

PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS
of the discussion
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Participants of the discussion

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JOHN LATHAM
BAS MATERS
PAUL PANHUYSEN
ROLF SACHSSE
REMKO SCHA
JEFFREY SHAW
BARBARA STEVENI

ROLF: I would like to make a suggestion about the way we are discussing, I myself will give a short introductory note and then I would like to ask each participant of this meeting here first of all to present himself, because we all don't know each other, and then perhaps to make a statement about his concern of art in social context, and how he is related professionally to this or that end of this kind of context, and perhaps at last, make a statement about the invitation and the enclosed paper. To me APG is important on two levels at the same time and equally important on both levels. First of all on a theoretical level in the sense that by the time-base idea and theory of John Latham it helped me to understand a lot more about the social context I am working in as an artist and, of course, to learn a lot more about the basic fundamental ideas of my work. You can see it perhaps, for instance, in the pictures hanging on the wall, made by me, which comprise a spacial moment and a time moment, and the spacial moment is itself produced by time, because they are all lightning flashes what you see here around, very short timed energy descriptions or energy lines, formed into material. On the other hand there is a very pragmatic side, I would suggest that John is the best to describe how far the time-base theory is related to APG's practical or pragmatic side, as I would like to call it, the pragmatic part of APG is the awareness of the social context any artist is working in, and the consequences of producing a scheme in a very prolific way of working in governmental or industrial contexts, producing a scheme of relating an artist to government, to administrations. We have tried to do this in Germany, we have tried to negotiate four different projects in Germany, they all failed, we didn't even get to the first step of having a feasibility study. All four failures had very different reasons for their failing, what shouldn't be described here -- we can come to this in the discussion, if you like ~~it~~, but the element of cooperating or trying to negotiate project schemes together with governmental bodies were to me a very important and good experience and helped me a lot to understand about my own way of thinking, about my own way of behaving being an artist myself. I must say, as perhaps not everybody knows me I am working both as an artist and a scientist, normally considered with the media history of photography and other techni-

cal media. I would like to ask John or anybody else from APG to present APG on both levels perhaps -- which I only divided here for discussion reasons, because it is of course one entity --, to present APG and tell something about the approach we are having here. Would you like to do it, John?

JOHN: I think I should say that the idea hung about when Barbara was going around the North Circular Road in London, where the factories are in the middle sixties and saw a clock-factory and it came to her mind that there was a kind of conceptual work which I had written down, which was a project for a factory and she said: 'Why don't we go into this factory?' Well, at the time I could see a lot of the wrong things that would be about any artist having to tangle with industrial organisations of any kind. In fact, I would have subscribed as it not being for something else entirely, which is quite prevalent that we should keep ourselves apart as artists, we should keep ourselves in another world. But the situation changed fundamentally when it became obvious what had happened in physics, all the concepts of the material world came to be completely contradictory by definings which were made in the cause of experiments, and what happened was that the framework, in which people think and see and the terms which people have got, are established by language. And language is inevitably tied to the visual tangeable, spacial material world it can't in fact deal with. There are two different media that we are involved in, and they have different spacial and different temporal relations to energy. If we use the word energy we are into trouble, There is a sense in which motifs in human beings is not energy, we only recognize energy as something having had happened which then informs an action. The point at which we are now in order -- and I say it is an essential point to go to the governmental end -- is that the media that governments use, the media that they used to use for administration is essentially and this is possibly where there is a contraction as to theoretical talk, and administrative talk. Talking about the movement of objects and the movement of people, and the administration of how people to be organized legally, because the purposes of organizing in this society are different. That medium used by government is the medium money, which is the other one to be been chiefly used to organize society. Both suffer from the same kind of fault that neutronian

physics suffer from. It is not able to state the whole; what it does state very well is parts and it will state, language will state stories about the parts, but it will never relate, as scientists have often commented and philosophers have often commented, it will never be able to state the circumstances which comprises the whole, the invisible whole. Now, artists have kept themselves apart from that and are independent of what had been verbalized for a hundred years, have also been apart from and independent of financial considerations. And I believe it to be right, because when an idea comes up and one is excited, one does it without any sort of financial consideration and drive, you just get it done. I am going to cut this thing short. The main point that I wanted to introduce from what Rolf said was, we have now with the idea of the event-structure dimensionality - which I think begins to see, to bring in what is on the walls here at the moment - a dimensional framework of what is there all the time and has happened in an instant, is very different from what the means of comprehension, that we have, in a medium which is ongoing and which splits and is not all there all the time, but which one focuses intentions on and one divides concepts and subdivides distinctions and sub-distinctions and so on all the time, that framework is leading us towards the same end as a physical reactor that is out of control. I would say this is not what we are disputing here. We are the people, let's say, artists are the people who have the means of showing those other parts, that have not used the material and tried to express through a different dimensional framework as sense of the completeness of things, and when we are in connection with situations which have had at their disposal enormous facilities, one can pick out - on APG's brief anyway - one can pick out and and persuade those people who are in charge of those things to do things which they themselves would never think of, and which they would themselves probably regard as invisible, just wrong. But they are probably the only things left to be done to start with to set the balances right.

ROLF: Perhaps it is possible for you, Hugh, to describe - as you did some years ago in the paper of the Open Brief Method - how to put these basic ideas into a sort of function, into a sort of given context, just being here and being active in the present times. How do you work, perhaps you can describe it on the sample of one of the schemes you have taken part in.

HUGH: You mean, the practical application of APG's work?

ROLF: As John laid out the fundamental theory behind it, this might be important.

HUGH: Well, I have worked in the Department of Health, in one of the central offices. They initially wanted two people from APG to work with them; three of us went, John and myself and a third member of APG, and we met a group of people who happened to be architects concerned with the buildings for mentally ill and mentally handicapped people, comprising physically and mentally handicapped. We had come to this group of architects through Barbara Steveni's negotiations, starting very high up in the hierarchy and coming down to a group, that was interested in and open enough meeting us and seeing if we could work together, and so it was this group of architects although I am a musician by training and John and Ian Breakwell, the third artist, are coming from the visual arts. We met them and just from that first meeting it seemed that Ian Breakwell and myself should do an initial study with them. APG has this Open Brief approach, where we go and take part in the work of, in this case it was the work of the architects' department, just to get a feeling of what they were engaged in, and talk to them to go on visits to hospitals and other facilities they were concerned with, to go to any meetings that they were involved in, just to live their work for a period of time. And after that we each wrote a report on our impressions and some proposals for future projects that could be worked on.

Of the proposals we made, Ian Breakwell worked on a proposal for one of the three main hospitals for mentally ill people, called Broadmoor. There was an interdisciplinary team involving the architects and people from nursing and doctors, then APG members and other people, looking into the whole functioning of the buildings of the hospital, whether the building should be improved, whether a new building should be done. Ian Breakwell achieved certain things that had not been done before, having individual interviews with patients just in a room by himself with a tape recorder documenting, because that is very much his own work - his own work is concerned with a diary in all media, visual and verbal recording, photographs of what he experiences in his life - and so this approach was ideal for examining a situation as complex as a special hospital. There I also worked later on a project... Well, I should just finish, the Broadmoor Hospital

thing ended up in a report from the team in investigating, it was very controversial and is still closed, but that's one of the things that maybe in two or five years timewill change and it could have a very substantial effect; the second thing grew into a quite different team which came from an idea of one of the architects - it was a phantasy of his more or less.-Ian Breakwell and I developped it into a project which had received quite a lot of money, a small amount of money in their terms, but in our terms quite a lot of money, for a study which was for old people who are perhaps loosing their memories, they are confused, they are living in some sort of hospital or a home, and we evolved a series of tape-slide-sequences in our days - three years later we had probably done a video - evoking the period of time where these people would have been young people. And we took roughly periods of ten years, about 1900-1914, then separately the first World War, and then the 1920s, the 1930s, World War II, the 1950s and one or two controle programs; there was a program about childhood. Those were taken out and tested in various hospitals with groups of old people, followed up by questions to come and visit them again, to see if they were stimulated by remembering times from their past; it is often with people like this, that they forget what happened five minutes ago or last week but they remember fifty years ago. When the pilot project was finished there was certain disagreement between two members of the team, one of the architects and Ian Breakwell, but apparently the project is now going ahead under an organisation concerned with old people which gets governmental funding, we have only just discovered that because we have been rather left without information for some time, so werare looking into that again. So these projects, once you are focussed on a project which is going to be worked on, they can have implications that continue over several years and it is quite possible that either of us would work in the future again with the architects perhaps on a different project still, it is not something you go to and stop; ideally you go and do it, and the project takes on its own life which can continue after APG is no longer directly connected with it. That's enough idea of a limited practical experience of mine.

ROLF: I think as description of APG kind of projects, as far as I can see, this is a very typical way of working within APG. I would like to ask either Nicholas or Barbara perhaps just to describe what was

meant with the proposal which is laid down in the paper presented to each member of the discussion, especially the one on page 3, point 7; just to get off the ground, I think we should stick a bit to the pragmatic side. John has laid out the basic idea, the fundamental theory behind APG, but to be able to lead a discussion, to run the discussion through, we should concentrate on the practical aspect as one level of discussion, and I would like to ask Barbara, just to describe what was meant with this invitation, with this idea; afterwards I would like to ask the Dutch artists who are here, how they would relate from their own experience to it. Perhaps you could start, Barbara.

BARBARA: Well, the proposal that we have put here is exactly what it says, based very much on the experience we had in our country or as group of artists having to first of all make our own enabling instrument, we first of all negotiate it, and I do not know whether this will be necessary for you to do because, of course, your experiences as we have been hearing from Paul are different. I mean, each country has got its own different experiences and what we found was a real, important instrument at the beginning of doing anything, was that as artists we negotiated an enabling instrument with our central government, which was a Civil Service Memorandum which we negotiated in 1972; I just lay this down before I come actually to the point because it might be useful. We found that although in this memorandum we negotiated, it is said that artists had application to all areas of governmental departments, we had to take it to the government and persuade them to do it in a way that we had found out for working in industry about ten years before, it would have to be done if it stood a chance of working as art and through artists. Otherwise the government would say: 'Oh, what a good idea'. I believe it has happened rather more this way round, from what Paul was saying to me just before, otherwise they would be saying: 'What a good idea, yes, we'd like all you artists to solve the problems and be problem-solvers and do various things, good works and whatever', but it could not come round in the same way as it would come if one could negotiate a period, a feasibility period which is what we have proposed here and which is the way we found out from trial and error in our country. So, one, you do not get used by the administrations to do what they think: 'We could

employ artists doing'; and, two, you do not get your art-administration to say: 'Oh, what a good idea, we will get artists to make more art in art-centers', or you will not fall into those holes which we found. So, what we are suggesting here is that various countries in Europe might be interested, and we have the invitation here to discuss it with you, to relate artists with their decision-making bodies in a way that we managed to relate in our country, but, of course, it would be specified how it would be right for you, and you will do it. There will be a number of feasibility studies, and the basis of this feasibility study is that it is open; that ~~in the new words~~ ~~the~~ decision-making bodies, the organisations in a way invite the artists, and we refer to our track-records of what it was done - you know as an example - but this way round, the possibilities go on for a long time and we suggest that if it was interesting, some of you working in this more social way related with your decision-making bodies up to a feasibility stage, so that you are doing the looking and you are doing the seeing of what is relevant to do and then one can negotiate how to take it forward to a longer period, but it is first of all being discovered through the artist being placed in a context, so that the organisation only has to commit itself to a short period of time first, during which time the artist finds what is relevant to do in this context. That is what we are proposing what could be done, as John was saying, unless persons, who are looking at the whole system and are not looking at the decisive little sectional interest-bits, are in connection with the people with all these controles, unless we are coming in and actually insist on coming up with wholistic principles first. Otherwise we will be told what to do and what is going on and dividing up and, being sectionally interested this is what does occur and what possibly happend when we tried to do the projects in Germany and we did not get them off the ground, it was because of the pæconceptions of 'Oh yes, we want artists to help in this way', or preconceptions from artists saying: 'Yes, I'd like to do this project or that project with your facilities in this environment'. So, we were suggesting, would it be interesting that there should be numbers of concurrent projects running in different countries. From the organisation agreeing to have a period of feasibility, where the artists are looking and the artists are finding what is relevant to do. And if we could get

those going round in the different countries, then we have really got something to look at, rather than being used the other way. And that was the basis of what this discussion and invitation is about. I don't know, whether I summed it up...

