



I want
to
make a
pile

Kathrin Böhm

Art on the Scale of Life

Edited by
Gerrie van Noord, Paul O'Neill, and Mick Wilson

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SPACES

The second section of the book positions the practices with respect to Space. The first text in this section takes the form of a conversation between two studio colleagues, Céline Condoirelli and Kathrin Böhm, further annotated by Conderelli, and gathered under the heading of "Value Swap." This is followed by Doina Petrescu's text on "The Heap Agency and the Work of (Re)Production Through Art," and an image section sequence that profiles a range of projects, including works under the aegis of the collaboration Public Works. Among the works visually profiled are *Mobile Porch* (2000), *UFO Landing* (1998), *Culture is a Verb* (2017–19), and the "International Village Show" (2015–16). The dimension of the practice that comes into view here is the spatial, not isolated from the previous question of exhibition, but overlapping with it, as the different components and genres within this second section combine to generate an extended methodological reflection on the spatial grammars that Böhm has elaborated within her practice.

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Mobile Porch Public Works (2000-14)



Mobile Porch was a multifunctional mini architecture to roam neighborhoods, becoming a tool for contact, stimulating activity, revealing the potential of everyday situations to inform the future. Everyone was invited

to use it, shape it, mold it, make it, temporarily, their own. The deliberately flexible design offered a stage, a screen, a reception desk, a dinner table, a shop, an exhibition board, a workshop, a billboard, a hang-out

... an endless range of functions and possibilities for public use. With initial support from the Art for Architecture Award, Jess Fernie, and Clare Cumberland, on the invitation of Georgia Ward.

ECONOMIES

The third section of the book pivots on the term Economies. Gathered under this heading are a series of texts and works that move beyond the reductive account of the commodity and market relations to consider the breadth and potentials of otherwise economies and circulations of exchange. Katherine Gibson begins her text, "At the Same Time as Doing 'Art,' Doing 'Economy,'" with an anecdote of her encounter with Böhm's "radically sophisticated 'art of doing.'" This encounter marks the beginning of a long-term collaborative entanglement of Böhm, Gibson, an expanding group of arts practitioners, community economy researchers, and activists who transform the impulse to "take back the economy" into a multi-local alliance between community economies initiatives under the heading of The Interdependence. This is followed in a contrapuntal movement by the "Glorypedia of Socially Engaged Art (Excerpts)." Via a performative glossary of terms, Gregory Sholette and THEM!! disclose (while disrupting) the co-optive drives of contemporary capitalism and its "near-total commodification of social labor." The argument of this section then switches genre once more, into the imperative form of the manifesto and the programmatic

agenda that Kuba Schreder and Böhm propose on interdependence as one mode of art worlding within a "pluriverse of art worlds." This is followed by a visual sequence profiling practices and works in the space of experimental economies. These range from the *seemingly* discretely localized (although always self-dispersing) platforms such as "Trade Show" (exhibition), *Park Products* (project) and the Centre for Plausible Economies (infrastructure) to the cascading circulations across the distributed networks of Company Drinks and The Interdependence.

