



Call for Contributions European Event « Art and Restructuring »

Artists and researchers gather around restructuring

9th – 10th of March 2012 - Maison des Métallos, Paris- France

Arts and restructuring?

Organizational restructuring is a practice widely implemented by firms with far reaching social, human and economic impacts. The global economic downturn has worsened the situation, provoking an increase in employee layoffs, economic changes, loss of skills and innovation at a national, European and global level.

Since a long time artists (film makers, writers, essayists and songwriters) have gained interest in the restructuring phenomenon. This interest has been developed to the fullest extent in their practices. Some other initiatives come from people directly affected by the restructuring events. Thus, stories, movies, documentaries and plays have been created to translate those experiences and views to pieces of art.

These artworks focusing on restructuring situations aim to grasp some of their most significant traits. They belong to the general frame of the contemporary relation between arts and the economic world, which since the first seminal works in organization theory (Strati 1999, Höpfl et Linstead 2000, Guillet de Monthoux 2004) have met an increasing interest. New managerial practices arise and take the artist as a liberal model, against what some scholars raise their voice (Boltanski and Chiapello 1998 ; Lazzarato 2007; Salmon 2007, Rancière 2001, 20011) and ask for a renewed critique and a political action.

The European Project « Arts et Restructuring »

A critical research on restructuring drawing on artworks could bring not only an original approach to a better understanding of restructuring but also it could complement the contribution provided by the work of researchers in the fields of economy, sociology, business and management.

Artistic work can shed some light on complex phenomena, such as a restructuring in both a pedagogical and acute way by their use of images, roles, characters, novelistic narratives, ... and can finely articulate the stakeholders strategies. In an attempt to seize the phenomena of restructuring, different levels and interpreting angles have to be combined, as well as different points of view: invisibility, complexity, symbolics, ...

Drawing on these hypothesis, the research group “Restructuring” from the research laboratory GREGOR (IAE Paris 1 La Sorbonne) launched in early 2010 the European research program “Arts and Restructuring” in partnership with the WLRI laboratory (Working Lives Research Institute/ London Metropolitan University) and the LENTIC (Laboratory and Studies on New technologies, Innovation and Change)/HEC Liège. This project is supported by the European Commission (funding program PROGRESS).

As an outcome and as continuation to this reflection, a two days final event will be organized in Paris, aiming at:

- Showing the artistic work from the three countries, Belgium, France and United Kingdom, in order to analyze the contribution of those pieces of art work to the understanding of the restructuring matter, the knowledge brought by arts, the problems it raises, its limits and the possible answers.
- Using as basis the artistic work (literature, visual arts, cinema, theater) and the results of the research produced by the project team, the idea is to share the opinions, reactions and contrasting views from key stakeholders (Managers, employees, union leaders, artists, researchers, experts and citizens at a large) by creating spaces for discussion, round tables, think tanks.
- Raising awareness of the factors to take into account in a restructuring process.

This project aims at exploring the restructuring phenomena and the way it is implemented:

- The tragic consequences in social, human and economic terms, for individuals, collectives and local areas.
- The justification of the decision and the details of the implementation, and their role played in the effects of restructuring.
- The potential practices and actions that contribute to limit the negative effects of restructuring.

Three dimensions of art are considered:

- **Art as a material for understanding restructuring:** what is the role of artworks in improving our understanding of the restructuring mechanisms and practices?
- **Art as representation of restructuring:** to which extent do artworks mirror social complex phenomena as restructuring, or do they help embedding and institutionalizing practices and concepts?
- **Art as instrument/device of response to restructuring situations:** could art be implemented by organizations or people involved into restructuring, in order to deal with the negative effects of a restructuring process, on the emotional, identity or physical level?

The two days event will be designed around 5 key restructuring themes:

1. Decision, context and reactions
2. Negotiation and details of implementation
3. Diversity (age factors, gender, nationality,...)
4. Restructuring over time (temporalities, long term effects,...)
5. Space and local areas (territorial dimension especially)

**Which contributions for the research,
What feedback to the artistic work
could result from gathering artists and researchers?**

Call for contributions

This call aims to open up the field explored by the research group. The meeting between the scientific discourse and artistic creation reveals unexplored correspondences in practice and theory, from which arise fresh possibilities for new investigations and experiments. The objective of this final event is to illustrate the potential of a liaison of the two fields :

- Art as an expression of the complexity of reality, as symbolic and metaphoric capacities revealing the invisible, and as a fostering resource for participation and creation.
- Research as an exploration of shared conceptions underlying social and cultural phenomena, as a critique of the taken-for-granted, and as an exploration of the social field and its evolution.

Following this, the event will stand between art and research. Hybrid and original contributions are expected. All artistic fields are welcome: theater, music, video, film, visual arts, graphic design, poetry, writing,...

We expect all kind of contributions from both artists and scholars:

- Communications, interventions, performances, installations
- Original artworks dealing with restructuring and its effects
- Comments and critical analysis
- Staging of the intellectual debate and analysis
- ...

Submissions should consist of an abstract (intention note, references,...) and a description of the contribution (pictures, descriptions, technical details...).

**Deadline for submission: December 30th, 2011
All proposals will be reviewed by the selection committee.
Evaluation and selection: January 31st, 2012**

Submissions must be sent electronically to: artsrestructurations@gmail.com

Who to contact ? Where to inquire ?

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