The Oil Show
12 November 2011–19 February 2012
Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV) at Dortmunder U
Dortmund, Germany

With works by:
Ursula Biemann (CH)
Christian von Borries (DE)
Mark Boulos (US/NL)
Heath Bunting (UK)
Bureau d’Etudes (FR)
The Center for Land Use Interpretation (US)
Chto Delat? (RU)
Carl Michael von Hausswolff &
Thomas Nordanstad (SE)
Werner Herzog (DE)
Mark Lombardi (US)
Michael Mandiberg (US)
George Osodi (NG)
Natascha Sadr Haghighian (IR/DE)
UBERMORGEN.COM (AT/CH)
and others

Curated by: Dr. Inke Arns

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In The Oil Show the HMKV has gathered 15 contemporary artists whose work addresses the geopolitical, social and ecological consequences of our dependence on crude oil. Their attention focuses on regions such as the Niger Delta, whose natural resources have been ruthlessly exploited for several decades—a fact which is hardly ever discussed publicly in the developed countries. Straddling art and scientific research, the interdisciplinary approach that characterizes their work aims to raise the public’s awareness of the increasingly complexity of global economic interests.

The installations, videos, photographs, murals, computer games and films in this exhibition evidence that Western societies are going to great lengths to conceal the inconvenient facts on which their centuries-old hegemony is founded, aiming to strengthen our complacent belief in an unrestricted, consumer-driven market economy—fuelled by non renewable fossil resources—as an everlasting, self-stabilizing model of growth. But appearances are deceptive, as recent research suggests that the maximum rate of global petroleum extraction, which scientists refer to as ‘Peak
Oil’, was reached around 2006. Despite the conspicuous optimism put on by the PR departments of billion-dollar global oil companies in light of promising oil reserves (for instance in the Arctic), it is an undisputed fact that the global community urgently needs to address the growing problems caused by rising demands for energy and natural resources on the one hand and the decline of available fossil resources on the other hand. With great artistic sensibility, the works in *The Oil Show* ask questions which are largely shunned by the dominant Western media.