NICHOLAS: It was, anyway it is, what APG has done in the last ten years or so, has been to put itself artists and its own members into usually governmental contexts, where they can irritate the government beast, where they can rapple with the central decision-making processes, which involves a difficult process of persuasion, because you have to persuade the bureaucratic organism to take on board a foreign body which it knows is going to do its best to transform it, criticize it, change it, and subvert it. And in the curious political and traditional circumstances of the British Isles, APG has had a certain amount of success in doing this. On the continent of Europe - Rolf was explaining, where the idiosyncrasies of social and political life are never quite the same - so far it has not been so easy and it might remain difficult for any of yourselves, and I think it is now very difficult for us in England because the climate has changed also, it is equally difficult in England actually to penetrate the social organism and touch the crucial parts of the nervous system on it. What we are trying to achieve in moving ourselves to a European level of cooperation is to set up a context which we have thought out, which we have initiated, for which there is no equivalent in political terms really, to set up a frame of references of our own, which at the same time has an authority which national governments cannot easily deny. We think, that it will give us more chance of penetrating the political organism, of entering the nervous system of our own cultures, to come in from an international level and to communicate between ourselves at an international level. And in many ways, certainly for me, the most radical possibility of the proposal here, is not that in Holland or in Germany or in France or in England we variously place ourselves in these positions where we can work in, in terms of the events of contemporary life, but that in doing so we keep up in a position to cross-reference, to exchange informations between ourselves, to link.

ROLF: I would like to add a German experience on this especially. When APG came to Germany being invited by a Museum or a Kunstverein,

people kept saying: 'O.k., this is basically so interesting, that it is a good intellectual experience to look at it closer'. So it was very easily consumed in Germany from the theoretical side, although nobody took the advantage of understanding John's theories, but anyway it was good to see, good to look at, and, of course, the German governmental bodies felt inclined to invite APG perhaps to take part in this or that project and expected a similar project-scheme as it had been done before in Germany by several other artists saying 'o.k., we just make a proposal, we want to do this or that project and need money'. What happened then in the negotiations was that at the same time, as the import situation of APG was easy to be consumed, it was as easy to put APG away by saying that APG is an English group, 'we don't want an import', and then myself as a German, trying to negotiate as part of APG, this always came to an end that they said: 'Sorry, there is no way of funding, making anything possible for APG in Germany because of its difficult connection'. So we very successfully stated the international status of APG by exchanging documentary papers between the German and the English government on a diplomatic level; but in the meantime the German governmental bodies lost their interest completely in any kind of project proposal we made. So it is important, just personally for me, to have a level of artists cooperating, on a European or whatever kind of level, international level to set up a body, even a solidarity body if you like, to be able to relate to each individual government by saying 'we have this international experience and we want to start off with this international experience into each country', and not the other way round. For me personally, this is the advantage of this proposal which we put into this invitation, and I would like to ask you how you would relate from your own experience to that. Perhaps, as a suggestion, I might ask Jeffrey first, because he knows the English situation and the Dutch situation and is looking at both sides from his personal experience as an artist. What do you think of any kind of idea in this area?

JEFFREY: I must say that over the last years I lost contact with the English situation summed up with APG's practical sphere and I have had more intimate contact with the way things are organised here and I have got one thought that might be relevant. That is, there is no doubt that there is here in Holland a fairly progressive level of

integration of artists in the social context, there are many ways in which artists are called upon to serve the community. So on one level there is an appearance on a surface of a very harmonious situation, where the artists arrive as socially connected beings; but at the same time my experience is, that once again you have a situation where you have a progressive integration, but still the definitions of what the artist does are being continuously defined and involved by the bureaucratic structures that are sort of giving the artists work to do. A very typical example for me - because I've been involved in such a project recently - are these subtle one-percent-ratings in the situations where public buildings are under obligation to employ an artist for a certain percentage of their building costs. And this is an interesting situation because it clearly states socially and progressive notions in the way it works. And it gives a lot of work to artists in terms of making contributions to the special context. And yet each year that I see the projects off, that I am surprised more and more to see how incredibly defined the projects are before the artist has even given a chance to do anything...

ROLF: That's the same experience we have in Germany as well.

JEFFREY: I was just told 'that this road needs to be fixed up and we're thinking maybe of something with light and plastic, and it has to do this and it has to do that', and in the end I asked myself why they are asking an artist to do this job; this is a job for an architect or for a new category of person which is called... I don't know, not artist, it's a new kind of person...

HUGH: Exterior designer like an interior designer.

JEFFREY: And I got an awful feeling that this is what artists are supposed to become, this is an intent to transform the artist into another kind of being, and the few artists that are left over are the sort of idiosyncratic eccentrics who are committed to stay home in their studio and paint; so this is one of the curiosities I have been feeling here very strong and I still feel that APG's approach is one of the most radical and one of the most important concepts for the way in which artists work together with the institutions and maintain their radical integrity.

ROLF: Thank you, that was a phantastic statement. I can only agree with each point in it just from the German experience, because we have this two-percentage-law as well and it is always too late, the building is finished, of course, when an artists is asked to do something about it. Paul, you know a lot about the 'Zorg for de Omgeving', and so this is perhaps a hook for you.

PAUL: Yes, I think the Dutch situation is rather peculiar in this way because, since the social involvement of art and architects here is a result of the artists' associations in the late 60s and early 70s, their approach was rather practical or a rather pragmatic approach of the problems, they felt at once completely isolated from society, and so they had to make connections to society. It had happened in many action situations and these results were taken over in the early 70s by the government, and the government decided that it would be a good idea to try to integrate artists to solve two problems at once: one problem was the problem of the artists who had not so much to do at that time, not so much work, the other problems being social ones, problems with participation of people in decisions of authorities. So artists came exactly in that field and their task was to solve the problems of the government and to serve as help with the people in participation, as they were told in different new situations for artists to solve those problems. It was the main interest of the authorities, and still until now, when artists are involved in urban planning, there is this idea becoming more and more vague now, but there is that idea that artists are quite cheap labonesss, and you can put them anywhere, give them problems that nobody can solve. Until now we have a rather disappointing history in these situations, because there were many artists who came into these situations who were not able to solve them, there was a very strong demand from the government that reached almost every artists that they had to go into those practical situations, and most artists could not function that way. It ended up that we have now a small group of artists and artists' association of rather maoist character, that is in this moment working completely together with the government and decides 'this has to be done that way and that has to be done this way', and when Jeffrey is talking about those commissions in percentage levels, then you come exactly into the field where there are always other artists telling you exactly what you have to

do and they are defining things in a very precise way - you have to fit into that, and when you do not fit in their ideological scheme then you are rejected. I think one of the main problems is, that in Holland there was never a theoretical thinking about the possibilities and until now it is rather difficult to talk about those problems together with artists, because I think one of the things that have to be made clear before: that it is sure that there are only very small possibilities for artists to become socially involved. And I think it is wrong to try to put them unwillingly in situations like this.

BARBARA: Right!

ROLF: This is what happened to APG in Germany as a classical double-bind situation. The appreciation of APG's thoughts and theories by the German governmental bodies, this appreciation brought the aggression of many German artists against both APG and the government, which led to the very strange situation that no artist in Germany wanted to cooperate with APG, we even got very aggressive statements against us saying 'you are collaborating with this hated government'. But having the same situation as Paul has just described, this is exactly a double-bind behaviour.

HUGH: Can I just say one thing on that comparison between Britain and Germany. If you look at the governmental structure, in Germany the politicisation of government people comes much further down than in Britain. So if you deal with some of the equivalent people in Britain, they are not political appointments, they stay there whatever the government is. So it is much easier for an artist to be non-political and to deal with them than it is in Germany, so we are able to do things that in Germany were by definition impossible or almost impossible, because the artist said: 'This is a politic I don't agree with, I can't work with this person'. I do not know how it works or how it is in Holland; but there was this difference which we were aware of and which we tried to explain to the German artists.

The following statement by Paul was missed, due to tape fault. The statement given here is a reconstruction by Paul.

PAUL: Reflections on the relation between artist, art, and society have strongly influenced the development of my work. The main concern

of my artwork is order and organisation, and in a way this may be seen as a metaphor for social order and social organisation. To realize a direct relation and communication with the audience I developed an art form since 1965, that I named "situasie" (situation). It was an art form of mixed media and a combination of environment, event and performance. I asked artists, neighbours, and friends to join these experiences. The organisations of "situasies" was: bringing people together in a museum's room or in a theatre for a fixed period of time, giving this room an uncommon atmosphere by introduction of art works or other objects placed in different ways of order, and performing a program of light, sound, and actions following a prepared scheme. The audience was stimulated to react freely. "Situasies" some years later developed into festivities in parks or squares, and into yearly festivals in the streets where I lived. My neighbours asked me to design a plan that would more permanently change the visual and functional qualities of the street. They wished the street would become the 'living room' of the population there not only for one day, as it was on the festival occasion, but for the whole year. I designed a plan, we had a lot of trouble in the street and with the municipal departments; the plan was published, broadly cited, but never realized. As a consequence of this experience I was asked to be a member of the team planning Buytenwegh de Leyens (25.000 inhabitants) in Zoetermeer, a new town. Zoetermeer was the first town in the Netherlands where artists were invited to take part in town-planning teams. The task of an artist in the team was: to represent the interests of the future population, to introduce visual qualities in urban planning and architecture, and to prepare the application of art in the environment. Zoetermeer employed three types of artists: A-, B-, or C-Artists. A-artists were working in the planning teams making overall plans. They were advisors and were not allowed to design, not even to make drawings. B-artists worked in the municipal design-groups and casually were permitted to draw. C-artists were commissioned to design artworks in the environment or in buildings. The distinction between A-, B-, and C-artists soon became a hierarchy in the qualification of artists. My experiences in this field brought me to the conclusion that the introduction of artists into planning processes must fail as long as buildings regulations and conditions are not changed fundamentally. In our country many art-officials are working hard to involve artists in social processes.

ROLF: Is there anybody who thinks he is able to answer this statement directly, or -- perhaps other Dutch artists would like to explain their experiences in the same sense.

