

THE ART OF THE OVERHEAD 2009

# CALL FOR OVERHEADS OHPen Surface

## Call for Overheads: OHPen Surface - The Art of the Overhead festival 2009

Workshops, Exhibition and Performances May 15 - June 5 '09. [www.overheads.org](http://www.overheads.org)  
Venue: Mötesplats Stapelbäddsparken, Malmö, Sweden, [www.stapelbaddsparken.se](http://www.stapelbaddsparken.se)

The Art of the Overhead is a small festival celebrating artistic expression in a medium that is almost forgotten in the age of digital reproduction: the overhead projector. Submissions are now welcome for our 2009 edition "OHPen Surface" which will take place at Stapelbäddsparken, a former Shipbuilding slipway featuring 3000m2 of largely underground areas in Malmö, Sweden. The "OHPen Surface" theme then, not only denotes the OHPen Surface of the Overhead projector but also the physical location and organisational workshop-based structure of the festival itself. However, with this framework we also aim to encourage a critical reflection on how technological standards, such as the Overhead projector, relates to the dynamic of open and closed which is so pervasive in the standards of today's networked media culture. (read on below for details on the festival theme)

Submissions are now welcome for the OHPen Surface workshop and/or festival in the following categories:

- **Transparencies** for The Art of the Overhead Archive (physical or as PDF's for printing). The archive is a wall-mounted installation where folders containing the different works can be browsed and projected by the audience.
- **Installation**, works incorporating overhead projection, custom built projectors, digital-analogue hybrids etc.
- **Performances**, live performances incorporating overhead projectors. From live cinema, vj acts or different kinds of kinetic-sound generation to the good old conference presentation.

**Deadline for submissions is March 30, 2009** - use our "Submit" PDF on the [overheads.org](http://overheads.org) website for contributions in any of the above categories.

**Projects for OHPen Surface Workshop:** for work-in-progress (or more or less finished works which require some time for preparation) you may apply for our workshop week which will run from May 15 until the opening weekend May 22-23. (NB: you do not need to be present the whole week, please state how many days you'd like to participate) This part of the festival is organised in collaboration with "Kunst und Musik mit dem Tageslichtsprojektor" ([derstrudel.org](http://derstrudel.org), Ralf Schreiber and Tina Tonagel) from Köln and focuses on low-tech DIY appropriations and performative uses of the Overhead projector.

## OHPen Surface - Festival Theme 2009

*"The reason for why we used simple overhead projectors was because of their open surface, where you could directly work with your materials."*

- Joshua White of Joshua Light Show.

Through performances, installations, workshops and a growing archive of overhead transparencies, the festival reflects on the different practices connected to the history of the overhead projector, from the bureaucratic and educational settings of the classroom or business conference to the counter-culture context of the 1960's and onwards to the contemporary media culture. The overhead prepared us for the cognitive structure of PowerPoint, teaching us the importance of keywords, summaries, bullet-lists, illustrative pictures and a straightforward way of presentation. In short, the overhead as a device for instruction is a disciplinary technology. But there are other histories of the Overhead projector as well: from the 1940's it was a standard equipment in Bowling alleys for the projection of players scores and later in the 1950's and 1960's it was appropriated by beatniks and hippies to create psychedelic "light shows".

This edition of the media-archaeological festival The Art of the Overhead is centered around the theme of the OHPen Surface, aiming at a critical reflection on the role of standards in the contemporary mediascape. The overhead projector is a clearly recognisable standard for the art of projection: it comes with institutional disciplinary settings such as the school or the business enterprise and with regulatory frameworks of presentation both of the material (such as the illuminated surface and the transparency) and the mental/cognitive kind (presentation guidelines, the do's and don'ts of instruction). In our culture of increasingly integrated networks of data flows, standards take on a pivotal role, from legal frameworks to file formats and communication protocols, we are surrounded by the institutions of cultural production that they bring about. What is important to remember is that while all these areas define different models of the "Open", they, as all standards do, also leave some other paths closed. How can such tensions be revealed and acted-reflected upon in artistic production?

With this call for contributions for The Art of the Overhead 2009 - we encourage artists and other media practitioners to depart from the Overhead projector as a standardized technology which has the potential for re-activation by way of its near outdated character. This entails reflection-as-projection, deploying the Overhead projector in the double sense of projection described by Siegfried Zielinski: as both casting out images representing the world and as a shaping movement, a production or rather a visionary pro-jecting of reality as delimited by how we see it through the image. To work in one media, criticizing another, or reflecting across a whole domain of media culture through a particular and well-known technological institution is a kind of non-digitalisable cultural practice that The Art of the Overhead is all about, and through the OHPen Surface we call for works that engage in this dynamic.

### AbOHut

The Art of the Overhead is an international media art festival, which took place for the first time in Copenhagen September-October 2005. Since then it has been followed by various exhibitions and workshops, inspiring the collaborating offshoot project "Kunst und Musik mit dem Tageslichtsprojektor" in Cologne 2007. Now we join forces and return to Scandinavia for a 2009 edition in Malmö, Sweden.

### cOHntact

Concept and Coordinators: Linda Hilfling & Kristoffer Gansing

OHPen Surface is managed by the cultural association The Art of the Overhead which is based in the Öresund region and supported by Framtidens Kultur and Malmö Stad.

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