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## **Net.Condition: From The Network To The Coffee Table**

by Lina Dzuverovic

It's about time net-culture got its own coffee-table catalogue and Net\_Condition: Art and Global Media is as close as it gets. Edited by Peter Weibel and Timothy Druckery, the 400 page fully illustrated glossy publication documents an exhibition lasting two years which took place across global media networks as well as physical exhibition spaces in Barcelona, Graz, Karlsruhe, and Tokyo.

Claiming that the supporting cultural institutions (ZKM, Mecad, ICC Tokyo) served merely as physical bases for extending the artistic activities into the immaterial global information space Net Condition aimed to reach beyond traditional exhibition formats by holding an expanded exhibition across print, electronic media, television and the Net. As is often the case with initiatives cast across such a broad range of activities, real and virtual, it was the physical manifestations that became the most visible and memorable elements of the project. Two years on, the catalogue serves as a testament to the difficulties intrinsic to the curation and documentation of distributed and process-based practice.

The catalogue profiles a practice which arises from networked and collaborative methods while at the same time examining the economic, political, social and artistic 'conditions' instrumental to the development of net culture. The catalogue is structured into social, media, ideological, critical, community, artistic and other 'conditions', a reference to the 'conditions' used in programming languages. As the very nature of networked media prevents clear divisions, this structure is problematic. All of the contributions could just as easily fit into another chapter. However, Net Condition succeeds in offering a comprehensive overview of a moment in the global independent media landscape. With contributions from over a hundred artists, activists, scholars and theorists including Jodi, Olia Lialina, Vuk Cosic, **Etoy**, Alexej Shulgin, Critical Art Ensemble, Manuel Castells and introductions into networks including Syndicate, Xchange, Nettime, Backspace and Rhizome as well URLs for all the work profiled, the catalogue serves as a thorough and useful reference, a 'way in' to existing global media networks and the golden period of net.art.

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