

CyberDandy

ORTLOS or NOT?

“If media is the answer, the question must be fucking stupid!”
4 o'clock in the afternoon in Graz is a good time. The stress of the

morning is over (getting up, making phone calls, writing faxes, checking the news groups and reading e-mails), so is the subsequent lunch break with espresso, and finally one can start to concentrate on work. Our friends in Los Angeles have just returned from surfing and are ready for the teleconference, in New York everything has long since been in full swing, and while in Belgrade the great heat wave is slowly passing, the Internet time of 625 in Bangalore suggests it is already time to store reports and files on the server before going out for a drink. The flood of information, images and sounds coming in adding to the workload, together with the possibility of being able to communicate and retrieve information any time, disturb the withdrawn and concentrated working situation of the lonely thinker sitting in front of the emptiness of a white sheet of paper.

The afternoon sun is squeezing through the gap between the sun shades of a café in the main square of Sienna in Tuscany, caressing a glass of Chianti on a round table before it is lifted by a hand. The table fills up quickly as the same hand immediately after unpacks a laptop, a palm pilot and mobile (adding to the ash tray, salt cellar and the menu). The laptop boots up, the palm pilot is synchronized, and the mobile turned in the direction of the infra-red interface. But suddenly the battery symbol starts flashing – it must be defective or empty; the synchronizing process has not been completed because the COM1 port is going crazy and the cracked Data Suite Software for the Nokia mobile doesn't work because the infra-red interface only runs on COM1, thus making the reading and sending of e-mails impossible. That very moment the camera cuts abruptly to a shot of the Chianti glass, the picture fades out and the writing is dissolved, “If you have a deadline, you better stay offline ...”. This was an excerpt from the latest anti-ortlos TV commercial, which will be broadcast this fall on every household.

Since most architects and artists are not skilled technicians, complex working processes often have to be carried out with proper technicians. The outcome of this translation of ideas can only be imagined. Everything appears as a collage or montage of thought fragments, pushed back and forth for a specific purpose. For somebody who is not in full command of the tool that he should be able to use day after day will have difficulty working on new concepts and ideas. But work and works of art are no longer the expression of a single individual as was still the case in Romanticism and classical Modernity. Neither, however, is it the expression of a collective as in the middle of the 20th century. Rather, it is the expression of a platform, a network of influences, continuously being reorganized by all participants. Discursive forums and artistic practices that do not aim for any durability take the place of the individual work of a single artist or group of artists. Their temporary nature creates the precondition for the inherent opportunity for constant change. This could be a model, in post-industrial societies, for how, as many people as possible can be led to participate in social processes.