

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

We think about contemporary art as an expanded field of practices that engage current global sociopolitical transformations without being either fully contained in or completely freed from them. Within the fabric of a present moment characterized by different, and often incompatible, temporalities and agendas, *ARTMargins* wants to locate transnational commonalities and trajectories that connect, or divide, different regions of the world, bringing together artistic practices from (post)transitional zones, while at the same time questioning the logic of transition itself: today the entire world is a margin in transition.¹

ARTMargins invites researchers and practitioners who operate under the conditions of neoliberal capitalism to critically reflect on what we call the “thickened global margin,” encompassing historical, geographical, as well as philosophical or theoretical postperipheries. A far cry from the emphatic claims to homogeneity and universalism that characterized postmodern globalism, such an agenda implies a shift in the definition of what it means to speak to, or from, the margins: away from the binary center/margin model (East/West, North/South) that dominated modernism and postmodernism alike to one that conceives of the periphery as a nomadic zone of contact in which the possibilities for a different future may be explored. Marginality, we submit, is less a condition or geographical given than a tactic that intervenes in dominant theoretical, historical, and interpretative models and methodologies. The margin, we argue, interferes surgically in a core text the way in which words scribbled into the margins of a written or printed page may intervene in a central scripture. It is in this spirit, and not with a view to correcting history, that *ARTMargins* hopes to offer a forum to those who are currently trying to pry open and reclaim the archives, historical legacies, and artistic and political traditions that for decades have been kept, or continue to be kept, under official lock and key. To freely paraphrase Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht, we aim not merely to supply existing political and cultural institutions and frameworks with material, we also hope to assist those who think creatively, and critically, about possibilities for changing them.

1 *ARTMargins* evolves from *ARTMargins Online*, which continues to investigate art practice in the postsocialist countries of Eastern Europe.

ARTMargins is interested in studying the migration of initiatives, ideas, and artistic practices across continents now and in the past, investigating, for instance, the establishment of artist networks in South America and Eastern Europe from the 1960s to the present; radical propositions for establishing autonomous art practices in the aftermath of the collapse of the social welfare state in the West, and of state socialism in Eastern Europe; or concurrent takes on global migration by photographers from Central Asia and the Middle East. Again, the point is not to objectify the perceived or real similarities between heterogeneous regions of the world, or to promote a new transnational exoticism, but rather to argue that there may be such a thing as an ever-widening, yet nonhomogeneous, worldwide periphery animated by artistic practices whose description and analysis cannot rely on established paradigms and methods.

THE EDITORS