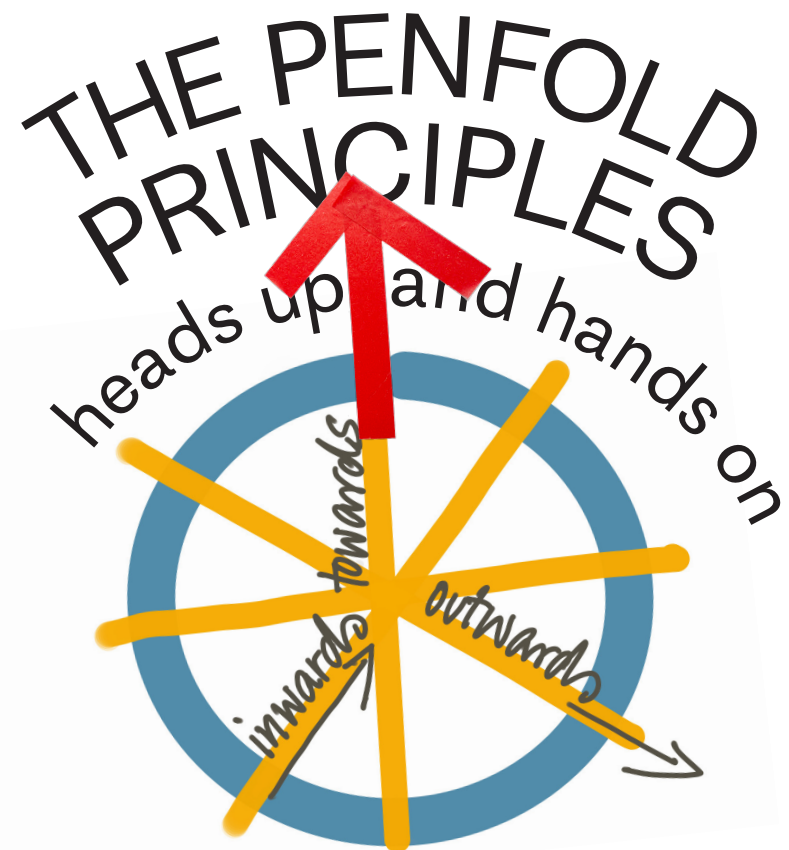
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An ethical and pragmatic compass of *Interdependent Art Worlds*, a tool for ourselves, collaborators and comrades.

The Penfold Principles of the interdependent art worlds (*itd. art worlds*) express both an aspiration (heads up) and a pragmatic principle (hands on), based on the understanding that our survival and well-being rely upon our shared, multispecies interdependence.

The seven needles point inwards – towards the realm of our own localised work and organisations – as well as outwards – towards wider society.

The compass is offered to help us navigate the perilous waters of competitive art worlds, setting the direction towards plurality and shared co-existence.



Park Products

Public Works (2003–04)



Park Products, devised together with Andreas Lang, was a two-phased project to make connections between different social, cultural, and material resources in and around Kensington Gardens, a Royal Park, and to extend the concept and realm of cultural production and distribution of the Serpentine Gallery, located in the park. In phase one, different

user groups collaboratively developed a series of park-related products that revealed less-known and invisible aspects of using and running Kensington Gardens. The products were later presented and traded from a mobile stall in the park, using non-monetary currencies for barter and purchase. Commissioned by Sally Tallant.



COHABITATIONS

The fourth section presents a series of perspectives and imaginaries of co-operating and co-belonging under the header Cohabitations, which in their texture and density of lived relations speak against the impoverishment of imagination that often reduces collaborative practices to mere transactions or contracts of mutual benefit. The first text is a montage that traces the decade-long dialog between Grace Ndiritu and Böhm titled "Talking with No One Else Around." The discussion moves from the family habitus of each artist through descriptions of practices, infected by themes of commoning and co-cultivation, and resolves into a revised take on the artists' placement strategy and the concrete dynamics of inhabitations of different organizational settings. Continuing with the dialog form, a conversation with Stephen Wright on "The Use of Redundancy" then follows, which focuses on Wright's initial gloss on redundancy and the proposition that "exhibition technology ... is largely obsolescent" in a phase of the discussion that takes the paradox of artistic autonomy as its foil. The very process of thinking as a mode of cohabitation is enacted in the conversation, and at the same time recurs as a theme in reflections on the debate on the possibility of a "private language." Wapke Feenstra's first-person narrative of Myvillages offers another rehearsal

of cohabitational thinking and doing, as she outlines the intersecting terms of friendship, feminism, coproduction, attunement to locality, and the rural when dominant art circuits tend to prioritize frictionless global relays and a nomadism that always trails back to the city.

