRIL 2011

- *Game of Thrones* premier on HBO.

##### MAY 2011

- Osama bin Laden is killed by US military forces.
- M-15 protests take place in Spain.
- Premiere of Lars von Trier's *Melancholia*, which will become a key point of reference for apocalyptic anxieties of the 2010s.

##### SEPTEMBER 2011

- Occupy Wall Street begins.

##### OCTOBER 2011

- Apple cofounder Steve Jobs dies (1955–2011).

##### JANUARY 2012

- Mike Kelley ('1954) dies.
- David Joselit's *After Art* is published to critical acclaim.

##### APRIL 2012

- Facebook purchases Instagram.

that felt like clear caesurae? Were there particular events, in the art world or not, that felt like personal breaking points where the mood rapidly changed?

**SP** I was quite shocked to realise that Viktor Orbán has been prime minister of Hungary since 2010, a moment which I think marked the end of Europe, when fascism became a normal part of the idea of Europe, and now we have so much of it around. When Trump was elected, this was also a great rupture for a lot of the artists of the generation I had been working with. And then came Brexit. We really had to change the way we looked at the world and what is happening.

**CB** Did it change the way you would address artists or the way you would engage them to create something for the spaces that you were curating?

**SP** I was invited to do a show in Hong Kong, which should have taken place in 2016, and I was thinking of doing a show called "Non-Science Fiction". Then I realised I couldn't do that show anymore, and in the end I did a show on the violence of gender.

**JH** I guess such a moment for me was Edward Snowden, but also before him, Chelsea Manning, changing the popular idea of what the internet was or what network communication was. It ended any naivety: you couldn't ignore the totalitarianism of networked communication anymore.

**CB** Given that artists are supposed to be society's truth tellers – at least in the canonical idea of the avant-garde artist – did this revelation pose a new kind of challenge for you? In the sense that Snowden and Manning are people who do not present themselves to the world as artists per se, yet effectively acted in a way that artists have acted historically. Did their actions challenge your idea of what your own role as an artist was?

**JH** LuckyPDF was network-positive: we believed that finding new ways of joining people together could create new and interesting things that weren't possible before you had these tools. We had to understand that our own experience of using these tools and our own experience of making work through and with and on network platforms meant we could no longer make that work without being very conscious of what was going on, or who else was watching.

**CB** Amadeo, did you have these thoughts too? The term "post-internet" has been strongly tied to your programme.

**AKT** We just stumbled into it. Being in Brussels we saw the first iteration of Anselm Franke's "Animism" exhibition at Extra City in Antwerp and started reading Bruno Latour and Graham Harman with our friend Jonas Žakaitis from Tulips & Roses. [Latour's] *We Have Never Been Modern* became really important to us after a decade in which a lot of art was trying to reference modernism and the idea of linear thought. It was really valuable to us intellectually as a rupture of these rational approaches to nature. Then we saw a lecture by artist Joachim Koester titled (after Sol LeWitt), "Conceptual Artists Are Mystics Rather Than Rationalists", redefining a practice that had typically been framed in a rational way. Then the next thing that really changed things for us was going to China, and seeing what was happening there in 2013, 2014.

**CB** That was right around when Art Basel Hong Kong started.

**AKT** Yes, but we were actually there for a show that Karen Archey curated with Robin Peckham called "Art Post-Internet" at the UCCA in Beijing. That was our first time in China, and we got introduced to a lot of people. Our experience was more from the political perspective, outside of the context of the fair: how quickly things move, how pragmatic the politics were, how quickly things were implemented. What shocked me the most is, that there is progress, there is prosperity, but it's not in a democratic system.

**JH** Just to clarify, I think it was this idea of the network as democratic which we maybe realised was not inherent: you couldn't just assume that the technology was going to be decentralised, or that it would be democratic.

