

Social Sculpture

Working on the Social Organism's freedom configuration

For many years, Media Foundation, based in Stuttgart, has been working on a wide variety of tasks related to social, economic and ecological renewal. It seeks to achieve these ends also through close co-operation with its sister organisation "FCE Foundation for Culture and Ecology", based in Mediaş, Romania. Both Foundations promote civic initiatives and long-term projects at home and abroad.



Rose brick used in Media Foundations warmth block actions. – © Foto: Archive Stiftung Media

Both Foundations, Media and FCE, are closely connected with the work of the artist Joseph Beuys and are keen to apply the concept of "Social Sculpture", which was developed in the seventies by Joseph Beuys as a way of shaping social reality and which he put into practice in many of his "actions".

Social Sculpture in this context is primarily a method of throwing out old habits of thought, especially regarding the description of social realities, and finding more appropriate terms to describe the situation. The process of social transformation begins in the mind of each individual. This is the vital source of freedom and creativity. The challenge we face is to discover this true source of human freedom within human thinking itself, and there to experience the motive of our own action as self-determined and free, instead of determined by others and unfree. Once this starting point of potential human freedom and creativity has been discovered, it becomes possible to realise Joseph Beuys's vision and become a creative force for the shaping of the future of our society. As Beuys himself put it: "Everyone is an artist!"

Social Sculpture can, in this sense, be understood as a method of enabling and encouraging people to become active participants in the awesome task of developing and transforming social reality. Social Sculpture thus relates to necessary processes of transformation, achieved by reshaping the great living

sculpture of modern societies. These sculptural processes are founded entirely on the creative and transforming power of human beings, and have as their goal to empower every individual to make a difference to his or her cultural, social, legal and economic future.

What is envisaged is to overcome all forms of alienation and to replace them with autonomy, self-determination and grass-roots organisation in every sphere of life and to integrate all those involved in and affected by these processes to the maximum extent.

To this end, Social Sculpture means the task of developing and strengthening the confidence that social realities can be changed, because every social system is unique and has been created by humans, and can therefore be changed by humans as well.