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COMPOS(I)TING

In the final thematic section of the book, the two essays gathered under Compos(i)ting provide operational analyses through which to think the methodology – the articulation of specific means and use values within Böhm's practice. Interestingly, they both situate these methodological aspects of Böhm's practice within different, though overlapping genealogies of twentieth-century experimental art practice. Paul O'Neill, who has worked with Böhm extensively for the last two decades, takes us through her poster practice that has evolved over the same period in the text "The Poster-as-Practice." Weaving the personal trajectories of professional practice and recurrent collaboration with wider accounts of the poster and its different aesthetic registers,

O'Neill's text maps out the operational specificity of Böhm's extensive use of the poster. Following on, the artist and theorist Dave Beech – whose own artistic practice negotiates the complex problematic of public-ness – positions Böhm's work within a genealogy of modernist montage, which he re-reads and articulates under the heading "It's Actually an Ethic."

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Alte Böden – Neue Standbeine Wapke Feenstra/ Myvillages (2019)
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Brown at Work (2016)
Brown at Work was commissioned by Croome Redefined for the National Trust, to revisit Lancelot Capability Brown's landscape design at Croome, dating from the mid-1750s. The project played with the ability to move soil in large quantities by having access to sufficient finance and being able to proclaim influence and simply using piles of soil and shuffling them around.

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Colour Fields (since 1997)

Colour Fields is a series of installations in everyday places in various German cities, including the Central Station in Nürnberg, a flea market at the Mainufer in Frankfurt, Schloss Faber Castell, the Zoo Nuremberg, and the Library of the Museum of Modern Art (MMK) Frankfurt.

Compost (2021)

“Compost” was a collaborative exhibition between Kathrin and The Showroom, London, which explored 25+ years of Kathrin's practice. In phase 1, “Turning the Heap” (June and July 2021), an accumulation of objects and methodologies filled the gallery space, initiating a process of sifting through, using the methods of the practice, namely working 1:1, in public, and toward use. In phase 2, “For Future Use” (September and October 2021) first findings were articulated and organized across the gallery, ready for takeaway and future use. The materiality of “Compost” dissolved by offering the content of the exhibition to be taken away for use elsewhere, be it as art or everyday object.

Curtains (since 1989)

As part of Kathrin's ongoing DIY furniture work, painted curtains are inserted in exhibitions and public spaces, introducing color and different uses for the context they are situated in, like at Sali Gia Gallery in south London in 1998.

Digesting Politics Keep it Complex – Make it Clear (2017–19), 214–15

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DIY Regeneration Public Works (2009)

The *Folk Float* from Egremont traveled to London's King's Cross area, at the time one of the largest inner-city developments in Europe, driven by top-down politics. The float became a collection and a publishing and meeting space for the ideas, suggestions, and politics of activist residents, workers, and commuters passing through the area.

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I Am a Shop (2013)

I Am a Shop was a series of workshops and public trading moments with a group of students from PiP (Pursuing Independent Paths), an organization providing training and support for adults with learning disabilities. *I Am a Shop* played with ways in which things made by PiP students could be presented and traded, ranging from vending machines to market stalls, honesty shops to wearable trading outfits. On the invitation of Emily Pethick, then Director of The Showroom, supported and co-produced by Louise Shelley.

International Clay Workshop (since 2010)

The International Clay/Tinned Workshop was part of thinking and making new *Höfer Waren*.

International Schnaps Bar Myvillages (since 2012)

The *International Schnaps Bar* is a collection of home-made spirits from various Myvillages projects and collaborations. The bar can pop up anywhere, no design or special display structures are required.

Ittinger Ei International Village Shop, Myvillages (2015)

Ittinger Ei is a collective village product developed with team members from the Kartause Ittingen, an old Carthusian monastery, which is now run as a civic foundation. The new product is functionless on purpose and reflects the very tactile but mysterious character of the place. The shape is based on that of a hop fire from the local harvest and carries open kiln-fired clay secrets from 113 members. Commissioned by Kunstmuseum Thurgau, where it is now part of its permanent collection.

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Jubilat (1997)

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Farmers and Ranchers is a portrait of teenagers from two typical rural clichés: cowboy-land Colorado in the United States and the Dutch dairy-farming province of Fryslân.