**CB** One could say that under a failing neoliberal structure, where every individual has to look out for herself, social/professional networks this past decade were increasingly exploited for personal security, and this dynamic was deeply corrosive to the more utopic 00s ideas of what a network could be. Interestingly, we also see a rapid change in the way that signs circulate during this time. On the one hand, trust in personal social networks

#### MAY 2012

- **The term "nodes" (not models) is popularised (via e.g., "Model Files" VFILES).**

#### JUNE 2012

- **Documenta 13 opens, curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev.**

#### JULY 2012

- **Hurricane Sandy devastates the New York/New Jersey area.**
- **The Curiosity Rover lands on Mars.**
- **Facebook reaches the 1 billion-user milestone.**
- **Franz West ('1947) dies.**

#### NOVEMBER 2012

- **Xi Jinping becomes General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party.**

#### DECEMBER 2012

- **Influential art blog VVORK (2006–2012) ends its daily postings.**
- **The end of the Mayan calendar is reached.**

#### JANUARY 2013

- **Vine is launched.**
- **Virgil Abloh founds Off-White.**

#### APRIL 2013

- **Margaret Thatcher ('1925) dies.**

#### MAY 2013

- **Gezi Park protests, contesting the development of public space, take place in Istanbul.**
- **Art Basel launches Art Basel Hong Kong.**

declines as relations become quantified and evaluated by an attention-based para-economy. On the other hand, we see signs become more volatile: internet memes, gestures, certain terms and cultural references: semiotics are thrown into disarray as no one knows exactly what they are signaling or to whom. "This is so crypto-fascist" "This is so cringey virtue-signaling", etc. On the feed, everything is open to interpretation and the person with the most engagements wins. I wonder if any of you personally experienced this "volatility of the sign" crisis in recent years: i.e., where you witnessed the initial meaning of a work or action rapidly change within its primary lifespan?

**SP** Anne Imhof's *Faust* at the 2017 Venice Biennale was obviously a "fist" [the meaning of *Faust* in German], but it was also a gesture that can be so many different things: it depends whether it's the left fist, the right fist, and what you do with it. I think *Faust* was also about how fast all these gestures can change, which can be a positive thing, but also a confusing thing. Something interesting happened in the 10s in terms of how fast images and meanings can change, also through the speed of their distribution and adaption.

**CB** To what degree can an artist, institution, or curator have control over that? Very little! Would you say that being a site of projection for viewers, a site for viewers to desublimate their trauma and anger, is central to the role of the institution, the gallery, and/or the artist now?

**AKT** We always wanted to keep the conversation around the exhibitions and artworks in the gallery as open as possible. In the beginning we also tried to avoid explanatory press releases and opted instead for exhibition texts that were more abstract and complementary to the exhibitions. We wanted the gallery to serve as a platform for the artists and the visitors and the conversations that would grow around their interactions.

**CB** So even from the start, with the post-internet work you were showing, you were into people reading the art in whatever way they needed to see it, free from the constraints of any particular discourse?

**AKT** Yes, because it was also important to re-establish again to a certain degree that an artwork

or an artistic gesture is not necessarily already totally tied to a discourse, to certain ideas, to an ideology. Rather it's important to let the actual gesture and not the intention behind it be centre-stage. The art became something viral that could be introduced into the current system, something through which the system takes on different meanings and unfolds different potentials. We didn't even have social media until five years ago, not to interfere with this process.

**CB** Because as soon as you're on social media it's like "Well, on Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler's Instagram they said ...". It becomes an additional channel of "official" unofficial information that you need to maintain.

**AKT** Yes, but, also from the artists' point of view, at some point it stops making sense to insist on being small and underground.

**CB** Maybe we could pivot now to consider how each of the canonical art-world roles – artist, critic, institution, dealer, media outlet – has fundamentally changed in the past ten years? We could start with the "viewer", who in many ways has been overtaken by the figure of the "user", especially given that the primary site of viewing has become the screen. Susanne, do you think about viewers differently now than you did in 2010?

**SP** I never imagine the viewer, only the way somebody can move through an exhibition. I think about how to make it possible for a viewer to approach a piece. We need the body to understand artworks and sculptures, and I want to let something happen in the space.

**CB** Is that really true though? Or is that more something we like to say to make ourselves feel better about the utility of physical art? Even the most physical pieces – works by, say, Richard Serra – we're constantly engaging in flat space, where one can conceptualise the work's relationship to the body, just as one can conceptualise the pleasure of an infinity pool in an influencer's Instagram post. Art now occupies the same space as a fashion image or an advertising image. I'm playing devil's advocate here, but is there a stronger defence?