PIET: Well, I'll try; I am working for the ministry of CRM, -- culture, creation and social welfare -- in the Fine Arts-Department; and well, you are not lucky in this way, because I am working in the field they call the free arts; all the projects were done in the other section, but the one who is in charge could not be ~~hase~~ and I hoped that the chairman of the group we made for, that ~~JeanLbeering~~ would be here, but I just heard that he is abroad, so I will try to make the best of it. I think Jeffrey is right when he says that in Holland there is a notion on the level of the government that is important to work together with artists in some fields. But the structure of how our government is organized makes that every different ministry can think different about it, and the ministry I am working for, tries to coordinate all the attempts, but that is quite difficult. On the other hand we have in Holland what we call a very strong decentra~~l~~isation...

JEFFREY: ... not so strong, not so strong...

PIET: Well, the cultural politics here have a tendency that the local authorities are responsible for their areas so that the central government can only give advice, and you can notice that ~~onetfing~~ ~~ideasing~~ ~~arting~~sto bring artists in advisory places, for example, started from the central government. And I would say the central government was brought to this by the artists' unions, that's what Paul explained. The first attempt made was forming a steering group in which one tried to find new possibilities, new ways of working, new possibilities in a special sense for artists. I think there were two problems, first this advisory group was brought together from all the different artists' organisations and different levels of institutions which were involved. I think, at first in this group there was a kind of ideological discussion between the different parts in it, so then they started to try to establish their own situation: for example they were talking about how much money they could earn working in this group, so they were not working on the problems...

PAUL: ... they still do...

PIET: The second point was, I think, the central government knowing that it was necessary to have some money to make projects, saved money already before this group started, and in the financial system we had at that period it was possible to do so -- that's not any more at this moment -- so there were collected about three or five to six million guilders especially for doing earmarks for experiments in that field, and you can see that this money, at the moment, is still not used, maybe one and a half million guilders of it, because it was difficult to find relevant projects because of the discussion inside the group; on the other hand it is somehow simple to put an artist into a situation if you say: 'I pay for this', you know, you can find people who say: 'o.k. I'll come' -- that's too easy. So some projects were started and artists had the possibility of advising, mostly they started too late. That is the same experience we have heard before, but the results of this advice should be worked out and should be executed. We said from the government: 'We pay for the advisory work of the artist, and you pay for the execution of the project.' Well, in some cases the project was executed; some others -- Bas Maters, I think you can tell something about their experience in the Hague -- did not work. After the advisory work was done, I think things just stopped. So I think it is, of course, good to try to get money from the government, that is always o.k. It is more important to try to find a way of convincing people that it is relevant and necessary having artists on the job. Then there comes the problem: 'Why just an artist?' I think, the artist should think about it, why and under which conditions. Not all the conditions in which people work are suitable, so only if the conditions are o.k., the artist should enter; but we don't know much about this situation, so there should be a kind of research under which conditions an artist can really work. Another point I wanted to say: somebody spoke about the 'exterior designer'; well, I think that the educational situation for artists -- we have about seventy academies here in Holland -- is so, that most of the artists are not able from their background, from the way they were brought up in the academical situation, to work in a team. So if you want to work in this field you should change the situation in the academies. Well, let me stop!

ROLF: Perhaps Ab can add something to it. Please, describe first what you do.

AB: I studied political and social sciences with specialisation in mass media communication and I was also interested in aesthetics; after that I worked on different levels, e.g. on a county level I was working with the council to stimulate projection and also consumption of art. After that I was a member of the board of an art-school for five years. Now I am working on a local level, in this town here, also trying to stimulate projection and consumption etc... I want to say something about my own experience in this field. I think, there is one thing which was important in the Sixties and the Seventies that people declared everybody to be creative, so not everybody was an artist and tried to do some things on it; the second thing is that the government tried to make some projects about that. So what will the government do, the government will try to produce circumstances that artists can produce in. They wanted to spread it through Holland's countries and - also important - try to let ordinary people participate in art. Well, they also tried to involve the artists in art-politics; I think they tried to socialise the artist but when the artists were socialised, then they had to speak the language of the government, so they artists were changing, they just had their meetings and tried to pronounce their own ideas and cooperate with the government. So, we have got products which were just adapted on their working in a team with architects, with government or so, they had made some products which fitted in this scheme; and then they were fairly disappointed because they could not change anything with their projects, it was just in the system. So, I think a lot of artists went into the system. When you try to work in a small village or in one part of a city, you have to change your attitude. It was not possible to get things changed with artistical works. I think, in our days a lot of artists are just choosing other ways, they do not want to work in a way which is disappointing them. I think, in Holland there is now a reaction which does not want to do so.

PAUL: I have to add something to this. I think, at this moment the main problem is the structure of artists' organisation itself. It has become really difficult, because we have realized a lot of artist's places in our society. And there is a very diverse scale

of ideas of the ways artists should work in it. On one hand you still have the old artists' associations where - just condemning everybody else - artists have a real profession; when you ask an artist to work in whatever kind of situation what has to come out are only works of art, so when they are working in urban planning, even when there is no place left to place works of art in a way that makes any sense, then they still say 'even when we place them on parking lots, we have to make works of art'. That's about 90 - 95 % of all the commissions; most of the artists in the associations think, it has to be done this way. Then they have another idea; that is, every artists, good or bad, has to have equal chances to the places which are there. So the result of ten years work in this field is that there are a lot of people who think it would be better not to spend the money any more in these situations because of all these ugly, dull art objects and all those playgrounds and all those other things artists made; on the other hand it is very difficult when you try to change this situation as an artist, as long as the government is cooperating with a small group which is thinking this way; the only difference that they are telling, of course, is, there has to be put quality into the environment and into the situations but when you ask further on what quality means, that you a friend to or a member of this small group of artists, they are deciding the same moment what has to be done.

AB: When you are an artist in Holland it is possible to make the work in the way you want it und it is also possible to get money for it.

PAUL: But it is not possible to function...

PIET: I think, I have to add something to it. Paul is exaggerating a bit. Of course, I already mentioned there is this steering group which caused a lot of political discussion among the artists; this discussion has been brought further into the arts council which is advising the Dutch government; so obviously Paul is chairman there at this moment...

So, ~~first~~ the idea was trying to find out under which conditions artists can work and finding out new situations. So, if somebody got a commission to do something it was done from a point of view on which it was possible to make an evaluation of what has been

done. That's one thing. It was done in an advisory group, that people did not like to have this advisory group anymore; there should be a situation in which a bureau, an organisation should come from which it worked out, and an advisory group in relation to this bureau. And the artists wanted to be in the board of this bureau. Taht was the first idea. Now, the situation has changed, now they want the situation that the government is responsible ...

PAUL: ... you have to tell it completely, it was a foundation first, and then they thought in our arts connall, this is ethically not good when we are in the board of this foundation as artists and we are paid like the people which are working in it. So it had to become an office, a governmental service, then we can put out the staff of the office, and we can sit on the same places as artists and be paid. So, the Dutch arts council accepted this and found it a really good idea to give the minister the advice to do it this way.

AB: I think this was logical because they wanted to be as a body which wants to have political influence; and if artists want to have political influence then they have to act like other people who want to have political influence, so they did. Now they are afraid to be organized and well informed, and now they have so much power.

PAUL: They have all the power, all the committees, all the places...

PIET: I think we have to finish that part and I am trying to explain a bit of it: at this moment we are trying to install this office which is under responsibility of the government. There is an advisory committee, and so far Paul is right, one special group, which you name having a meoistic approach...

PAUL: ...stalinistic...

PIET: ... is quite strong, that's true. There has been a change in attack towards the policy of what this bureau is going to do, because at first the projects given by commissions were just chosen from the point of view of learning from them, so not every project was possible. Now there is a tendency that they say 'just every project' - maybe I am exaggerating at this moment, too, but I wanted to make this point clear. Every project in which an artist can work, just take it, and when he is working, look how he does it; so the evaluation is still possible, but the projects are not chosen in the way it was done before.

ROLF: May I ask, perhaps, one of the Dutch artists to answer this directly and tell how he sees this situation. Perhaps, Remko or Johan can say something about it, just describe how they feel in this situation.

JOHAN: I think it is very difficult to make art and also to co-operate with the government, because when you are making art you make something the government and the society did not ask for. So I think there is always a little gap between government and artists, also between society and artists. And I do not think there can be a law or an institution which will be able to connect these things. It is very hard to see the government giving money to artists for things they cannot use, things the society did not ask for; it is a very mad situation.

BARBARA: It's all the wrong way round. I mean this is the real thing that we are having all the time, and what we have from our experience is, that once the government begins to think up ideas of projects for artists whether it is arts' administration or it is governmental bodies or whatever it is, if they are dreaming up projects for artists to do... I mean what are we doing as artists, the thing is it has to be from invitation, the whole word 'employment' is doubtful when you relate it to art...

PAUL: That's true!

BARBARA: ... So we have in the end to find that it had to be through invitation, and we had to do some projects which we have to find out ourselves, we had to persuade. We have already persuaded five governmental departments and that was done only by persuasion, and we had to do it ourselves to show them how it was not to be done. As soon as they began to say: 'oh what a good idea, you could help us here, you could help us there', we say 'no'; it has to come from not-knowing and proceed to finding out, and then one can look at what it is that artists have seen to do. So that is why we stressed the Feasibility and the Open Brief, we did not realize until we had done these projects; five years later are the results beginning to come through, now the one in the Department of Health, it is five years later we have heard that the project That Hugh, David Toop - another musician -, and Ian Breakwell were doing, working with architects, they made these tape-slide-sequences which were then

taken away into another help-for-aged-project; they changed them themselves as they took them round. We still get results back, and I have some papers here for you about the different projects. But the main thing is and this is why we make this suggestion, it is very interesting to hear the completely different way round as it has been happening in Holland. Yes, of course, we must have our artists working with us, all these good feelings for it; but it actually has to come the other way round and it has to come from watching and by inviting, and then leaving a space of not knowing a and risking paying for not knowing. That is the basis of possibility.

AB: Why do you need the government then, you can do it by yourself, if you are an artist. You are always reacting on things, on your surrounding etc...

BARBARA: Sure, but it just is, that they, the government are working on society and apparently for society and the world, and they have all...

NICHOLAS: It's the other side of government we are talking about. You are talking, I think, about government in the role of a patron for the arts. We are talking about government as the decision-making and the power process for a society and seeking to insert the artists process in that; and that does not come about because the governments want it, it comes about because of the fundamental change in artists' motivation. That is something quite different.

AB: So you want to influence the decision?

NICHOLAS: One is talking about the beginnings of a growth change in human adaption and it is coming from artists rather than from scientists.

PAUL: Still, I think, all those Dutch projects that have been done in the last ten years - I am sure that there are some really interesting projects amongst them with good effects. In my own experience I am really glad with the experience I had in the Maaspoort, in Den Bosch, with a project of developping new parts of the city of about 7.000 houses. It ended up last month that we have talked a lot about ideas of what such a place, the whole settlement should be, how you think about it, what the meaning is about it. Well, the meaning is about structure, it ended up because of savings which were necessary, so they made a plan which is a real good one.

And another experience which was really fruitful, at least for myself and my own thinking - and I still think, that's important, too - was a project I made with an urban planner in producing the show 'Zorg for de Omgeving', and it fits in the same structure, in the same intention of government. I like to point out that in the Dutch situation, what we really need is the possibility of changing experiences; that's the most important thing.

AB: I want to pronounce the danger of the way the artists are acting here. We are just incorporated, we get them in there; so we have this language, they have that language. I think it really influences...

