PRESS RELEASE

Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana, kindly invites you to:

Heath Bunting
Identity Bureau
The Status Project
www.aksioma.org/identity_bureau

Aksioma | Project Space
Komenskega 18, Ljubljana
7 – 24 February 2012

Artist’s presentation and exhibition opening: Tuesday, 7 February 2012 at 7 PM

Heath Bunting, one of the leading early net.artists, will open his *Identity Bureau*, which will be intended for selling custom-made natural persons. The bureau undermines the established ways of climbing the social ladder and offers a substitute system for the hegemony of the one, only and "official" identity determined by the state. Bunting established the bureau after realising that in the UK it is legal to have several identities. The bureau sells new, official and legal identities that common people can afford similarly to earning points at supermarkets. The identity comprises more or less tangible evidence, such as phone numbers, official letters, bills, library cards and, of course, presence on the Internet, where one receives a network of people, organisations and institutions already connected with him or her. The new identity also enables one to get a bank account and primary health care.

The exhibition will display a large number of maps showing relationships between social positions. The artist explored the influence of administrative systems on mobility and quality of living of individuals. According to Bunting identity is a construct. Depending on the social class, a human being can have one or more natural person identities and can control one or more artificial persons (corporations). Lower class people possess only one severely reduced natural person and no control of an artificial person. Middle class people possess one natural person and sometimes control one artificial person. Upper class people can afford multiple natural persons and control numerous artificial persons.

*Identity Bureau* is part of the *Status Project*, developed by the artist between 2004 and 2008. It deals with the construction of our "official identities", which are based on databases, and these influence our mobility in social space, on the Internet, in private and political life.

The day of the opening the artist will have a lecture about this and other previous projects of his.

**Heath Bunting** is a contemporary British artist born in 1966. Based in Bristol, he is the founder of the site *irational.org* and was one of the early practitioners of *Net.art* in the 1990s. Bunting’s work is based on creating open and democratic systems by modifying communications technologies and social systems. His work often explores the porosity of borders, both in physical space and online. In 1997, his online work *Visitors Guide to London* was included in the 10th documenta exhibition in Kassel. An activist, he created a dummy site for the *European Lab for Network Collision* (CERN) and works to maintain a list of pirate radio stations in London.
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