**SP** I think Serra is a good example. Between these massive blocks of metal, everything gets so physical. It is beyond what you can imagine. You can perceive art when you see a video

#### JUNE 2013

- **Edward Snowden leaks NSA global surveillance disclosures.**
- **"When Attitudes Become Form" is reenacted at the Prada Foundation, Venice.**

#### JULY 2013

- **Black Lives Matter forms.**
- **Cambridge Analytica is founded.**
- **Military coup removes Egypt's first post-revolution president, Mohammed Morsi.**

#### SEPTEMBER 2013

- **"Speculations on Anonymous Materials" opens at the Fridericianum, Kassel.**

#### OCTOBER 2013

- **8chan launches as a home for users banned from 4chan.**
- **The term "normcore" is coined by K-HOLE.**

#### NOVEMBER 2013

- **Hito Steyerl publishes "Too Much World: Is the Internet Dead?" on e-flux.**

#### DECEMBER 2013

- **Mike Nelson proposes a pyramid made from former homes of evicted public housing residents in South London and is subsequently dropped by the public art commissioning agency Artangel.**

#### FEBRUARY 2014

- **Outbreak of the Maidan Revolution in Kyiv.**
- **Stefan Simchowicz and other "art flippers" gain**

# Words are not enough any more; you need an image to capture the complexity, the contradictions.

about it, or you can look at a catalogue, but doing a catalogue is always about failing in a beautiful way, because it can never really reproduce an art piece. Even with photography, it's impossible.

**CB** But is this in part simply because when you're physically in a space, your attention is focused on the art? I'm curious what your policy is in regard to visitor selfies.

**SP** This is something that has really changed. It's interesting how much people now perceive art through making photos.

**CB** Do you encourage it, or are you agnostic?

**SP** At KW, everybody was always allowed to take pictures, and I remember showing Richard Serra movies and people were filming everything. I always thought it's okay that people want to take these things with them in whatever form. But the degree to which we perceive an artwork through the camera still hasn't been thought through enough. One thing is that it makes it easier for people to get engaged or to try to understand art. But there are so many different layers to why you go to an exhibition and film everything or take a photo. In Venice during *Faust* the images people took changed the performance, so it was like an ongoing process. In the past ten years cameras have really changed what an image is, the politics of the image.

**AKT** In that context, there is *OMG Obelisk* (2007) by AIDS-3D, a work that was never produced to be shown in an exhibition space but rather to be reproduced and circulated as a JPEG. Katja Novitskova is doing something similar, in that she always anticipated how her works would be fed back into this population of unorganised images floating around on the

Images don't necessarily tell the truth; the meaning of the image is totally volatile.

web. There are so many artists who were taking into account how an audience exists beyond the viewers in the museum and how an artwork goes beyond physical experience.

**CB** But how do you sell that to a collector? I mean, a lot of your artists embrace the fact that the works they make will change as they circulate, and that this is necessarily part of the life of any work now. But then where does the collector fit into this circuit: is it simply that they are buying the "original referent" iteration of the given work and this iteration is the most valuable ... or?

**AKT** We have had this before with video art not being editioned, and, well, you can go back to Yves Klein and these immaterial practices that would involve collectors or artists: there are a lot of practices that are similar in some ways. But the way it was approached was new, and I think it was partly in how it reached beyond this inner circle of the art world, beyond the art world's ideas of viewer, artist, critic, institution, dealer, and so on. The image itself has become very important in this decade, especially if you look at memes, which have replaced a form of reading. Words are not enough anymore; you need the image to capture the complexity, the contradictions.

**CB** Yet images don't necessarily tell the truth; the meaning of the image is totally volatile.

**AKT** Well, language also doesn't tell the truth.

**CB** True.

**AKT** The image works very well as a mechanism for artists to capture all the simultaneous contradictions of this decade. In *Faust*, there were so many different registers that were activated through the image, which made this project so powerful beyond the "stage".

**mainstream traction.**  
– Russia annexes Crimea.

**MARCH 2014**

– Malaysian Airlines flight 370 disappears, and P2P theories start receiving more traction than those in mainstream media.

**APRIL 2014**

– *Thomas Piketty's Capital in the 21st Century* is published in English.  
– The term "zombie formalism" is coined by Walter Robinson.

**MAY 2014**

– The term "incele" enters public discussion.  
– Maria Lassnig ('1919) dies

**JUNE 2014**

– Amalia Ulman stages her scripted Instagram narrative, *Excellences & Perfections*.

**AUGUST 2014**

– The beginning of Gamergate.

**SEPTEMBER 2014**

– Telfar throws White Castle party in New York.

**NOVEMBER 2014**

– The White Cube starts publishing regular reviews.

**DECEMBER 2014**

– Spike Berlin opens.

**JANUARY 2015**

– The Charlie Hebdo shootings in Paris take place.