ROLF: But art is a risk anyway, of course, in any sense art is always a risk. You always get something which you do not expect, like Johan said. Of course, any governmental body must take the risk of having an artist cooperating not knowing what's coming out and that is what APG's Open Brief method is all about. I would like to ask Remko because he took part, as far as I understood, in several of those experiences which Paul made, just to show his point of view, perhaps how he experienced cooperating to some extent with governmental bodies. Perhaps from there on we can try to find an answer and get to a solution how artists could relate.

PIET: Maybe one question before Remko starts. You say the government should ask an artist and take the risk, in which sense?

PAUL: The same risk as the artist has to take always has to be taken over by the government. You have to take those risks, artists take and could think it's a good thing to take those risks, it's a change of mind of authorities, that's the first thing that is necessary.

ROLF: I would say very simply that making art in whatever sense of the word or being an artist or being an Incidental Person, like APG quotes it, is a risk anyway. Any art has to deal first of all with existential questions of life and living and, of course, social contexts as it is a part of this. John made a fundamental theory about the relation of time to our existence and how it influences any of these kind of things. Risk is just part of any artist's life and it is the most important part of an artist's life. That is the contribution any artist brings into his own society in producing something which nobody expects before. That is not the

question of innovation, of aesthetical innovation. And as the government is there as a social body which is concerned first of all with the life of the people in a country, it has to take the risk, it has to have an artist. This was especially seen by the governments of the 17th. and 18th. century, that was the role of the artist some 300 years ago. The artists themselves got lost of this role in the 19th. century, and we are now getting back to that by new means because we have new media and - like John described it in his statement before - by the way of employing language, because language in this time is first of all the representational level on which we all can act together. I just wanted to explain the risk.

PAUL: Piet exactly knows what kind of risk it is, because he had to take that risk with the show...

ROLF: I didn't mean that personally.

PIET: I just put the question, because I would see a parallel pendant to the question: 'Why an artist?' You know, there are more people, more disciplines, more ways of thinking in society which have to take a risk, a scientist has to take the risk, too; the point I want to make is that it is very important, of course, we have the possibility to take the risk which an artist can take for the society but one should not isolate the artist from other people.

ROLF: But, what John said in his first statement was, that the artist has a non-sectional interest, and any scientist has to stick to the section where he is working in. That is what all physicists are talking about since 30 years. They do not talk about anything else at the moment, because they actually do not know how to define their own role, their own science on this, how to define natural science what this word means. They actually get to the boundaries of knowledge, to the borders of experience; so they have to re-define their role for being able to come to new experiences in any sense. So, their interest is first of all sectionally bound and their way of thinking is sectionally bound in introducing methodologies. The advantage artists have comes from their own history, from their own tradition, from their own way of working and living, from their own definition of being an artist, which is a simple

single-minded human definition. They have the possibility to say 'I am not sectionally interested, I am basically interested to this and that extent'. That is the only way of defining an artist in society at the moment.

PIET: I agree, but that means that we have to re-define what we call administration.

BARBARA: It just seems that since almost the last two decades, this is the point that has been coming up, perhaps in the underlying theory where the artist again is representing whole systems. I think, perhaps John could say more on this 'why artists' and following on what Rolf was saying. Because it would also get over the business of 'why not all artists, any artist', 'we are all artists', it is only certain artists who began to get to a point of seeing whole systems that again well beginning to re-define what the role of artists is; and that have only been the last two decades that have really come into this, that is making sense theoretically and pragmatically for artists. Again: why artists? Because they are different now; and it's only been different coming out of the last two decades, and I think that perhaps John and artists who begin working in this way identify the point: 'why artists now?'.

REMKO: ... one thing first: it is in fact not so, as you gave the impression that - like the kind of urban planning and architecturally orientated things that Paul has been involved - I have been with that, too, but that is exactly not true. I have been involved with almost all the other things that Paul has been involved, but not those. So, I am really outside of this problem that we have been talking about, the government trying to engage artists in this urban planning architectural complex. I have been completely outside of that system and I have nothing to do with that, and I am very glad about this. What I am doing, I am working actually both as an artist and a scientist, and I do not see how that really makes all that much difference. It is a different world, it is a different social context mainly, and there are different clichés about them which people think in terms of. But if you really look at what people who do good stuff in both cases, then it does not make all the difference. You know, I mean the real progress in science comes from being not caught inside your little thing... Very often it depends on what kind of science one is talking about, like physics which is got to

be a very defined and refined kind of discipline although it has been a very strange kind of concept art, really. But there you have not many choices really concerning to give the definition of what you are wanting to talk about, I mean centuries of people have been working on that, you cannot ignore it. There is more immature science like socio-political sciences, anthropological humanistics, all those kind of things that you are actually dealing with. If you look at people who do good work in those areas, that is not any difference in the motivation of what an artist is about. They are really expressing a kind of outlook on life and they can use it, they embody it in things which are narrow in that; but that is also in art, very little; this big thing behind it which you embody like little objects. This brings my real question also which I have to APG, namely. I see a lot of people actually who work in the real world who do not call themselves artists, and who do things which are included in the realms of aesthetics. If I design a computer program I like to design computer programs which I call beautiful. And it is not idiosyncratical for me to call that beautiful because all mathematical professors talk about the beauty of their process stuff. That is because these things have their functional validity and they do what they are supposed to do, they are right, they are not wrong, they work, but they also have qualities beyond that. This is the same thing with people who design airplanes; I think people who design airplanes which fly, I do not think any less of them than of people like Panamarenko who designs airplanes which do not fly. The fact that they do not fly does not add art quality to them. So, I think there is a lot going on. The real world is organized in the wrong way because people have the wrong interests, I agree with that. But at the same time there are a lot of things which have to do with this aesthetic business going on in the real world, by people who manage to like squeeze that in, who sort of manage to fit in the real world that they also have interests of a different sort, concerns which are broader than that. Now my real question to your program I have, and I really sympathize with what is behind it, but the question is, why would anybody who is responsible for doing something in the real world somehow, organizing something, making some products or something, why would they specifically want to invite an artist to be part of that rather than just any random person, like picking a random person out of a telephone directory.

You see, like 'we need a fresh input so we get some random person to do'. What is there about art which is there for that other person, too, which one could reasonably expect them to be...

JOHN: If somebody has got something really important to point out, too - say the whole bunch of government -; all the governments are using certain concepts which are basic but not in thought; if you are going to see a way to get back to them you are previous of a film or an act or a play, you are just somebody playing at it. What is worse is that it seems rhetorical and we are funded by art-funding bodies in order to be, so get rid of steam, get rid of what is inconvenient to the government; they do not want to know that that is just a belting fault, but they got to know it, and if we only can see it then we are not rhetorical. One goes in there to use the actual instruments which are being used there in order to put - that is the sculpture material. Because that then speaks to the people on the side very real; they say 'what, we don't gonna do this! And how dare you to come in and say that's that what should be done.' And they get very uptight about it but gradually, after a while, the thought gets through and touches the function. One has to push it through. And that is part of the excitement that one has such a resistant material to use.

REMKO: I can see this, I sympathize with it; my question is really, once you get yourself in a certain place and have your ideas and are clever then a lot of things can happen. Everybody who tries to do that I sympathize with. But my question is: do you seem to see there is not only something that you are involved in doing yourselves but as a kind of scheme, something which could work alike in general on more than an incidental basis. So if it was able to work out as a scheme, you must have things in the back of your mind how you are going to be able to lord these other people there in the world into inviting you.

HUGH: First of all, the five major placements we have had in national or local government, each took about two years to arrive, starting usually from the top at the point where everything was agreed and the artist could start - so it is a very long process to find the right people who are sympathetic. We talked to lots of people, you go in all directions in these structures until you

find someone that seems open to your ideas. And in the case of the Department of Health where we worked, we found these architects who were sympathetic to us. So much so, I have said that the report on the mental hospitals was very controversial this was because the presence of an APG artist there changed like an infection the people we were working with, and they presumably from the beginning were prepared to be changed by our way of working. So the whole project became controversial. So these people in the sense of their openness to be on our sort of wavelength was followed through by our presence, so they did become moved like artists and, perhaps one can say, sort of artists who have done APG work, they tended to be artists who have not said: 'I studied painting, or in my case I studied music, and do stay with that'. They tried to use any available materials, modern equipment or whatever. They do not just stick within the traditional galleries, concert halls, whatever it is. Otherwise artists who in their work show themselves to be open to using everything available to them, to seeing relationships between very different types of experience and ideas to make something coherent out of them. Of course, there are people in the real world - whatever that is - outside art who also do that. I think perhaps someone who is an artist has more confidence to work like that. Because that in a sense is underlaid all art, even if you are working in traditional things. Of course, there are people in other disciplines who have done something very parallel. When you are working in it you find your home in the big structure, the place where there is sympathy for your ideas; and you do not stand there, you talk to people all around and find your roots so far in the structure, this in a way that no one else has done, going upwards and along, sideways and downwards. Normally you stay in a small circle with a little bit up, a littlerbit down, and a little bit sideways but you do not go very far. The artist has to be free to move everywhere within the structure, to see relationships, to make relationships, and that is very hard for someone who does not have confidence, in a confidence that you get as an artist to treat everything as important, potentially important and useful.

JEFFREY: I find it a curious question why an artist and why not just someone out of the telephone book. Indeed, why not? I think, that moment I would like to thank as an artist why be so humble. There is a difference I think; the difference belongs then to a

certain arrogance that artists arch. There is no reason why an artist should not possess the arrogance of saying: 'I'm concerned with the whole world, with all the issues, with things that are important. And I go into the situation I am concerned with these big issues.' And when you pick someone out of the telephone book you miss the right way how to get this person.

REMKO: I think this is in a sense the right answer. I think it works the wrong way round. Somebody who lives up to this idea of an artist, I agree with it. But that is what you don not want to have inside your situation, this blew up everything, of course.

BARBARA: Sure, so you say 'why should they have this person?' This is the paradox that we work with all the time, in fact; right in the beginning we had this IBM-situation, they sort of said: 'If you are the people we think you are, as you say you are, we would not dream of having you. But if you were not that, we do not want you anyway!' You know you are not going to be good enough so that is the paradox we have to work with. And it does take all this time to do the negotiations. But in a way they feel the conviction from the artist, this is why it cannot be done by the administration, it has to be done by the artist. Why? Because the artists are concerned...

REMKO: And everybody has to do it by himself, really.

PIET: The point I want to make is, you say it cannot be done by an administration, I think, of course not, maybe we have to re-define administration. I want to say that cannot be done by persons working in an administration, for example. But in thinking about it, we all know Beuys, I think he has said everybody can be an artist. I think it is in the sense as Jeffrey said.

NICHOLAS: Beuys is a very special case, a very special man.

