



DOCUMENTATION **EVA BORNER**

info@evaborner.ch | www.evaborner.ch

Eva Borner

Eva Borner pays attention where others turn away: respectful photography of the sleeping places of the homeless in Athens, tactful conversations with displaced, vulnerable and homeless people throughout Europe or compassionate films addressing the enforced resettlement of local residents in Shanghai are the starting point for her subtle consolidations of human fates. Through poetic or narrative means, her works kindle memories and associations in the viewer. In impressive video, sound and object installations Eva Borner gives the «voiceless» a voice, with the physical absence of the protagonists being a characteristic element of her work. Voyeurism is far from the artist's intention; instead, her cautious productions aim to give us an understanding of the difficult and often grueling reality of those affected.

Invisible People

Art installation with photographs, 2016

Eva Borner photographed sleeping quarters of the homeless in Athens. The sleeping person himself or herself is absent. We look into an intimate interior in a public space. As so often in her work, the motif is the presence of the absentee. In places where we usually do not dare to look, the photographs bluntly depict the belongings of an anonymous inhabitant and prompt us to think about who these items belong to.

Eva Borners research is grounded on the statements of Schedia, street paper (Athens) as well as tours of the city she was led on by the homeless in order to glean an alternative view of existing social realities. Most of the photos were taken with the permission of the respective inhabitant.

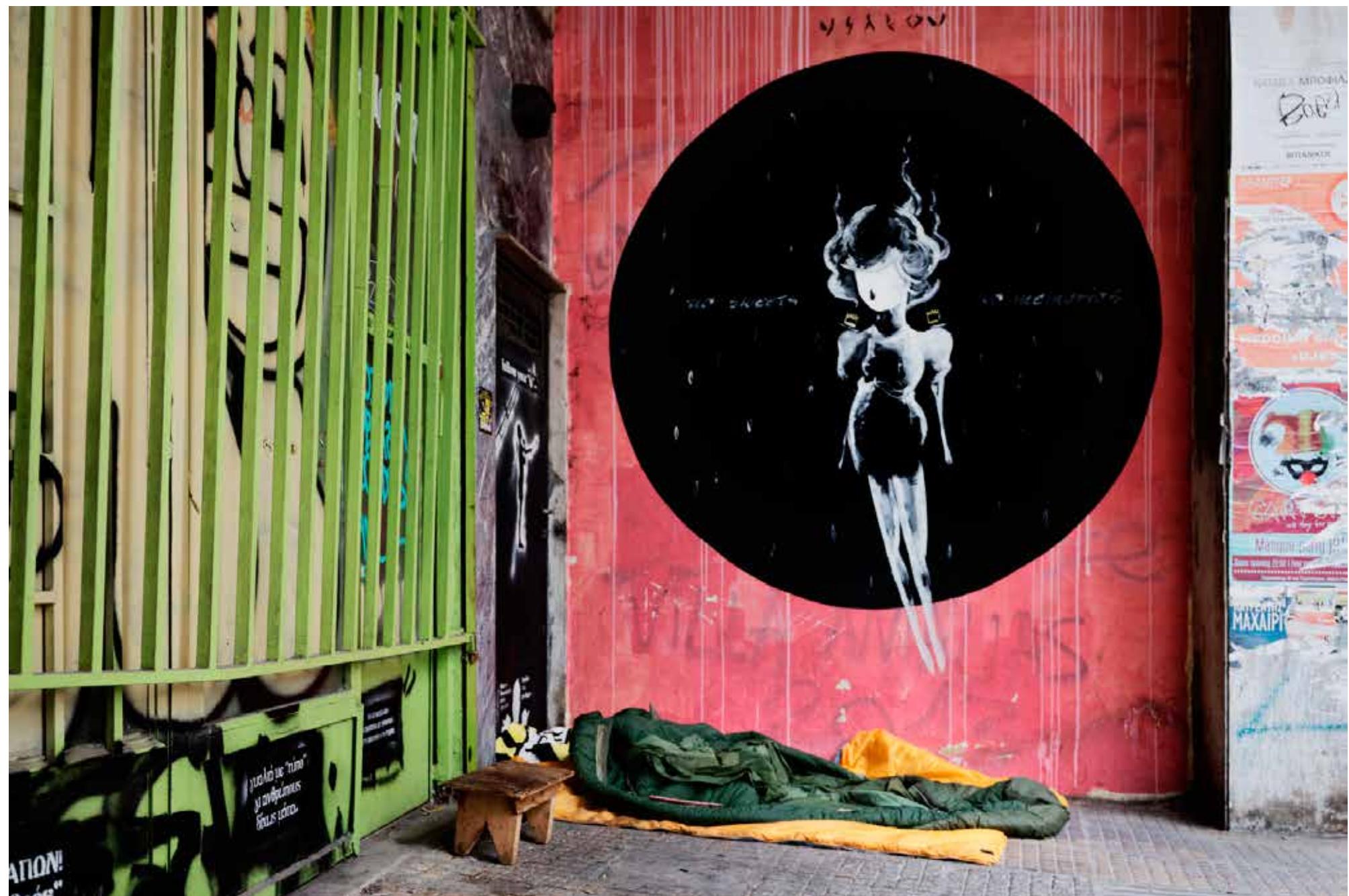
In this way, we partake from a distance and let ourselves be touched, whilst in everyday life we would usually rush past and ignore these people and places.