# There is little incentive for an institution to collect 8chan threads and bad-taste memes.

**JH** Ok, so let's think about the very 2000s works – maybe that's slightly unfair – of Tino Sehgal. His response to the same situation is: no photos. And that doesn't work any longer, right? It's impossible. So the artists have to find a different response to the same problem, which is encourage photographs as much as possible, to bring that inside the work, rather than trying to keep it outside.

**CB** John, you bring two vectors into view here. One is a question of the archive, and the other is the question of political volatility or protest. The first is perfectly illustrated by the fact that if you google LuckyPDF today, you'll find a lot of Tumblr links that are no longer operative. I wonder what your thoughts are regarding "storage" of this digital space outside the domain of what institutions are set up to archive?

**JH** I think it can exist in an institution, and one of the works that's up there is Amalia Ulman's *Excellences & Perfections* (2014). I don't know if it has been bought by the New Museum, but it's archived by Rhizome's web archive, and that fixes it: is is a copy of exactly how it was in 2014. But it's not the internet anymore. It's using the same technologies but it's not connected to anything, it's deliberately disconnected in order to preserve it. I feel that's harmful to the work, which obviously still exists on real Instagram, it just looks different now because the interface has changed. Bringing things inside institutional archives, though, is a great way for institutions to have control over how we remember these things. If you have the documentation, the image rights, the access and the resources to organise them, you get to keep your archive, to preserve these documents, and you can use them

in the future. If you don't have that, if you no longer have the resources to pay for your Vimeo premium, then things get lost, so there's a power imbalance there.

**CB** History is written by those who keep their Vimeo subscriptions! Susanne, from an institutional perspective, do you feel a new need to also collect the ephemera that lends context to the artworks that you are collecting? I imagine that in the future it will be challenging to communicate the original meaning of a work made during the 2010s given how schizoid the semiotic climate has been this decade. Of course there is little incentive for an institution to keep a collection of 8chan threads and bad-taste memes. It is nevertheless that cultural soup that good work made during this time is pushing against or coming out of, right? How does an institution think about archiving context?

**SP** I think this is more a task for historical museums than for art museums. We are focusing more on how to preserve art. We still have, for example, a Bruce Nauman work on a Betacam tape that's quite problematic now. It was not made to run for so many years and so many hours. So at the moment I'm more interested in what it means to collect and preserve objects. It's important for a museum to archive everything. I established the first permanent position at the Museum of Modern Art in Frankfurt for digital archiving and documentation. I was recently talking to Cory Arcangel about his preservation of homepages. It's really extraordinary that he has preserved the homepages of several American companies. It's so interesting to see, because this is what is often lost.

If you say something at a dinner party, you do not want it archived on some server somewhere.

**APRIL 2015**  
– Airbnb begins operating in Cuba (leaving only Syria, North Korea, Sudan, and Iran without Airbnb).

**MAY 2015**  
– Ada Colau is elected mayor of Barcelona.

**JUNE 2015**  
– WHEREISANAMENDIETA protests the presentation of Carl Andre's work at Tate Modern, London.

**JULY 2015**  
– Greek bailout referendum ignored by Prime Minister Tsipras, Minister of Finance Yanis Varoufakis resigns.

– Spotify introduces Discover Weekly, an algorithmic playlist trained on users' tastes and networks.

**AUGUST 2015**  
– Angela Merkel says "wir schaffen das" in response to the European Migrant Crisis.

**NOVEMBER 2015**  
– Shootings occur at Parisian club Bataclan.

**DECEMBER 2015**  
– The Paris Climate Accord is reached.

**MARCH 2016**  
– Instagram introduces non-chronological timelines.

**CB** So in a way it's up to the artists to archive that which they feel is necessary for the legibility of their own work?

**SP** It's so fast, for a museum it's really impossible to keep up.

**JH** But that's okay, right? It's okay for things not to be around forever, because that's the medium. They weren't made to be around forever.

**CB** Yes. It's a problem when this content *does* stay around forever, and this is why many people now auto-delete their tweets. If you say something at a dinner party, you do not want it archived on some server somewhere.

**AKT** There are also catalogues and artists' books, and I see artists often including the cultural soup that you just described – memes, contextualising materials, screenshots from websites, and so on – in printed matter. It's interesting that the book still has a certain function and maybe upholds its status. It's a very old function of the book, being an archive and having this currency of the "soup" mixed in with works, exhibition reviews, and so forth.