PAUL: I always thought, everybody is creative but not everybody is as creative as another person. But I do not think, this is not because I am an artist that I tangled those problems in urban planning, I did it just because I lived in a street, in a rather boring situation. Neighbours told me 'we don't like this situation at all but we can't change it'. So we decided to change this situation. That had nothing to do with government, there was no government interested at that time at all, we just did it. There were two reasons: one reason because I did it, I am sure it had its roots because I am an artist, and there is another thing, that is,

I did choose to become an artist because I did not like to become too much involved in the social system itself. That is a reason to become an artist, that you do not like to become too much involved in it, to earn your living from that system and being part of the system. It is a good reason for people in our days to become an artist, that you really like to stay in a way independent of the system you are living in. I do not say it is a privilege quality only artists have, I think most artists do not have this quality, and that is my problem with many other artists; of course, there are other people who have that quality, too. That is a real problem you have to point out, that it is in a way necessary to remain outside a material involvement in the system, outside having all these people that just are paid to do their work in a way which is already defined before they come in this place. That is the real problem. E.g., when you are dealing with urban planners they are just thinking about it as managing the process of building a new town...

ROLF: The question of defining the word artist, and why artists, this all means, of course, again the question of defining sectional interests. Saying 'o.k., this is the profession which has in our society the context of being able to produce anything what it wants to, what it likes', so you might imagine two things as well, first of all a different kind of society with different administrations where other professions have an equal role - which we happened to live as an experience when we have been in Poland and saw the role the basic groups of Solidarność played last year, which would be defined as 'art as social strategy' here but was run by people who never considered themselves to be any kind of artist. I would never be dogmatic about the profession artist. This is incredible, you can't do this; any person working in APG is working on both levels which we would call professionally science and art. Anyone in APG is doing this kind of double profession. So this cannot be a definition of what we do. But the definition is, of course, the task you are taking yourself, yourself defining the role, defining the context in which you work, then the role comes afterwards. The risk a government takes, a risk any government is normally open to take is to get a definition of its own role by introducing them on different levels. What happens afterwards is that they have to live the risks. So the initial start has to come from outside, an initial

start can never come from inside any kind of administration. That is the same with government and any kind of other big organisation; I would say, it is not the question here of fighting the governments, is not APG as a new anarchistic structure or something in that sense. It is more or less defining a role in any given big organisation which has a problem of...

PAUL: It is really important that there is any care in the environment to visual qualities. I have the strong feeling that when you are living in a very poor visual situation, it is rather difficult to develop ideas about visual qualities, as they are used in art. So it is necessary to take care of those visual qualities in other aspects of life, of social life, too, when there is such a big gap between things artists are involved in, and the image we are making from the environment, the way we are working out our own environment. Then it becomes really normal that people think artists are busy with things of no importance at all because in daily life all those things which are important to artists are nothing.

ROLF: Perhaps one of the other artists can add something from his own experience, exactly on that point.

MARK: I am a student of the art academy in Arnhem where Bas Maters is a teacher, so I cannot speak about experience but maybe I can speak about the theory of yours. For me the problem is a bit strange because first it puts the artist on a level of a messiah who can solve all the problems that other people cannot solve; maybe there are some of them who can do this, but I think just very few. I think, as it was told before there are a lot of other people who can speak about the same subjects, like philosophers or theologists, and it can be also quite interesting for people, there can be new directions in it for living etc. I do not like to put an artist on such a high level. On the other hand, it is strange in normal society that like in trade you ask for a product and you do not know what you get. E.g., when you ask an architect to build something and he says it won't be a building but it will be something else, but he wants to be paid for it. That is what I do not understand. You ask for an artist to work and to be paid for it and you do not like to have a program in which the artist has to work.

ROLF: It is a bit the other way round. Of course, what APG is about that artists are not problem-solvers. They are dealing with problem-

areas to a certain extent, but they cannot solve given problems, in that sense it is not the role of the messiah, it is just exactly the other way round. The artist or Incidental Person is a person who connects himself for a given time to a given context and then acts from his own experience. These different actions from the context which is there and from the Incidental Persons in their relation to each other might lead to a product, will anyway lead to a feasibility study. It is not the question of being financed and funded for that; this is, of course, just a part of it because anyone has to live to do it, but this is not the basic question. APG is not an art-agency. Of course, this is not meant like a product as you have it in advertising or whatever, that you have a name, ask 2000 people what they think what this name would bear in their mind, and then try to design a product which fits the name being advertised before. So, you have different shapes of reality on that.

HUGH: Perhaps, slightly simplified, APG is like an efficiency consultant who is engaged to look at an office or a factory, see if they are efficient, if they are waisting money or whatever. APG could be seen as invited to look at an organisation to see if they are efficient in dealing with society in the area they are supposed to, health or environment or planning; to see if they are giving themselves an appropriate role, if they are asking themselves the right questions 'should we do this, should we do that', to see if they are working efficiently as an organism. To see if the parts are functioning together, rather than being totally separate, looking at efficiency in that way, in a very difficult-to-define way. But you could say, certain areas like 'is it working as a complete organism or is it totally independent', and 'waist has been made', because people do not know about the possibilities from these various areas being combined. And we can say also that on many occasions, I think APG-artists have identified problems before they existed, problems of the future before anyone has said 'this is a problem we'd like you to look at'. We say 'here is a problem you don't know about it yet, because the language you use hasn't made it clear'. We can say, in some cases the projects that APG-artists have decided they wish to work on have had the potential of saving a large amount of money. So the first things you can say, which are to do, are very parallel to someone running an efficiency consultancy.

NICHOLAS: I would take it further than that, actually what one is really talking about, is re-inventing the world that we inhabit, the forms of culture which we have. The legwork goes into selecting and identifying contexts for operations which is really only justified in this sense, it is not for the sake of this context, there is no real inference of artists having a potential as a useful long-term potential with an auspicious potential as the consultant. It is more the artist reasserting for reasons which we have to look inside our own evolution to find. In the past the artist has acted there which is the original source of the meaning of this civilisation, when that motivation comes through within a culture, perhaps because it is turning and changing in an evolutionary sense, then it comes through very strongly. I think that is the reason why we are here today, because all of us in various ways feel that. It is very difficult to say what the potentials of a general scheme are. But if I would have put it in any sense at all, it would be to do with re-inventing the culture in a different set of terms which have to do with not only the totality of this experience, but the totality of this experience through time. So it is a shift of attention from the way things fit into each other spacially to the way they lay out diachronically. I think one is talking in terms of a very large shift of perception in that way. The difficulties we have in defining it are not because the presumption is grotesque, but because our own particular timing as being alive at this particular stage of our cultural evolution places us very early in that cycle. The artist is unlike the scientist in one particular respect, whereas the scientist may invent in the same fashion preliminary as the artist. The scientist ultimately commits himself to a system of accounting, a classification of the world which separates the rational from the emotional side of life. He commits himself to a mathematics in the end. And he may from outside these mathematics, from outside his computer program admire the aesthetics of it. But within the computer program there is no room for that. It is purely rational. It is a different way of behaving from art, it is a different way of acting in the world. There is a different set of potentials which come from refusing to act in that way. Then the insistence on perceiving in the long term and the persistence of the gravity of perceiving in a long term, and beginning to re-invisage one's society in the

terms of the long-term changes within it which no bureaucracy has any license to do, so again the artist is on the outside but acting in a perfect coherence within his own terms of reference.

REMKO: If you talk about changing people's perception of things or re-inventing the culture, it sounds like somehow making explicit things that we do not know at this point, like what you strive for is sort of just in the conventional sense or science in a conventional sense, like it would be putting art objects of some form where I can look at and then I certainly would get a deeper awareness of my culture. And this, I find, is very interesting.

NICHOLAS: I don't think that are the consequences of what acting this way means, I'm sure that John wouldn't...

REMKO: But I am asking that you, Nicholas, because this sounds - when you describe this -, it sounds like what you are after, that is something I very much sympathize with, something which I really like is just making things explicit which are already there, that we are already living that we do not know it. Then you make it explicit so that we can look at it and sort of deep ensure awareness and deep ensure life. That is what you mean, or is it not?

NICHOLAS: No, it is not. Exactly this morning... - speaking as myself, my own involvement in APG is as an evolutionist which is not existing in our world at the moment - certainly what is going on in my head has nothing to do with the building down the road, the 'Evaluation'. But that is what I was trying to make explicit, what was going on in evolution, that is the contrary.

REMKO: I think that you are interested in deeper issues than those people were; one can still want to make them explicit like people who write for the soft culture or make abstract paintings.

NICHOLAS: The only thing what makes me nervous is 'explicit'. I think that the processes we are talking about, when you are talking about art or something, they are always in their own way implicit.

REMKO: Then I do not understand what this process of re-inventing the culture is, because then it already exists, we are doing it, then I just try to understand what you are saying.

ROLF: It might lead to a level or corner of discussion which should be discussed between you both, Remko and Nicholas, first of all. I would like to ask Ruud Backx to point out something to it because,

as far as I learned, he is running a place where a lot of cultural things happen and he is designing programs where cultural things happen on different levels in different media. We should introduce this level of communication as well into this discussion. I would like to follow the suggestion of Paul that Ruud Backx tells us about his work, and we relate to it and discuss it.

PAUL: I would suggest that after Ruud, Bas Maters is going to tell something about his experiences.

RUUD: My cultural center is dealing with artists, theater makers, musicians, all those kind of people who are not really dealing with socio-cultural activities rather than working from their own individual opinion, making their own individual things. The different aspects we are trying to gather in our cultural center are to give artists a place where they can have their exhibition, where they can have their concerts, where they can have their theater performances rather than asking ourselves 'is this worthwhile for a big audience, is this interesting for society', rather than 'is this interesting for having a place for dealing with their work'. That is a very big difference between some more different kind of centers in Holland, that the staffs of those centers are only thinking 'how can we directly change society, how can we involve artists into society', then also dealing with socio-cultural affairs. What I would like to ask APG is, is there any difference between the socio-cultural worker or artists working in socio-cultural affairs or architects or teachers, and so-called free artists? I guess that the so-called free artists are maybe not directly dealing with other groups of society; but, of course, they are part of society only working in a different way. I guess that in a society where the economic crisis is increasing the government is always trying to give less money to those kind of artists whom I am working for, instead of giving money to artists who are dealing more directly with society.

JEFFREY: I got to interrupt you because it's absolutely the contrary. In moments of crisis the artist is emasculated and given the call: 'go back to your painting, we don't want to listen to you!' It is nonsense when there is a society which is wealthy and willing to listen to artists and involving us, but what we are watching now is a regressive, a conservative mood out of the situation of financial crisis; artists have been told once again 'go back into

your idiosyncratic world because there is no role for you any more! there is just enough money for us, there is no more money for you anymore!'

ROLF: That is what the fashion of the 'new wild' painters is about.

BARBARA: That is why we really must take an opportunity to use, you might say, a very small track-record that we manage to lay down, to use at this moment when they can well go back. I mean, in our country the Arts Council set up their schemes to place artists in art-centers and in galleries with massive government subsidies to do all these things, and they just do not want to know what we are doing. When we were negotiating these things they just - because through sending a solicitor's letter through John Latham and getting our Labour MP to write to them - did they bother to answer and then they said: 'maybe we will offer you subsidies if you get your placement'. But, of course, one does not want subsidies because we have managed to do without subsidies, so...