Frogbutterspoon (Höfer Waren) International Village Shop, Myvillages (2015)

The *Frogbutterspoon* is a butter spoon/knife/stamp made from porcelain, which refers to the frogs that gave the villagers their nickname. The *Frogbutterspoon* is the first collective product, and part of the *Höfer Waren* series initiated by Kathrin in her home village. New products result from conversations about traditions, knowledge, desires, means of production, and value.

Future Gallery Public Works (2006–07)

Future Gallery was a foldable and modular display structure and pop-up drawing room that traveled to thirteen Siemens sites across the UK to collect ideas and visions for the future of the company. The informal collection of hundreds of drawings collected showed a sharp contrast with the company's singular corporate identity. A publication offers ten different selections and interpretations of the drawings. Commissioned by Siemens Arts Programme and Siemens Communications UK.

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hello.clk..bzz..whrr.. Nice To Meet You (1999)

“hello.clk..bzz..whrr.. Nice To Meet You” was a group show co-curated with Gavin Wade at Kunstbunker – forum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Nürnberg.

Herland (since 2016)

Herland is an ongoing conversation between Grace Ndiritu and Kathrin about lived utopias, resulting in visual sketches.

Höfer Waren Myvillages (since 2006)

Höfer Waren started in 2006, together with women from Kathrin's home village Höfen. Since then, a series of goods has been developed around selected local materials and stories, including the *Frogbutterspoon* and *Höfer Spitze* (lace). The new goods are launched and traded at the annual village fete, alongside other produce and exhibits from the village. The goods enter the International Village Shop network.

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*International Clay Workshop** (since 2010), 81

Kassel's Rural Undercurrents Myvillages (2022)

Who holds land-based knowledge in a city and where does it become visible? Who are the women who run lasting economies? How can we share without talking? The Rural School of Economics addressed, dug up, and visualized the collective findings to those questions over a period of eighteen months in and around Kassel in the lead-up to and during documenta 15 in Kassel, which took place in summer 2022. The film *Kassel's Rural Undercurrents* is a summary and documentation of Myvillages' project, linking to the *lumbung* approach applied by documenta curators ruangrupa, offering a glimpse into activities at the Ruruhaus, the Hübner Areal, and the Hafenstrasse sites, as well as the many collaborations embedded.

Kunst Station Public Works (2010–12)

Kunst Station Triemli was realized in the context of a so-called "Kunst am Bau" (Art in Construction) program, with a range of art commissions across a hospital site in Zurich, Switzerland. See <https://kunststationtriemli.ch>.

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Made by Many Keep it Complex – Make it Clear (2019) "Poster Talk" during the "Never Again – Internationalism after the End of Fascism" conference at the Museum of Modern Art Warsaw, during which we circulated slogans and badges, including the *Made by Many* tape.

Myvillages (since 2003)

Myvillages is an international artist initiative, founded in 2003 by Kathrin Böhm (D/UK), Wapke Feenstra (NL), and Antje Schiffrers (D), to advocate for a new understanding of the rural as a place of and for cultural production. Myvillages' work addresses the relationship between the rural and the urban, looking at different forms of production, preconceptions, and power relationships, while passionately questioning the cultural hegemony of the urban. See <https://www.myvillages.org/>.

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Picnics (1999)

Together with Stefan Saffer, Kathrin undertook a six-week residency at Camden Art Centre in northwest London, during which they presented changing installations in gallery 3 and the garden, with event flyers designed by Nicoline van Harskamp.

Public Works (since 1999)

Public Works is a London-based art and architecture practice, working within and toward public space. Public works projects address the question how the public realm is shaped by its various users, and how to support, expand, and secure common space for communal and collective use. Kathrin was a founding member alongside Andreas Lang, Stefan Saffer, Torange Khonsari, and Sandra Denicke-Polcher, and was closely involved from 1999 until 2012. See <https://www.publicworksgroup.net/>.