Note: part of the concept is to send the proceeds of the pieces sold directly to the inhabitant of the photographed sleeping quarters.

Forms of presentation:

As art installation: printed as poster, plastered directly on the wall, dimensions: 120 x 80 cm
or as photograph / fineartprint (pigment print on Hahnemühle, on aluminium), dimensions: 120 x 80 cm











Installation view, *frac, Ré flexions, autour des nouvelles acquisitions*, Sélestat (F)



Installation view; Werkschau, Spinnerei, Leipzig, Germany



Installation view; der Raum, Soloshow, Berlin, Germany



Installation view; der Raum, Soloshow, Berlin, Germany

Presence through Absence: The series Invisible People (2016) by Eva Borner

A portrait of a beautiful young woman in perfect light, black and white photography. The radiant rainbow colours of a graffiti. If there was not the disturbing surrounding, you'd imagine a private, spartan bedroom: A mattress on pallets. A curtain. Very few personal items as a pillow and a small, self-made "table". Someone sprayed "Athens is the new Berlin" at the wall. Not only the graffiti and the portrait, another picture-in-the-picture appears: A religious ikon, surrounded by a golden aureola. Two doormats remind of a former flat and the will to keep up some form of normality.

As a volunteer for helping newly arrived refugees in Athens, Swiss artist Eva Borner came to Athens in the year 2016. Then, very quickly, something else caught her attention: She became aware of the many homeless people in the Greek capital. In the current economic situation since 2008, if people loose their job, they have around three months to find a new one. Otherwise, they often very quickly loose their apartment, too. They become homeless. From there, it's nearly impossible, to find a way back. They become outcasts. And there are a lot. Everywhere Borner saw sceneries of personal tragedy and loss. Borner got in touch with the street paper "Schedia" and received her informations from them. Additionally, a homeless news vendor guided her through "his" Athens. So, Borner received deep impressions from their daily life on the streets.

In contemporary and modern art, many artists dealt with the subject of waifs. Duane Hanson, for example, adopted in his artworks Bowery Derelicts (1969) or Homeless Person (1991) the complete opposite path by placing the individual, body and face, in the very centre. On the other side, German figurative painter Tim Eitel took unnoticed photos from street persons in Los Angeles and then painted these people afterwards in his studio.

Borner's photographs are special and unique mainly by two characteristics: Firstly, she never pictures the protagonist or victim. The defined programmatic presence through absence gives even more suggestive power to the images. Through this step, Borner empowers the viewer – to imagine, how the person living in this environment may look. Or, how it feels, to live in such circumstances. Or, how it would be to live like this. All the parts of Borner's series Invisible People produce empathy through the viewers gaze. Secondly, Borner always asks the inhabitants for permission. This profoundly ethical attitude leads even so far, that she does not want to personally profit from income through sales of these pictures. Therefore, she gives the revenue back to the individual depicted derelict. And the belief in human, ethical values in a neoconservative society. And self-confidence. And energy.