JOHN: Can I just add to this, you said four government department placements, I mentioned five, you know it very well. You, Barbara, got the Civil Service Memorandum through. When we first started to use it we got it through because we knew industry, we got through to the Department of Industry. The man at the top of it happened to be a world famous running man, and he was far more able to be relaxed in himself about an approach which was human and not official. So he was a genuine person, he immediately saw it. He said: 'I think that's a good idea, I can see an enormous amount that you could do for society and we will do it together'. Well, but he did not mean we will serve the Conservative Party. That had absolutely nothing to do with the case in point. What happened was, he put it through his branch of the Civil Service and it got checked back to where our funding department was which was the Art-Department. The Art-Department made sure that no such things should be allowed whatever happened. Even though they said 'you must get yourself selfsupported'. Now having said: 'you must get yourself selfsupported, no more subsidies from us, you are not saying what we mean. What you must do is to serve the society, in fact you go and whore about in the industries'. We said: 'right, if it is that what you are going to say, our interest and the people who we are to perform an interest for is the whole society and it has not a sectional interest to it,

therefore it is a government department business'. So we got this instrument from the Civil Service Department. When the Art-Department itself saw what was going on, what it did was to say: 'it will trick on our toes, this is an invasion of the arts scene that has got to be stopped'. Quite serratically and without any excuses at all on paper. The negotiations arrived in a form of a very short letter from the minister saying: 'I'm sorry, it's no, no, no, and no. What you have to do though, the only things I can suggest is, you go back to your Arts Council which has just got some more money'. Now, that was the most disgraceful let-down of the Art-Department and the most typical example of what happens with art-bureaucracies. The art-bureaucracy had been grossly defending that what they thought we were going to do. For that they got to have to face the music, because as the story gets around and we see that here, there, there, and there. All the time, they are niggling away at the attempt to in fact influence the bureaucracy. They are trying to have it not happen, they are trying to actually persuade that it is dangerous. The left-wing departments have said - this is a grotesque cow-towing, too - 'this is going along with the Tories, it is propping up the capitalist system'. The capitalist system is more relaxed about it, it said 'well, we have a way of keeping these things up, don't we?' And, of course, they do. We could spot where these things were happening because certain people were very honest, certain people were actually aware people. The game is still very much on many fronts in England, to come through so that an exposure is almost immanent; there is almost a great avalanche of indicators, as to how in fact the bureaucracy which is the biggest growth-industry in the world at the moment is in fact keeping itself a growth-industry at the expense of, of course, a productive industry; a really great idea to how we would in fact resolve our situation. If we do not recognise that medium that we start off to tell ourselves things with, what artists begin to do is to inform themselves who they are through a simple matter of dialogue with the medium. You do not have to go to school to have it. You have your own dialogue with your own medium and if somebody states what you are doing you will listen to it as what not to do rather than what to do. But when you found out what it is that you are aware of, you will come out and you go back and say: 'I've got news for you, I've got something to say, I can't tell you in words because that is to defeat what I've got to say to you'. That means 'look at your situation and the

proposition I have; you can take it or leave it, but it will in fact show you what in fact is the big mistake that you are making and that is costing you major budgets, not just little amounts like art budgets, it is costing you gigantic budgets', this is what is the word.

ROLF: Taking it the other way round exactly, of course, the best way to neutralize an artist is putting him into the educational system. This is just the opposite way of doing it, and this is what politics normally tend to do, as it is done in Germany. Any artist dealing with these kind of facts, putting forward new ideas or different ideas, is very shortly afterwards trapped into the educational system by being offered a professorship or something, so what happens is - as they normally fall into this trap because of the social welfare status they receive by that - that you can neutralize people by putting them into these kinds of typical establishments. What APG is about in this sense, of course, it keeps open to points where you can start off, where you can say 'o.k., that's what it's about, this is where the budget is and there are the news'. I would like to ask Bas Maters about his experiences he had in Holland with his projects.

BAS: I am feeling a certain belief and ritual starts as a motif for integrating art into a company. I think that way, too, in philosophy, but in the pragmatic way for me it is like a deal, the society is asking me to solve a problem for it, I am engaged with that question but it gives me the right to do it in my own way so that I can make solving a way of personal expression. That has a lot of risks and there are certain points where one can say 'no, it's too far in a wrong direction, there should be a balance'. Maybe I had luck for being involved in projects with a team of engineers in town-scape architectural drawings, and I could come with visual ideas and concepts how it should look like, and they agreed with that and the whole project started on an artist's concept. The first after that for the water and the wine and things like that, I started that kind of projects some two or three years ago and I am thinking now, maybe there was too much water in the wine, perhaps I will come back to smaller scales which I can control better. Because I am looking for a kind of sensible atmosphere in things, and I do believe it is very important that the daily surrounding should carry that atmosphere because all the people will remember it.

Maybe it is different for all of us but it has a certain intensity. For that kind of things you need a lot of words, and pictures are quite simple to show. So I am interested in that 'maybe, let's see the pieces we are talking about, let's see visual things'. I could tell a lot. For me these reasons are very important, it could be a beautiful process, but if there is no reason you can relate to and have contact with the original idea, then it is a pity, it is not so much worth.

HUGH: But in some cases it is more satisfactory if you compare some APG projects with some apparently similar things that in England the Arts Council has given money for; with them there is the production of an art object which is shown in an exhibition, it goes away and the whole thing is finished. With the APG project, if it goes well, something new is set in motion and it takes on its own life. The APG artist goes away and there is something that remains, that grows and has its own independence. This might be some sort of documentary records on it, or it may be a written report, or it may be something more intangible. But in some way it is more satisfactory, even when there is nothing tangible left, that it comes from nothing and has a life of its own.

BAS: I cannot imagine that for me, other people can do it, too. It does not need a visual artist to do it, to adopt it.

FRANK: The artist you are talking about, the artist who has really come across the whole, I can contribute to it in this respect in a special way. The sense is still the traditional artist who was part of a system where the division of labour was not existing, an artist in that respect is one of the few people who can still work in this way. My question is, how can these special artists who still have come across the whole cooperate with other people within a social framework without losing this special quality of seeing the whole? My personal experience is, when an artist goes into this system and tries to infiltrate the system he will become very soon part of the system, he is losing his special qualities because he will be also part of the division of labour.

JOHN: In the beginning, what I tried to suggest was the reason why APGs started - Jeffrey would remember it as well because he happens to use the same word - the event took over from the idea of the object and proposed a dimensional structure which is not verbally transmittable very well, extremely difficult and verbalisations

knock it, they really cannot take it. But artists naturally do it and they insist on it, and the only weapon we have is to insist on a proper presentation and the intention to go on, in the way that it will be in their heads and bodies. Once the translation of the system has gone into being able to account for the event, and there are lots and lots of aims which motivate people. One can choose any scale event, one can say 'it's five minutes' or 'I want to forward something which has got a much larger base to it'. And one winds up and finds that the energy is there to insist with or not. These characteristics one wants to bring up and find in just the artist that we meet and come across in Europe, particularly because we have got the wonderful situation where our governments are absolutely screwed up to think what to do, because they got the Hiroshima-complex. And when we have got this real genuine prospect, I have been whipped out simply because the others cannot understand themselves. To left and right they cannot really get it together, so there is going to be a collision. But the understanding - and the means of understanding - comes through the wholistic principle and it has got almost there within the last years. But the question remains, which beginning, what does one start with, where is the beginning? Holy scriptures, scientific quantum theory, or what?

ROLF: That's the question of re-inventing culture...

JOHN: Yes, and you re-invent an initial thing you wish it is there, with a light beam that hits an emulsion and changes that into its opposite. Well, that is a basic unit of action, as a quantum action as the basis of these photographs. I had another one which I just left simply developed, it was a photo of the time-base theory. It is not saying what they mean, that is the truth of the fact that it is not saying what all these other people are meaning, both stopped by their own linguistic backgrounds, their own historical background which goes back 25 centuries to Plato and Plato's division into two worlds, very essential to the situation today. To overcome that huge back-look that we have developed in art, the general approach from artists which is saying that there is something in the matter with everything people have been saying and it can be sorted out; but just let me get by myself, I'll get it out for myself and for the last few decades we have known, That is how the artist is going to do it, and we will be doing it for ourselves.

But once the trajectory has got round the bottom end and we notice that that is what is the case, then I feel we go in and we can stand the ground. The program which is being proposed is so short in its potential, it may make a lot of money very fast first for a number of people and it could forward what is called the economy. But it is checked out for any other purpose, and we have to simply say so and point it out in some diplomatic way that it will be persuasive. That was the burden of what I had to get out!

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ROLF: We should concentrate in this discussion on the proposal. The proposal is mentioned on Page 3, Point 7 of the invitation letter. It would be the best, first to explain it and perhaps to tell what, as a suggestion, may come from APG towards any Dutch artist.

BARBARA: I think that what we are asking is, are any of you interested to perhaps form an informal artists' group to take forward these proposals and possibly get it to a feasibility commitment with whatever organisation you would wish to work with, and come to the meeting at the end the year in this capacity, hopefully with some other artists from different countries whom we hope to attract in the same way. We are asking really who would be interested, how you might be interested and whether there is a way one can take this forward now. So we really ask you.

PAUL: I think, here in the Netherlands there is one thing really necessary that has to happen. I think that it is really interesting to have the possibility of an exchange of experiences between artists who are really involved in the proposal, as we have it here. The proposal itself has to involve this problem of exchange, too. Because I think in many countries there are some artists who have experiences in that field. The foremost thing that has to be done is to come to an exchange of experiences and next to it to a publication of those experiences. The way we have been talking before is rather one of the consequences. What can be easily drawn out of the discussion is that at this moment

every artist has his own ideas about the approach of social problems. It is really necessary from our experiences in Holland to point out that it is the right of every artist to have his own vision, and on the other hand have an evolution of the experiences and bring experiences further than now. It is necessary just to take for granted that every artist has that own vision and at the same time comes to an exchange of those experiences and just looks at them if there will be a development. All these things have to be handled very open-minded with much tolerance for all those visions. In the proposal itself there has to be the concern with these problems, because in the Netherlands the experiences are quite opposite it is necessary to involve people who really are interested to exchange their experiences.

ROLF: I would say within APG each artist has a different language in expressing the way he sees and is acting in his context. I would not say that APG is as ideologically fixed as perhaps the Maoist group you mentioned before, in the sense that it is open-minded enough, of course, to implement other thoughts. It is not the question that there is something to be built up now here like an APG Netherlands, as I always refused to build up an APG Germany; I saw myself as an integral part of APG, although I differ in a lot of aspects from John's thinking or the thinking of any other member of APG. So, this might not be the question in the first instance, APG is open enough to invite everybody who feels a similar concern in the context of any social strategy, any relation towards administrative bodies or whatever, as an invitation. What could be thought of is some kind of informal exchange group. For me it is very easy to come to Eindhoven, it just takes me two hours drive. So it is not a question of distance to communicate.

PAUL: Formally it should be included in the proposal because the exchange in the European context really can be made.

BARBARA: We have to have the meeting of us all and what our differences are and then we can see what it is.

NICHOLAS: Exchange can be seen on a number of levels. It is very important that if and when a number of us can meet together at the end of the year or maybe early next, that should be seen as a meeting of exchange. But also, if possible it should be seen as a meeting to move from the discussion to the outlining of a program of action and taking the next steps to achieve that. These are

targets that we can aim for, so that we do not fall back into circles and circles of discussion, as people tended to perhaps in the Sixties. We should push ourselves gently forward into successably different circumstances as we go and those would be fulfilled really by the circumstances of this kind of very simple program. There is a second point in which exchange can be taken, and it is very much in my ambition that it should. We should be looking to pool our experience actually in work. We should be looking to work as far as possible multinationally, and to lift the kind of contextual work we are all talking about out of a national dimension. We should be making our own cultural architecture which is on our own terms, in terms and on the scale of our own perspectives and allowing ourselves to move where we wish to move, not where other people want to canalize us. Furthermore I think that there is an exceptional feeling, an exceptional possibility in this area. It is the New America, it exists to be uncovered by ourselves!