Redrawing the Economy (2017–19), 131, 132, 133–35, 134–35, 166

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*Rural School of Economics** (since 2019), 93, 100, 212, 223, 226–27, 236–37

Rhyzom (2008–10)

Rhyzom was a collective pan-European research and dissemination project. Activities spanned fieldtrips, workshops, and publications, which all addressed and investigated forms of local cultural production and their trans-local distribution of live projects and case studies.

Rural School of Economics Myvillages (since 2019)

The Rural School of Economics is de-centralized, self-organized, multi-lingual, and nomadic. It exists as an international network of geographically distant rural communities, and between rural communities and their local cultural organizations. Knowledge exchange is led by non-linguistic sharing and learning-by-doing. It is trans-disciplinary and inter-generational with a focus on (re)drawing the way we see and use our environments. Classes happen close to where rural economics are practiced, in small workshops, kitchens, on fields, in the street, and village halls. The pedagogy highlights learning as commoning, and focuses on mutual knowledge exchange, with the roles of teachers and learners being interchangeable. See <https://www.ruralschoolofeconomics.info/p/what/>.

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Set (1995–98)

"Set" was a series of spontaneous and curated exhibitions outside and inside gallery spaces. "Set" was initiated and run by Kathrin, Stefan Saffer, Albert Weiss, Albrecht Schäfer, and Julia Mangold. Regular contributors included Manuel Franke and Leni Hofmann.

Setting the Table: Village Politics Myvillages (2019)

"Setting the Table: Village Politics," which took place at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, included a range of objects, products and films created with villages around the world, in Russia, China, Ghana, Germany, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United States. In times of deep social and political fracture, the exhibition reframed the countryside as an active space of cultural production, challenging preconceptions about the meaning of "rural" today, toward a new political imagination and a culture of radical solidarity and care.

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Thinking Things in the Making (since 2018)

Thinking Things in the Making is a series of commentary posters based on a selection of titles from the PUBLICS library, Helsinki, which is dedicated to curatorial thinking around art's relationship with publicness. The series continues to expand and grow as an interpretation of the glue between discourse and action.

This Is No Longer That Place (2019)

Keep it Complex – Make it Clear Taped Talk during "This is No Longer That Place: A Public Discussion," which took place at The Showroom, March 2019, as part of the European Cooperation project "4Cs: From Conflict to Conviviality through Creativity and Culture," co-curated by Michaela Crimmin.

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*Village Convention** (2005), 65

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Vasen mit Nasen (2004)

A series of ceramic vases, imagining the people you don't want to deal with in your home village/the place where you grew up.

Village Convention Myvillages (2005)

The "Village Convention" at the Ditchling Museum, in East Sussex, south England, was organized by Myvillages and General Public Agency, and took place over two days. The Convention was split into a presentation and workshop-based part, with invited practitioners from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Austria and Denmark, and a public event.

Vorratskammer/ Pantry Myvillages (2010–11)

The *Limowolke* was one of many collaborative ways to fill and furnish a public pantry for the Über Lebenskunst Festival, organized by Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin in 2011. Myvillages worked with more than 80 Berlin-based food growers and makers to fill a pantry that would feed the 8,000 visitors of the festival. In August 2011 everything that had been collected and prepared since 2010 entered one large physical pantry. The *Limowolke* was a co-production between Kathrin and Baupiloten and Montessori Gemeinschaftsschule Berlin, and contained the summer drink designed by students from Berlin and visiting exchange students from Windhoek, South Africa.

*When Decisions Become Art** (2019), 8, 58–59, 197, 199

*WMK Mobil** (2002), 108

When Decisions Become Art (2019)

Expanding operational question of "how to organize" to a political one, "When Decisions Become Art" was a call to (re-)consider the desired relationship between art and society. The project manifested as a loosely collective and self-organized public program, operating through a mixture of discursive, practical, social, and propositional formats, including presentations, seminars, the mapping of local and international initiatives, cooking sessions, and DIY publishing. Kunstbunker – forum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Nürnberg – the result of 25 years of artist-led self-organization and co-founded by Kathrin – became a public space and open platform for the duration of the program.