On disappearing

Installation with soap

After having worked as a volunteer in a refugee camp, Eva Borner wanted to express her experiences and thoughts by means of an artistic piece, in order to raise public awareness for the global refugee crisis.

The central theme of my work is the presence of the absent. So too in the work "On disappearing" 2016, which emerged out of the reflection on recently occurring events and which addresses loss – the process of suppressing and forgetting. She imprinted central passages from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights on olive oil soap from Greece. Combined with the materiality of the soap, tension on the level of content is thus created, raising manifold associations and questions. Who are they that wash their hands in innocence? At which price does Europe remain clean?





Installation view, Weaving Europe, Pafos2017, Cyprus, curated by Efi Kyprianidou



Installation view; Berlin, Germany, Solo Show



Installation view; parcours humain, Zürich, Switzerland



Installation view; Kunsthalle Wil, Switzerland

Greenish-shimmering hand-sized cuboids are precisely laid out in a geometric ground sculpture. The characteristic fragrance as well as close inspection allows us to identify the blocks as olive-oil soap. In their surfaces, Eva Horner has stamped key words: freedom, equality, fraternity. Terms that as slogans during the French Revolution of 1789 spoke of profound societal transformation and since 1948 are secured in Article 1 of the UN Human Rights Charter. On the soap pieces, the artist has captured the human rights that are disregarded most worldwide. Cross-references to «washing one's hands of something» or «one hand washes the other» are of course intended. The production is touching in its simplicity: order and play define the aesthetic expression. The quiet concision of the display emphasizes the solidity of the ethical principles and needs no further interpretation for clarity.

Ideal light box

Material: Light box with relay control (to make it flicker)

Printing on foil





For some time, the EU has no longer been ideal, having degenerated into a deal. Any ideals in EU refugee policy have likewise perished: between deal and ideal a flickering light box calls attention to a dilemma.

Wirklichkeiten - Realities

Installation Sound Sculpture
2018

«In collaboration with the sound designer Hans Peter Gutjahr, Eva Borner presents a walk-in «sound sculpture» in a «black box». The longings and wishes of the interviewees are presented to visitors of the installation via many small speakers hidden in calyx-like funnels composed of handmade cardboard.

In the mind's eye, each voice modulates into an individual with wishes; due to the immediacy of the auditory experience, personal thoughts on the current unstable political situation in and outside of Europe are set free and empathy for the individual fates is evoked. In her creative process – the weaving together of various voices and sounds – the artist falls back on a historical and long-standing tradition and craft as well as on the weaving of a political metaphor. The method of weaving and connecting into a soundscape creates a polyphonic symbol for global societal questions around the construction of citizenship, cultural identity and belonging. A communal, cosmopolitan and prospering Europe for people from various backgrounds proves to be a work in progress – an ever-changing entity, constantly redefined and continually shaped according to the current historical reality and carried by the visions and convictions of each individual.»

Text by Gabrielle Obrist and Claudia Reeb

Videolink:

<https://vimeo.com/339189539>

Eva Borner – Realities



«Realities» is what Eva Borner calls her multi-piece productions developed for the Kunsthalle and interprets the theoretical term, so often discussed and questioned in philosophy, in very concrete ways: as a current reality, a given condition, an inevitable fact, an unembellished truth both for the individual as well as, on a larger scale, for an alarming number of people today: worldwide, there are 70 million people on the run, more than the population of France. The UN High Commissioner for refugees, Filippo Grandi, makes the following appeal: «No matter which measure is applied, this number is unacceptable. Louder than ever before it speaks of the need for solidarity and for common goals in the prevention and resolution of crises. Together we have to guarantee adequate protection and care for refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers worldwide, while at the same time striving for solutions.»

«I want peace on earth – that's all»

Eva Borner does not want to ignore the brutalization of the world or human distress and has made it a matter of course to pay attention to existentially vulnerable persons as well as to those who have been displaced to the fringes of existence. For her, *«willingness to listen»* and *«taking time»* are the impulse and condition for interpersonal relationships. As a volunteer in a refugee camp in the Athens harbor, she gained insight into the difficult situation of the people there. At the same time, she observed the ever-increasing number of the homeless in Athens due to the economic crisis. Sensitized by this homelessness, she did extensive research on the topic and thereby recognized how little it takes for a human being to become homeless and to slip through the social net.