ROLF: That is a metaphore...

NICHOLAS: So far we think there are no Iroquees there already, so that we should actually work forwards without any alienation of personal differences, because it seems to me that all our individualities remain expressively important. But taking from each other what we can take, you have a certain amount of what is sort of there in one corner of the map from APG's point of view, that we should make it our purpose to a program of those kind to defining ways of working as artists which overload national and disciplinary boundaries. So, that one is taking the multi-disciplinary conception to the next stage of its development. One is actually working across tangible cultural boundaries, it is a deliberum strategy. These things are possible if we work simply and steadily towards them, retaining all our individualities intact, but exploring things we could work towards each other as we go.

ROLF: I would like to add another aspect to the proposal, although I know that both of the representatives of any governmental bodies in this meeting here are not the exact people to be addressed, I would like to ask them if they feel sympathetic enough to carry it on, perhaps in the sense that every Dutch artist who could concentrate on meeting and coming together to this small international meeting or conference could be enabled to find these kinds of

experiences, to fund these experiences of Dutch artists in correlation to APG.

PAUL: We will ask it later on.

PIET: The artist is asking, and the government mostly says 'yes', if possible.

ROLF: I did not mean it personally.

PIET: We have an Arts Council...

PAUL: I invited Piet as a good friend. What I really like to point out in the proposal is that it is really important to come to publications of experiences in different places, in the form of an European publication. It is important as a strategy, it is necessary to have the question for a good publication in the budget.

NICHOLAS: This could be a Dutch contribution as initiative.

PAUL: Of course, there are means to realise it.

AB: You are discussing now in a political way!

NICHOLAS: No, we all have to put into this what we see. We have suggested some steps there. But that is what you suggested which is not there. I think that our resources will probably be quite away from that.

PAUL: When you mean the British Arts Council but I think on an European level, it must be possible to come to a publication. Only a publication of successful enterprises made by artists can persuade the progress to a further state.

HUGH: Some of the funding, if it is for a publication, might have to be international or intereuropean, this page mentions the European Cultural Foundation, this is part of an application to them. There is also the Cultural Department of the Common Market in Brussels which we are in contact with and persuing at the time. Perhaps a publication could be something they could support, for individual travel within countries we can go to our individual art councils.

ROLF: John reminded me of an idea he proposed four years ago when I was first introduced into APG. He had the very good idea of a similar project connecting artists in Europe with a telex link for exchange of ideas. This is not said as a strategy or proposal, it is mentioned as an idea which should be sincerely thought of and

discussed at a later stage. Because the communication gap brings us a lot of problems. We had these problems with Arts Sociologiques in France which was only a group of three, but when they broke up they did not discuss between themselves anymore. So, on a certain level these things might be very trivial but they have to be considered. I must say to your proposal, Paul, that I am not a documentary-fetishist so I am not too far into the idea of having a book of experiences, but I see a value in something like a brochure or so in being applicated to any kind of art-body in any country, to be able to spread it and therefore bring people together who have similar ideas and whom we do not know now. This is very important, in the first stage this might be a very useful tool. Perhaps, saying something like an advertising brochure, not as a documentary of what has been done now.

PAUL: I do not see it as a documentary but I see it as a tool to persuade people. It is important to have some cases studies of different experiences. The experiences you told us, are real good experiences in the Dutch situation. Perhaps there are Dutch experiences which are in France, England or Germany very good experiences. So it would be of strategic value to make clear what we mean when we select accertain amount of cases. I can publish it at the end of the first stage.

BARBARA: I would like to just pick up Rolf's point that he was making, that we managed to come together in this way and have this discussion. There is the possibility between now and the end of the year, the possibility of projects actually happening in the way we were sort of demonstrating to come from you, in relation to the representatives that you have got. I think we should not loose the possibility of the pragmatism. So I just want to re-inforce perhaps what Rolf was saying.

ROLF: As an end of this discussion I just simply ask now who of the Dutch artists being here, which is to a certain extend a random choice, of course, although Paul very exactly knew whom to invite...

PIET: He made a random choice!

ROLF: It is not picking them out of a telephone-book. I ask who of the artists here would like to take part and would like to spend some of his precious time for doing so.

PAUL: I would like it.

MARK: I see the importance, too, of having contacts between different countries, although the problems of the different national contexts stay. But I think it is important that there are more publications in the way we are working here and elsewhere.

FRANK: I certainly agree also, but the only problem I have is that as we are here, it is certainly just a choice of artists, maybe we must try to bring also other ideological points of view in.

ROLF: Therefore Paul's idea of the book is very good.

PIET: As a consequence of what Paul was saying - that every different background, attitude, or approach should have a possibility in this group, as we have such a lot of different ideas in Holland - it is necessary to have a good information to all the artists not only in the visual fields. We should find a way of bringing the idea to all the artists here and then see how they react.

PAUL: I completely disagree. It is quite impossible to involve all artists in this idea. It is completely wrong. It is quite a personal choice of artists to join it. I am open to everybody who likes to join it, but I know - and that is the specific Dutch situation at the moment - that I am not prepared to be in contact and to have discussions with everybody, especially not with artists who are thinking in a quite totalitarian way. Art has nothing to do with democracy!

PIET: That is not meant, of course. Everybody should at least know about it.

BARBARA: From our experience perhaps it might be helpful, too; we have several times spread it out to everybody, then of course, we had masses of people writing in who were painters or whatever and did not actually want to do these things at all, one took enormous amount of our resources and time answering back and then interviewing lots of people; that was fair and a good thing to do. But then all the money and all the energy went. Perhaps it can be invited still as you say, that this idea is around, but spread it just a bit more to people where you know that they are working in a multi-disciplinary way and could take on these sort of things, because it is obviously pointless to send to private painters who want to paint their painting.

FRANK: The problem is not the private painters, there are several groups in Holland working on different political and ideological premises. As we all know there are a lot of fights just on the political level.

ROLF: That is the reason why I more rely on mouth-propaganda.

PIET: I think, if you are an open organisation it is necessary to have different points of view in your organisation, of course, under the condition that they accept that it is open, that everybody is free to say what he wants.

JOHAN: Therefore it is necessary to have a platform to exchange informations to come to know each other.

JEFFREY: I am getting a little confused. I do not know how many points of view there are in the world, we are talking here about the APG proposal which has a certain phrasing, the phrasing is to do with the relationship of artists in institutions and the working relationships. Indeed, for many artists there is a great rest of freedom of this idea, what you added to this towards as an artist working in institutions and what kind of work you are interested in doing, the openness is unquestionable. But the thing is I am asking myself, you also include the point of view saying 'no, artist in institution, nonsense; artists do not belong anywhere in the institution'. In other words, are you already including the people who are going to disagree fundamentally with the starting point?

PIET: Of course not. You start, of course, at the point you want to go on. If they do not agree, why should they join?

HUGH: Just one thing which might help to clarify a bit. The major projects we have done in the last few years, they all came initially through national or local government departments. In some cases we were working in the offices of the administration, in other cases it was actually working out in the field with local people. But it came down from the top rather than trying to get a little local organisation together. It came down from the top, perhaps in parallel lines with something organized officially, and grew up from there. So, I wanted to clarify working with institutions is not necessary inside that institution but linked with the institution and possible perhaps for members of the public, if you are working with them to have connections into the institution that normally they could never do.

NICHOLAS: I think what we are talking about, and nervously came with the intention of setting up anything as space-based as an organisation, we were really talking about a program which we would like to develop and if there are people who would also like, maybe for not identical reasons, to join the development of this program, that would be a marvellous thing. But the setting up of an organisation with all the testing, challenges in organisation, the point of dialectics that come from taking up stable positions and trying to fossilize them, that is something what we are really not wanting.

PAUL: I don't think that it is possible to have a kind of representation, that is representative itself for the artists in Holland. I don't think it is of any use working that way. It is just enough to stay open.

AB: You have only two choices. To be open at all or not open, selective in choosing your own people.

ROLF: The English language offers a wonderful phrase, the common sense, which is untranslatable. That is what Jeffrey described, we can say there must be, of course, a least idea which we share, otherwise we are not having a group to a certain extend. It is not meant that everybody should give up his former life and join a new party or a new sect. Nobody asked for this, I am just overpointing this. I could not say that this is something which any governmental body would or can expect as well from APG, even if it comes from abroad.

PIET: Of course not!

HUGH: Perhaps one way to also help limit the common sense, make it quite clear in some way, that anyone coming to join the group is not going to have the chance of getting more money through another channel from the government. There is no money in it. That must be clear by implication, if even negatively.

PIET: But this has practical consequences. First you should have a good text which you issue under the artists in Holland, so they can make their choice by knowing what is going on.

ROLF: First of all, we are producing a paper out of these tape-records, and each of us who gets a copy can show it to others and by this there might be some kind of snow-ball system, that is more reliable.

FRANK: We can make a declaration right now what kind of agreement we have reached, and publish it. And people will be attended then or not.

AB: But we have here some experiences with people working in the area of social strategy. Perhaps, it will be good to work on an informal level but in an open way.

PAUL: Of course, in an open way, we have to be sure that people can bring in their own point of view and be tolerant to each other.

ROLF: I have been introducing Paul to APG some weeks ago, so things happen this way, I did not have a publication. I just threw a lot of paper at him and poor Paul had to read it.

PAUL: And I did!

ROLF: Perhaps we can just ask you if you would like to take part in that or if somebody here refuses it, so let us carry on this way. Maybe we could reach an agreement between ourselves, between the artists and the governmental representatives here, if they sympathize with it.

AB: It's too late now.

BARBARA: For disagreements?

HUGH: The fact you are still here...

AB: So I am interested in yours and also in other experiences, I am very pleased with these actions of artists because I am not an artist. It is a little bit an optimistic idea, a little bit simplistic, but I think you have to do it.

ROLF: It is the question of carrying it on and you have to bring it to a point where it is able to be discussed.

AB: It is your idea...

PAUL: It is all special in the artist's situation, it is always idealistic, it is always too late...

AB: I try to stimulate it if I can, I am curious about it.

ROLF: On the other hand, I would like to suggest to you that you read John's time-base theory and structure-in-events, and then decide if it is too simplistic.

AB: Perhaps the theory is not simplistic but the way how you discuss and organize things is simplistic.

PAUL: Everybody joins the APG proposal, yes? Can we conclude that? Then I would like to invite everybody to have a meal with us!

ANNEX:

**Invitation letter from the Apoëlohuis Eindhoven
APG proposal to the European Cultural Foundation**

Eindhoven, 3 januari 1982.

Ter gelegenheid van de tentoonstelling 'SILVER GRAINS, the materialisation of photography' van Rolf Sachsse die van 26 december tot en met 17 januari in het Apollohuis te zien is, wordt op zaterdag 16 januari van 3-6 uur een discussie georganiseerd.

Tijdens deze bijeenkomst zal het voorstel van de 'Artist Placement Group' (APG) waarvan Rolf Sachsse deel uitmaakt, aan de European Cultural Foundation van 20/11/'81, onderwerp van het gesprek zijn.

U wordt uitgenodigd aan deze discussie deel te nemen.