**SP** I print out all the emails which are important, like all the correspondence with artists. I think it's safest, because it's impossible to save digitally.

**JH** In 2010, when Katja Novitskova published her *Post Internet Survival Guide*, the idea of printing out images from Tumblr in black and white

and binding them was an absurd gesture. But only ten years later, that has become a really different thing from what it was at the time.

**AKT** Before I came here I made a PDF from our shared timeline on Google Docs to print out later, because I was wondering if I might lose access to it after the talk.

**CB** I remember another turning moment for me was probably around 2014, arriving in Berlin to work for a print magazine, and realising like, oh my god, who's going to actually read print media for critical hot takes? Nobody! Print has another value: it is the record of everything that's happened during a certain period of time, functioning to hold language and images together within a particular cultural context. One thing we haven't addressed yet is art's changing relationship to politics and protest. Notably, the iconic images from this decade are mostly gestures of dissent: the artist Parker Bright blocking the view of Dana Schutz's painting of Emmett Till (*Open Casket*), or the reflecting pool of the Temple of Dendur at the Met Museum strewn with empty bottles of Oxycontin during the anti-Sackler protest organised by Nan Goldin's P.A.I.N. Sackler group, or the vast repository of street-protest footage from the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, the French

Yellow Vest movement, and the ongoing Hong Kong protests, among so many other examples. It has been heartening to see cultural production that refuses injustice. We have also seen, however, an intensification of peer-to-peer surveillance among artists and within artist communities. Have the same structures (i.e., social media) that have helped us organise en masse against state-level corruption simultaneously been corrosive to our local communities, particularly in the art world? How do you see the effects of this recent politicisation of art?

**SP** I think identity politics has fundamentally changed the way we understand art's role. Also questions of power, about who is talking and from which position. What does it mean that I'm a white female German curator? These questions became so important and I think that's opened up a much wider discourse, and this, for me, has really been the most significant development of the past four years. It changed my view, and gave visibility to many groups and individuals who were invisible before, and I'm really grateful for that.

**JH** To be honest, 2010 felt like a time of abundance, and perhaps 2019 feels like a time of scarcity: of resources, attention, and time. Something I see as a really important

outcome of these past ten years is the understanding that disorganised protest isn't effective beyond a certain point and that engagement with existing institutions, structures, and even working with existing political parties rather than setting up a new political party – all that seems has more potential now. Because maybe we felt that to occupy was enough, and now we have seen all the failures, though that maybe isn't the right word: these occupations went somewhere and then got lost, and so the question is, what are the often very bureaucratic structures that we need to work through?

**AKT** When we started with the gallery we always had the impression – which has been widely discussed – that there is no outside and therefore it's really hard to take an outside position; you are always complicit. For the first five years that was probably okay, but then suddenly all these shitstorms happened. The problem I see is that things became so complex that people know what they are against, but it's really hard to define what you're actually for.

**CB** And there's an attention-economy filter on top of this. I mean, if you are giving an artist a prominent platform in a time of attention scarcity ....

**JH** I think one of the things we'll look back on in

**SEPTEMBER 2017**  
– **Germany's AfD (Alternative for Germany) party gains parliamentary representation with 12.6% of the vote.**

– **Occupation of Berlin's Volksbühne protesting the theatre's new leadership under Chris Dercon.**

**OCTOBER 2017**  
– **The Harvey Weinstein scandal breaks effectively popularising #MeToo; Knight Landesman leaves Artforum.**

– **Unannounced shutdown of the Beijing Factory and Environmental Protection Bureau.**

**NOVEMBER 2017**  
– **Lil Peep (1996–2017), height of Soundcloud rap?**

– **Leonardo Da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi* sells for \$450 million.**

– **The Louvre Abu Dhabi opens.**

**JANUARY 2018**  
– **Water crisis in Cape Town followed by strict water restrictions.**

**MARCH 2018**  
– **Christopher Wylie outs Cambridge Analytica.**

**JUNE 2018**  
– **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez wins Democratic primary election for New York congress (wins seat in October).**

– **The Carters release the video for "Apeshit", shot in the Louvre.**



#### APRIL 2016

– **The Panama Papers are released.**

#### JUNE 2016

– **The opening of "Berlin Biennale 9: The Present in Drag," curated by DIS.**

– **Referendum on Brexit is held, with 51.9% voting Leave.**

#### NOVEMBER 2016

– **Donald Trump is elected president of the US.**

– **Fidel Castro ('1926) dies.**

#### DECEMBER 2016

– **Numerous viral conspiracy-driven stories (e.g., Pizzagate, Pepe, Milo Yiannopoulos, DNC Hack) travel from filter bubble to filter bubble, seeding doubt in institutional knowledge.**