She asked refugees in Greece about their *«deepest wishes»*. The artist collected their personal, touching and shocking answers – not only at the shore of Europe. She later also spoke to the homeless, those without a house or a homeland, migrants and those in exile in the streets of Paris, in accommodations in Leipzig and in various Swiss cities.

These lengthy and intensive inquiries and conversations form the basis for the installation «Realities», shown for the first time in the Kunsthalle: with her production, the artist gives otherwise unheard people a voice.

«Peace! Neither politics nor religion nor money should rule the world»

In collaboration with the sound designer Hans Peter Gutjahr, Eva Borner presents a walk-in «sound sculpture» in a «black box». The longings and wishes of the interviewees are presented to visitors of the installation via many small speakers hidden in calyx-like funnels composed of handmade cardboard. In the mind's eye, each voice modulates into an individual with wishes; due to the immediacy of the auditory experience, personal thoughts on the current unstable political situation in and outside of Europe are set free and empathy for the individual fates is evoked. In her creative process – the weaving together of various voices and sounds – the artist falls back on a historical and long-standing tradition and craft

as well as on the weaving of a political metaphor. The method of weaving and connecting into a soundscape creates a polyphonic symbol for global societal questions around the construction of citizenship, cultural identity and belonging. A communal, cosmopolitan and prospering Europe for people from various backgrounds proves to be a work in progress – an ever-changing entity, constantly redefined and continually shaped according to the current historical reality and carried by the visions and convictions of each individual.

«I wish... I am very aware that I will never see my family, my father and my mother again. I wish I could see them again, even if it were only for one day, for a minute or two...»

Thoughts and reflections are also a central element of the installation up in the gallery. Embedded in a living-room scene, a bizarre dialogue unfolds between a man and a woman.