WMK Mobil Public Works (2002)

Public Works' *Mobile Porch* was adapted as *WMK Mobil* for Kunstprojekte Riem, a six-year-long program of public art commissions for the new neighborhood of Messestadt Riem, Munich. The *WMK Mobil* traveled around public spaces to discuss the "Why?" of art, including Fire Station Riem.



I want to keep
the books

BE A
PLAY

replace the
word art with
freedom
to do things

DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE FOR PEOPLE

Open space

Support Structures

Contemporary Art

from Studio to Situation

AN EDGE EFFECT

Two Minds Artists and Architects in Collaboration

Folkstone Triennial

MUSEUM VAN NAGAEEL

Afterall

BRITISH ART SHOW 6

A Public Programme



Publications by / with Kathrin Böhm
Listed in reverse chronological order

Kathrin Böhm, Yolande Zola Zoli van der Heide, Gavin Wade, Mick Wilson, and Franciska Zólyon, "Exhibition as Pile," *PARSE Journal*, # 13, 2021, "On the Question of Exhibition," available at <https://parsejournal.com/article/exhibition-as-pile> (accessed February 2, 2023)

Centre for Plausible Economies (Kathrin Böhm and Kuba Szreder), *Icebergian Economies of Contemporary Art*, Pyrammida, 2020, available at <https://www.pyrammida.life/cpe> (accessed February 2, 2023)

Myvillages (Kathrin Böhm and Wapke Feenstra), eds., *The Rural* (London: Whitechapel Gallery/MIT Press, 2019) -

Mansions of the Future, *Culture is a Verb* (Lincoln: Mansions of the Future, 2018) ø

Kathrin Böhm, Doina Petrescu, and Tom James, eds., *Learn to Act: Introducing the Eco Nomadic School* (Paris: aaa-peprav, 2017) -

Kathrin Böhm, Wapke Feenstra, and Antje Schiffrers, eds., *International Village Show* (Berlin: Jovis, 2016)

Kathrin Böhm, *Trade as Public Realm* (Copenhagen: Trade Test Site/Half Letter Press, 2016)

Kathrin Böhm and Miranda Pope, eds., *Company: Movements, Deals and Drinks* (Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2015) +

Kathrin Böhm and Melanie Mues, *I Am a Shop*, sketch book produced as part of Communal Knowledge, Pursuing Independent Paths (London: The Showroom, 2013) ø

Myvillages, eds., *Vorratskammer/Pantry* (Berlin/Heijningen: argobooks/Jap Sam Books, 2012)

Public Works, *works we like to show, questions we ask ourselves* (London: Public Works, 2012)

Kathrin Böhm, *Who is building what: relational art practice and spatial production* (Wolverhampton: University of Wolverhampton CADRE publications, 2009) *

Public Works, *DIY Regeneration* (London: Camden Art Centre, 2009) *

Public Works, *Future Gallery* (London: Public Works and Siemens AG, 2007) *

Public Works, *If you can't find us give us a ring* (Leamington Spa: ARTicle Press, 2006) *

Public Works, *Park Products* (London: Serpentine Gallery, 2004) *

Kathrin Böhm and Stefan Saffer, *business to business* (Munich: Mannesmann Pilotentwicklung, 1999)

Kathrin Böhm and Leni Hoffmann, *Nahverkehr* (Nürnberg: Kobra Verlag, 1996)

Kathrin Böhm, Susanne Bosch, Elke Haarer, Matthias Klos, and Christina Oberbauer, *Jelängerjeliher* (Nürnberg: Kunstbunker – forum für zeitgenössische Kunst, 1995)

Publications marked with
+ available at <http://communityeconomies.org>
ø available at <https://issuu.com/kathrinbohm>
- available at <https://ruralschoolofeconomics>
* available at <https://compost.kathrinbohm.info>

Publications by Others

Sarah Jury, "Kathrin Böhm: Compost – Turning the Heap," *Art Monthly*, no. 450, October 2021: 30

Irene Aristizábal and Hammad Nasar, eds., *British Art Show 09* (London: Hayward Publishing, 2021)