#### JANUARY 2017

– **Barack Obama commutes Chelsea Manning's prison sentence.**

– **Mark Fisher ('1968), aka K-Punk, dies.**

#### MARCH 2017

– **Artist Parker Bright protests Dana Schutz's *Open Casket* at the Whitney Biennial.**

#### MAY 2017

– **Opening of "Anne Imhof: Faust" at the German Pavilion of the Venice Biennale.**

– **Emmanuel Macron elected President of France.**



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this decade with horror is this idea of content-agnostic platforms: that the platforms don't care and are not responsible for what they host. Art institutions can no longer say they're just representing or just showing something or just making things visible, and I don't think artists can claim to just be making things visible either. Not so long ago that was a position you could take, but the responsibility of making things visible is an incredibly large part of how we do politics, right? AKT It probably comes back to the idea of protest. I mean, is the institution, the exhibition space, a place for discourse or activism? And if so, then is it only for performances of



**JULY 2018**  
– Climate scientist Jem Bendell publishes “Deep Adaptation” paper.

**AUGUST 2018**  
– Greta Thunberg begins School Strike for Climate.

**SEPTEMBER 2018**  
– Gallerist Mary Boone pleads guilty to tax evasion.  
– Gilets Jaunes movement begins in France.  
– Journalist Jamal Khashoggi is assassinated in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

**DECEMBER 2018**  
– Tania Bruguera arrested in Cuba under new law requiring artists to obtain government license.

**FEBRUARY 2019**  
– Karl Lagerfeld (\*1933) dies.

**MARCH 2019**  
– Okwui Enwezor (\*1963) dies.  
– The first Brexit deadline is not met.  
– The Sackler family suspends all art philanthropy in light of anti-Purdue Pharma/OxyContin protests.

**APRIL 2019**  
– Fire breaks out at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris.

ceased to exist because everything got so commercialised?

SP The museum, and the liberty of art, is a space we really have to defend. Germany has changed in such awful ways in the past decade. It was always anti-Semitic, and there has always been a lot of racism in this country, but it used to be more hidden, and now it's so present and even part of everyday culture too. For those in the AfD, the question of cultural production is really important. The AfD sends me letters every month, and they

have programmes where they really get into cultural politics. If the government were to change ... maybe it's strange to mention this now at the end, but it's something we need to think about, something that is really different when I compare it to the situation in 2010. I could never have imagined that the democracy that we're living in would be so questioned – a fascist Europe! This means we have a really big task where we all have to fight together. We have to be aware of our power and defend the space of freedom.

**MAY 2019**  
– Anna Delvey outed as fake heiress.  
– Collapse of Austrian coalition after the Ibiza affair.

**JUNE 2019**  
– Hong Kong pro-democracy protests escalate.

**JULY 2019**  
– Douglas Crimp dies (1944–2019).  
– Jeffrey Epstein “kills himself”, igniting conspiracy theories from across the political spectrum.  
– Safariland owner Warren Kanders resigns from the board of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

**OCTOBER 2019**  
– The US withdrawal from Syria facilitates Turkish invasion of Rojava.  
– US House initiates Trump impeachment inquiry.  
– Lebanese anti-corruption protests lead nation’s president and prime minister to resign.

**NOVEMBER 2019**  
– The Centre Pompidou Shanghai opens.

**DECEMBER 2019**  
– Peter Handke is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.  
– Boris Johnson wins the UK election.  
– Australian bushfires intensify.

Identity politics has fundamentally changed the way we understand art's role. Also questions of power, about who is talking and from which position.

**SUSANNE PFEFFER**

is the director of the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt, where she has organised the exhibition “Museum”, as well as a recent survey of the work of Cady Noland. In 2017, she curated Anne Imhof’s Faust for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, which was awarded the Golden Lion.

**JOHN HILL**

is a British Prague-based artist and educator whose work looks at the artistic and institutional use of cybernetic methods.

**AMADEO KRAUPA-TUSKANY**

is the co-founder of Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler gallery in Berlin, representing artists such as Avery Singer, Katja Novitskova, Guan Xiao and Anna Uddenberg.

**CAROLINE BUSTA**

is a Berlin-based writer and the co-founder of newmodels.io.