

HAMBURG MASCHINE

2018-2020 | new art in public sphere

Press Release *Initiativprojekt Stadtkuratorin Hamburg*

In April 2018, Dirck Möllmann was appointed as the new independent city curator. His program HAMBURG MASCHINE (HAMBURG MACHINE) brings together individual artistic positions, art activism, and discursive elements that establish a tangible and accessible artistic praxis. By drawing on the history of public art, the program will open up new paths for urban art in Hamburg.

In the first edition of *Initiativprojekt Stadtkuratorin Hamburg* (2014-2016), Sophie Goltz focused on how society is shaped by migration. In the second iteration (2018-2020) titled HAMBURG MASCHINE, Dirck Möllmann will focus on the digital. Digital culture has become the fundamental condition of production for working, shaping the way meaning is created. The program stems from the belief that digitality makes our information and communication culture more fluid and permeable, but at an individual level also less transparent. Therefore, the digital cannot be solely understood as an aspect of economic or technological innovation.

Why will Hamburg become a machine? In the twentieth century, the current city was a representative stage, a productive factory, a planned infrastructure, a built physicality, and a social reality, sustained by a political community. This has not changed, yet the city has been radically transformed by the current cybernetic epoch. In this transition from an industrial to a machinist and socio-technological system, what will become of the urban structures in place? What functions can a future art for and in public space have? And, what meaning will art obtain in this society?

During this transition, HAMBURG MASCHINE engages in establishing a model institution. By the end of the second term of *Stadtkuratorin* in 2020, ideally, a foundation for a newly structured and reformulated funding strategy will have been put in place for Hamburg's existing public art program. The idea of a model institution arises from the desire for a physical space, a future institution that is tangible, visible, accessible, and usable. This type of space does not yet exist. It intends to be open, public, and secure (even for data) and will be developed in collaboration with artists, according to the following maxim: Utilize art to create new paths and generate a momentum to democratize democracy.

Following these calls for change, the program HAMBURG MASCHINE attempts to engender a new urban art. A spectrum of artistic possibilities will not only strengthen Hamburg as an international art center but also strengthen the existing ties between local participants. The public's interest and a grassroots curatorial approach lie at the base of this project, which plans to encompass various city neighborhoods, going beyond the Mitte district.

Dirck Möllmann, Stadtkurator (city curator)