

Contexterlin

Contexterlin is a neologism first announced over a friendly beer talk in Berlin in the summer 2009 by several cultural workers (artists, curators, cultural managers) while discussing the various job titles they use when they have to describe their work. Since the job titles in the independent cultural field is under a constant development by re-defining the already existing ones and developing new ones, this term was seen as a proposal that can be used sometimes as an 'umbrella-term' to describe the wide range of actions that these workers do. This talk was followed by it's first actual use of the word in the real-time event, when it was put into circulation by the artist I Wei Li, a visual artist currently based in Europe.

(Elena Veljanovska)

Artist Statement, I Wei Li / My definition/understanding of Contexterlin:

Contexterlin = context + er + in

I-Wei positions herself as a 'contexterlin' – a female person who aims to generate new context each time in her art practice. The artistic experience for her is an overall experience that queries all aspects of life.

- ~ As a curator, she seeks to highlight the approaches, viewpoints, and visions of contemporary artists.
- ~ As a producer, she animates events where intellectuals and artists are invited to share their critical reflections on current social changes.
- ~ As an artist, she commits herself to experimental and documentary films, multi-media installations, and interactive performances.

Contexterlin TABAK 1/a
Contexterlin TABAK 1/b

Why I use Contexterlin?

Since I have many different roles when it comes to creative practices, labeling myself as a curator, producer, or artist is rather limiting because these titles describes more about what I produce rather than why I create.

I first used Contexterlin in public when I was invited to give presentation in various workshop during Festival d'Avignon in 2009. The audience was a group of international cultural operators - curators, policy makers, directors of festivals and cultural institutions. I introduced myself as 'contexterlin' and wrote the composition (Contexterlin = context + er + in) on the white board for everyone to see. The writing is as significant as talking about it because it allows people with different cultural background to associate the word visually. Many of them can relate to this word with their own work.

When I talked about it, I prefer to provoke people by this job title as a way to question:

- ~ Why we do what we do?
- ~ Why we create?
- ~ Why we produce?

Later, some participants quoted my introduction or put my photo with the title 'contexterlin' on their websites.

I still use contexterlin, for this year's "Transmediale 10" festival and on my own website. For me, this word enables me to claim the value of my work.