De bedoelingen van de Engelse Artist Placement Group (APG, 1966) zijn enigszins vergelijkbaar met die van het Nederlandse Praktijkonderzoek Beeldende Kunsten (POBK). Overeenkomstig is het zoeken naar een mogelijke inbreng van kunstenaars in maatschappelijke processen, waarbij zowel gedacht wordt aan de overheid als aan de industrie. Zo behoren o.a. de mogelijke rol van beeldende kunstenaars bij de vormgeving van de omgeving en samenwerkingsverbanden tussen kunst en technologie tot de belangstellingssfeer van APG.

De doelstelling van APG ligt zeer dicht bij de aanbevelingen met betrekking tot een bijstelling van het POBK zoals deze in een evaluatierapport van de Stuurgroep (mei 1978) werden geformuleerd:

"Het betreft niet zozeer een onderzoek naar een bestaande praktijk danwel een onderzoek naar de mogelijkheden van een te ontwikkelen praktijk: Deze praktijk betreft die vormen van beeldende kunst-beoefening, die vanwege de vraag naar beeldende inbreng bij activiteiten en processen in de samenleving aan de bestaande, atelier-gebonden beroepsuitoefening toegevoegd worden."

Wezenlijk verschillend is dat APG het initiatief is van een groep kunstenaars en met name van John Latham, die vanuit eigen opvattingen over de sociale rol van kunstenaars ijveren voor plaatsen voor kunstenaars in maatschappelijk, organisatorisch verband, terwijl het POBK een overheidsonderzoek was in opdracht van het Ministerie van Cultuur, Recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk.

Het lijkt daarom interessant de Engelse en Nederlandse ervaringen en opvattingen op dit gebied aan elkaar te toetsen, en te onderzoeken of een gezamenlijke opstelling in Europees verband zinvol en mogelijk is.

Een afschrift van het voorstel van APG is als bijlage bij deze brief gevoegd. Eveneens een lijst van de genodigden.

Het gesprek zal in het engels worden gevoerd. Het Apollohuis zal van deze discussie een verslag publiceren dat aan alle deelnemers zal worden toegezonden. Rolf Sachsse zal optreden als gespreksleider.

Na afloop van de discussie wordt de deelnemers een warme maaltijd aangeboden in het Apollohuis.

U wordt vriendelijk verzocht in verband met de voorbereidingen mij zo spoedig mogelijk telefonisch (040- 440393) te laten weten of u van deze uitnodiging gebruik zult maken.

Met de meeste hoogachting,

Paul Panhuysen *Paul Panhuysen*

Het Apollohuis. Tongelresestraat 81, 5613 DB, Eindhoven.



artist placement group

riverside studios, crisp road, hammersmith, london W6 9RL
telephone: (01) 741 3497

coordinator: barbara steveni

To: The European Cultural Foundation,
5 Jan van Goyenkade,
Amsterdam 1007,
The Netherlands.

20th November 1981

Please receive the enclosed application, under the title:

ART AS SOCIAL STRATEGY IN ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS:
The Incidental Person approach to Europe

This application is for a financial contribution towards
Part 1. An initiation phase of a three part programme of
international co-operation between artists and administrations
in a group of 4 (5) European Countries.

The project proposes a pragmatic means of implementing the
recommendations in the Report of 1976 of Mr. Leo Tindemans to
the European Commission.

With compliments,

BARBARA STEVENI

Introductory notes to this Application.

1. Part One will consist of (a) Recruiting candidates for membership of an international STEERING GROUP who will be responsible, both for the programme's policy and from whom a proportion of the participants in the international projects in phases two and three will be drawn, and (b) To hold a SMALL INTERNATIONAL MEETING in London or Paris, to which potential participating representatives will be invited and at which the STEERING GROUP will be formally instituted.
 2. This programme is along lines successfully developed by ourselves (as the Artist Placement Group) at the national level, and derives in particular from experience gained during projects conducted by artists working in conjunction with government departments in the United Kingdom between the years 1975-1980.
 3. The direction taken over the past two decades by certain artists in a number of post-industrialised countries, away from an expressionist art and privacy of the studio, to an art of implementation - to work in public and social contexts, is seen as an important development providing a vital ingredient towards an idea of cultural coherence.
 4. The programme relates additionally to Article 24 of the commission's report for a European Foundation (supplement 5/77) which states, "various countries of Europe have many different plans for promoting cultural activity, both at local and national level. The Foundation should encourage socio-cultural workers in the different Community countries to attend both national and local gatherings".
 5. APG's proposals first attracted European interest when an account of the groups work and its method for artist/administrative association was included in the EEC commissioned report of 1977 by Marie-Madeleine Krust (volume 1), on the initiative of M. Robert Gregoire* of the cultural sector.
 6. Subsequently APG's proposals were introduced at national European level at a series of exhibitions meetings and platform discussions under the title: ART AS SOCIAL STRATEGY IN ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS - The Incidental Person approach to government - In Bonn in 1977 and in 1978, before artists and senior government officials on the initiative of the then Minister for Education and Science, Professor Dr. Reimut Jochimsen and Dr. Margarethe Jochimsen*. In Paris, (Musée de la Ville de Paris) 1978 and at the British Embassy Paris on the invitation of the British Ambassador Sir Reginald Hibbert, 1980*. In Vienna, Palais Liechtenstein, with artists and government officials and union representatives 1979, under the auspices of Rose Marie Schwarzwaelder.
- * from whom refs & documentation can be obtained
7. The contacts and exchanges established between artists and the representatives of administrations in Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Austria with perhaps Holland included will constitute the basis for this European programme.

1. Name of organization (or person) submitting the application:

ARTIST PLACEMENT GROUP (Trust), incorporating APG RESEARCH LTD, a company limited by guarantee, Co. registration No. 979565.

2. Permanent address:

APG
c/o RIVERSIDE STUDIOS,
CRISP ROAD,
HAMMERSMITH,
LONDON W6 9RL. Tel. No. (01) 741 3497

3. Secretary General or Director:

Barbara Steveni (Ms)
Director Coordinator.

4. Date of foundation:

1966.

5. Aims of the organization:

ART AS SOCIAL STRATEGY IN ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS:

"The Incidental Person approach to government", APG represents an international artist voice, inviting negotiations with artists who are able and willing to work in the broad fields afforded by administrative contexts of any country."

APG London May 1980

APG aims to examine the potential activity of artists in relation to industrial and commercial organisations, to investigate the circumstances of segregation, and to look into ways in which the two might be brought closer together.

APG London 1968

The long term objectives of APG are to make it common practice for organisations of all kinds to adopt the principle of having an artist associated with their work on an open brief.

APG London 1972.

6. PROJECTS ALREADY CARRIED OUT

- 6.1. Following a period of experimental associations in industry in the United Kingdom, (1968-1971) aimed at arriving at an optimum form of artist/organisation association, APG artists negotiated a CIVIL SERVICE MEMORANDUM with central government in London in 1972. This document which recommended the application of certain forms of artistic activity to government activity, formed the basis of the method by which artists were seconded for various periods of time, to carry out projects with the organisations listed below:
 2. (UK) With the Department of the Environment, Inner Area Study Birmingham, 1975-1977 resulting in a new means of revitalising community relations in the Inner Cities by relating the decision-makers to the recipients of their decisions.
 3. With the Department of Health Architects division, Euston Towers London and in Broadmoor Mental Hospital 1976-1980, resulting in (a) a new means of communicating 'on the level' with patients (inmates) in an institution for the criminally insane: (b) a Reminiscence Aid for the aged.
 4. With the Scottish Office Planning division: Edinburgh 1975-1976 resulting in (a) conversion of derelict coal and shale heaps to art works and national monuments, (b) potential marine development industry to include fish stock cultivation on the derelict docklands of the Clyde.
 5. With the Peterlee Development Corporation, Durham 1975-1978 resulting in a People's Project set up in a New Town to rediscover a living memory archive of the district run in conjunction with Manpower Services for unemployed ex-miners and school leavers.
6. Results continuing to emerge from these examples of artist/administration association brought about in this particular way, indicate that certain types of creative practitioners when juxtaposed with administrative contexts perform a function of both coherence and innovation by use of media directly associated with these contexts. It is a function which is not carried by the professionals and specialists of other disciplines who conduct their affairs through verbal and financial media alone.

(References, reports and documents referring to these projects may be obtained from the offices of the Artist Placement Group London, and from the Bonnerkunstverein Bonn.)

7. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT PROGRAMME

1. TO RELATE ARTISTS WITH AN ACTIVE STATUS, IN 4(5) EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, TO WORK IN ASSOCIATION WITH THEIR NATIONAL DECISION-MAKING BODIES IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO THEIR EUROPEAN COLLEAGUES, BOTH ARTISTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPRESENTATIVES, ENGAGED IN THE CONCURRENT RELATED NATIONAL PROJECTS.
2. The objective of this programme, which will be negotiated in its initial stage by APG, is to initiate and set in train a programme for European coherence, along lines successfully pioneered by APG in the United Kingdom. (Civil Service Memorandum '72 refers).
3. Agreement to this programme makes a requirement of representatives of local and national government departments, to commission a series of FEASIBILITY STUDIES within their various departments through secondment to them of selected artists. (Those who have indicated an ability and motivation to work within public and social contexts). An optimum period of time for these initial studies will be four to six months.
4. Full associations on a yearly basis subject to renewal will then follow on the findings and proposals arising from the initial FEASIBILITY STUDIES and in agreement both with the participating administrations and artists of the countries concerned and in conjunction with the European STEERING GROUP.
5. Project funding:

Both the initial studies and subsequent projects are funded by the hosting organisations of the countries concerned, (on a level equivalent to persons of other professions and disciplines. (university lecturers grading).
6. THE FIRST TASK OF THIS PROGRAMME (FOR WHICH FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION IS SOUGHT FROM THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION) will be the task of RECRUITING THOSE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES AND ARTISTS OF THE 4(5) PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES WHO AGREE TO INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAMME.
7. APG as the negotiating body in this initial stage, will aim to set up a EUROPEAN STEERING GROUP composed of artists and perhaps organisational representatives of the participating countries, who would be responsible for the policy of the programme. It could also supply a proportion of the participants in the projects at the implementation stage of the programme.
8. To launch this programme, to familiarise and encourage participation, we would aim to hold a small INTERNATIONAL MEETING in London or Paris, to which potential participating representatives will be invited and from whom candidates for membership of the STEERING GROUP can be drawn. The occasion will also formally announce the programme and institute the STEERING GROUP. We would stress the importance of the pragmatic emphasis in such a meeting, and would therefore set an approximate date towards the end of '82, which in our experience, would allow sufficient time to incorporate a number of participants already engaged in the FEASIBILITY STAGE of the programme.

8. Project budget

The application is for funding of £5,000, to meet one half of the costs (estimated total £10,000) of an International Meeting, to be held in late 1982 either in London or Paris. To this meeting will be invited the potential participants in the European Programme, and from these the Steering Group will be formally constituted and development funds allocated as appropriate.

It is confidently anticipated that the remainder of the costs of the International Meeting - a further £5,000 - the costs of venue and delegates, will be made available, if the meeting is held in London, by the British Council.

The British Council has already subscribed £3,000 towards the travel and research necessary to arrange the International Meeting.

(As already stated, development funds for the actual artists' projects in the countries taking part in the Programme will be sought separately, and are not the object of this Application).