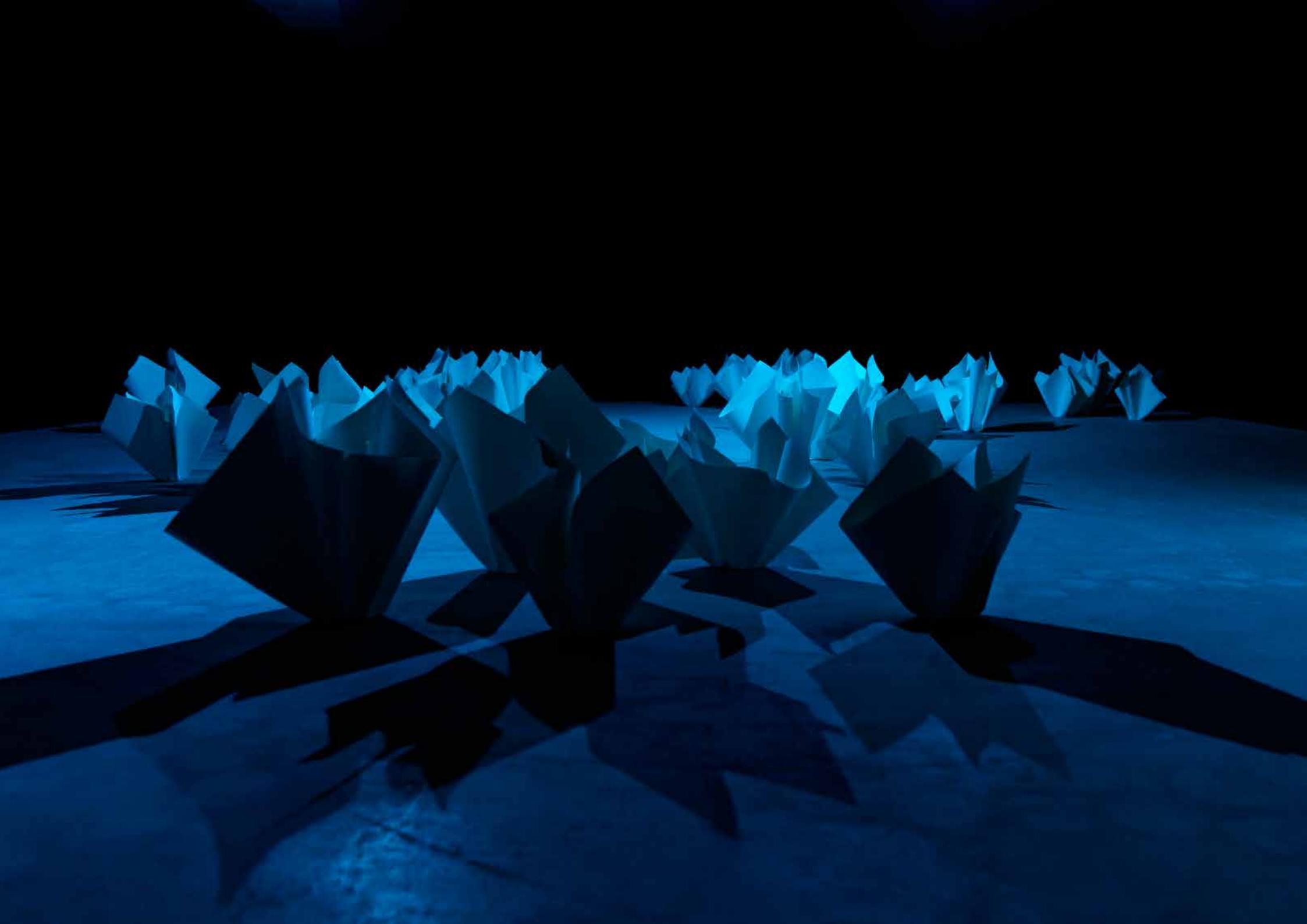
The voices of the protagonists in the chamber piece by author Dmitrij Gawrisch, which has been staged by Eva Borner and set to music by Hans Peter Gutjahr, are carried to us through headphones. As the plot develops, what at first seems like a trivial conversation in time blurs into a surreal exchange of phrases. For the onlooker, it soon becomes clear that the two are a couple that have all they want materially and in fact own everything they wish for. Yet in their relationship, like the heroes and heroines in the Greek tragedies, they are fatefully entangled with one another. There does not seem to be a way out, a catastrophe looms. The oppressive hermetic is optically supported by a film loop showing the endless ebb and flow of the waves at a lonely coast in Normandy. Though the ceaselessness of this natural phenomenon is enchantingly beautiful and has an almost meditative effect, the endlessly recurring and constant movements together with the diametrical dialogue become monotonously oppressive and hopeless. By the precise staging and production that includes image and sound, Eva Borner lets us perceive the couple, who are perhaps a symbol for aspects of

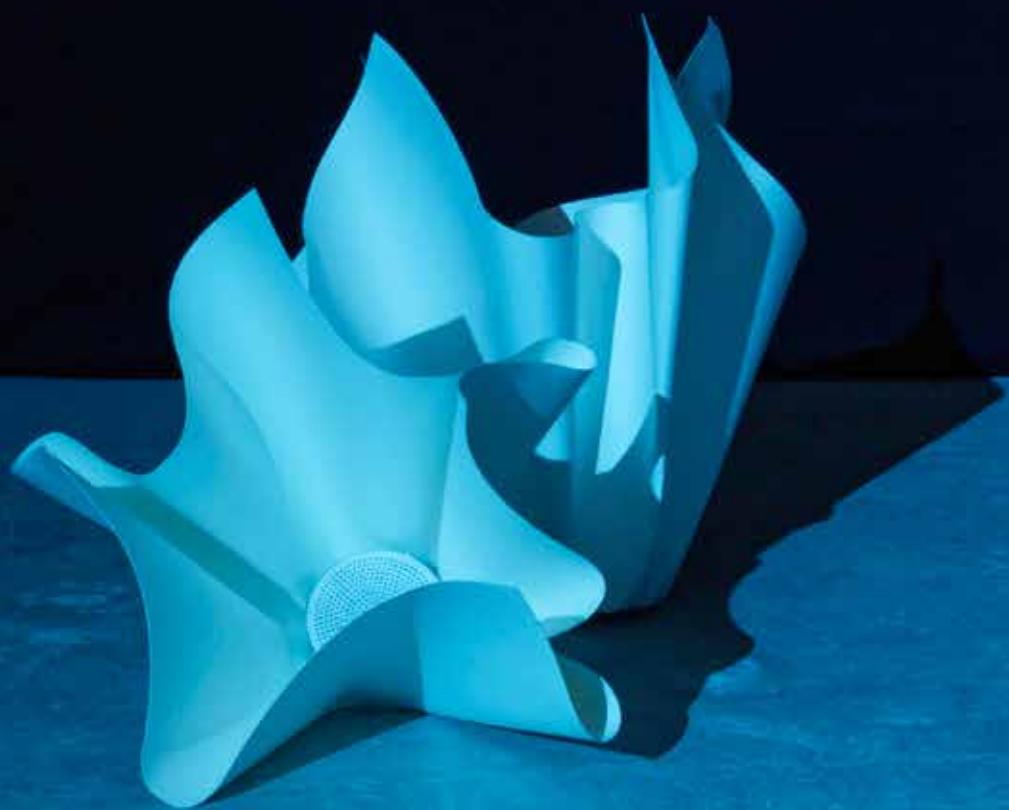
our western society that is lacking in vision, as ‹trapped in themselves› and ‹disoriented›.