Phaidon editors, *The Kitchen Studio: Culinary Creations of Artists* (London: Phaidon Press, 2021)

Grace Ndiritu, *Dissent Without Modification* (Bergen: Bergen Kunsthall, 2021)

Can Altay, ed., *Arteconomie*, Ahali Podcast Series 13, Istanbul (2021)

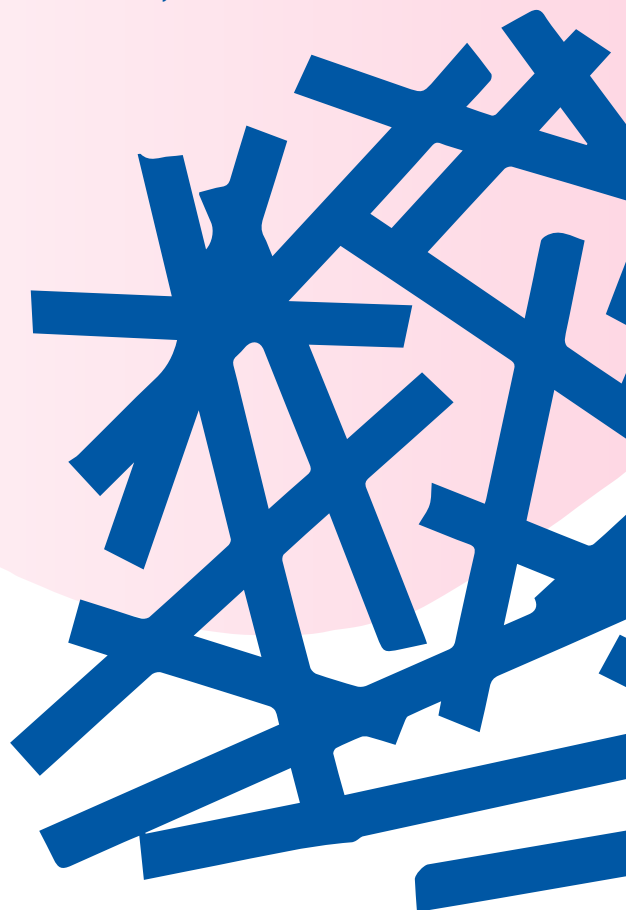
Maja and Reuben Fowkes, "Monoculture and the Polyrrural, interview with Kathrin Böhm," in *Eastern Sugar*, ed. Ilona Németh (London: Sternberg Press, 2021): 154–59

Jakob Kibala, "Wir versuchen das Gegensatzdenken aufzuheben – Interview mit Kathrin Böhm," in *Progressive Provinz—Die Zukunft des Landes* (Frankfurt: Zukunftsinstitut, 2021): 110–16

Kerry Campbell, ed., *Mansions of the Future: A Public Programme* (London: Chateau International, 2020)

This book critically profiles, contextualizes, and theoretically elaborates the work of artist Kathrin Böhm, offering an overview of her exceptional practice, which is rooted in a highly original artistic synthesis of a range of concerns and approaches. Since the late 1990s, the artist has expanded the terms of socially engaged ways of working to an unprecedented scale and breadth by producing innovative organizational, spatial, visual, and economic forms, which often entail the production of complex infrastructures.

Offering a significant addition to debates on contemporary art and architecture, social action, and public culture, this artist book-cum-reader-cum-catalogue brings together critical essays across five sections—Exhibiting, Spaces, Economies, Cohabitations, and Compos(i)ting. Alongside Böhm's own reflections, contributors include Dave Beech, Céline Condorelli, Elvira Dyangani Ose, Wapke Feenstra, Katherine Gibson, Joon-Lynn Goh, Lily Hall, Grace Ndiritu, Doina Petrescu, Gregory Sholette and THEMM!!, Kuba Szreder, and Stephen Wright. Texts and image sections are framed and complemented by texts by co-editors Gerrie van Noord, Paul O'Neill, and Mick Wilson. The book is designed by An Endless Supply.



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