

Flag Metamorphoses

**A participatory / collaborative art project - a continuously growing animation with many authors:
The flags of every nation in the world transform into each other in a flash animation.**

A flag may blow in the wind but its appearance is long-established and changes far less frequently than does the land which it represents. Using digital media however, we can make the symbols dance. - This work is an exploration of the meaning of visual signs: a questioning, a reassessment where necessary, a breaking down, "destabilisation" and a creation of new associations. I believe that in order to successfully undermine entrenched representations it is necessary to work directly with them, to develop them further and juxtapose them against new representations.

Basis for the visual realisation of the flag transformations: The symbols displayed on the flags and their meanings and the relationships between countries - historical, cultural, political, religious, economic.



Research

Although the symbols on flags are related to the real history of a country, they often more clearly express specific claims or aspirations – such as strength, independence, beauty or the greatness of the country and its achievements. This makes working with the symbols more complicated, but at the same time elevates the issues under consideration onto a more abstract, philosophical and cultural/historical plane.

The Myths "hidden" in the flags can be revealed through research and be productively employed in the animation. We will also examine relationships between the countries: neighbouring countries, colonial relationships, cultural influences etc.

Artistic realisation

Whereas most flags have predominantly simple geometric forms such as stripes, circles, stars, moons, triangles and crosses, in the transformation phase irregular, amorphous, organic and symbolic shapes can emerge (and disappear again). The aim is therefore not only to transform and disrupt the visual composition but also to add shapes and figures to it which express some connection to the country of the next flag.

The transition between two flags can vary greatly, depending on which aspect of the relationship between the two countries the authors choose to accentuate. This is then in effect a never-ending project: every flag could be transformed into every other flag, in both directions and in many different ways.

Call for Participation: Realization with many authors!

Based on this concept, I would like to invite any interested parties from as many countries as possible to develop and design a scene for the animation: the transformation from one flag into another.

If you are interested, please send me an email to myriam@thyes.com saying which flags you would like to animate. I will provide you with the desired flags as Freehand files.

The co-authors will research the connections between their two chosen countries and independently realise the animation in Flash and send me their Flash scene as project (.fla).

Technical requirements: Pure graphical flash image, no text or video.

Duration: around 30 sec. Format: 768 x 576 pixel, 14 frames per second, black background.

OR: If you prefer, just send me a storyboard (drawings with description), and I'll realize your scene in Flash.

I am creating scenes myself as well, and I collect all the scenes, publish them in the website and will combine them later into a large animation resulting in a long Flash film (.swf). Critical statements are welcome, but discriminatory content will not be accepted.



Public presentation

The single scenes are presented in the internet - the series will grow continuously with the addition of new scenes. In the website all co-authors are named with the place they live (with synopsis of their scene) - and with links to their websites.

Each author keeps the copyright and intellectual property right for her/his own animations, but has to name Myriam Thyes as author of the concept.

This extensive animation is a longer term project and will be shown in festivals and exhibitions. Before each presentation, all participating artists / all contributing authors will be informed and they'll be named in the presentation.

Flag Metamorphoses is an uncommercial public art project. If it should ever get payed a presentation salary, or if the animation should ever be sold, the money would be distributed equally between all authors, corresponding to the amount of scenes they have contributed.

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www.thyes.com/flag-metamorphoses