In the back part of the gallery, greenish-shimmering hand-sized cuboids are precisely laid out in a geometric ground sculpture. The characteristic fragrance as well as close inspection allows us to identify the blocks as olive-oil soap. In their surfaces, Eva Borner has stamped key words: freedom, equality, fraternity. Terms that as slogans during the French Revolution of 1789 spoke of profound societal transformation and since 1948 are secured in Article 1 of the UN Human Rights Charter.

On the soap pieces, the artist has captured the human rights that are disregarded most worldwide. Cross-references to ‹washing one's hands of something› or ‹one hand washes the other› are of course intended. The production is touching in its simplicity: order and play define the aesthetic expression. The quiet concision of the display emphasizes the solidity of the ethical principles and needs no further interpretation for clarity.

Gabrielle Obrist and Claudia Reeb







Articel from newspapers:

Translation Press:

The homeless speak «through the flowers»: Migration in the Kunsthalle Wil

The Kunsthalle Wil has taken on the topic of refugees and migration and invited the Basel artist Eva Borner to show her work. The four pieces in the exhibition «Realities» are convincing in their subtle, poetic appeal: Do not look away!

Martin Preisser

For some time, the EU has no longer been ideal, having degenerated into a deal. Any ideals in EU refugee policy have likewise perished: between deal and ideal a light box in front of the Kunsthalle calls attention to a dilemma.

The artist Eva Borner from Basel, whose atelier is in a hayrick on the Hauenstein and who often also makes an international appearance, shows her work about refugees and the homeless in the space of the Kunsthalle, giving those who have lost everything a voice. She does this without intellectual distance and above all without any sense of voyeurism, but with empathy, respect, sensitivity and caution.



She not only knows the issue from hearsay. Time and again Eva Borner visited refugee camps in Greece, lent a hand and experienced the great hospitality of those who have lost everything. She also spoke to homeless people in Switzerland, those who have slipped through the social net.

«They gave me a wish»

The big room in the Kunsthalle is completely draped in black fabric. On the ground, calyxes made of handmade cardboard. In the darkness, only slightly illuminated by blue light, one is almost jolted time and again by the sound of a voice coming from one of the

flowers. «Migrants and displaced persons gave me their wishes», is how Eva Borner formulates it. These wishes form the creative starting point. The artist gives them a form and a frame in which they can be heard. They are now expressed «through the flowers» («durch die Blume»), a German saying meaning «dropping a hint».

There are fifteen sound sources in the space, arranged by the sound designer Hans Peter Gutjahr. He has united the various human voices (that time and again express the wish for peace) into a soundscape; a symbol for how we are all connected. «Everyone I met had a story to tell», says Eva Borner, who has managed to create a quiet, almost meditative, yet intense effect in her work.

With «Blackbox» she shakes us up gently without being blatant or engaging in sensationalism. Despite the difficult topic, the white flowers radiate poetry; every individual fate is given back a bit of beauty. Art also has the task of

mirroring realities (as in the title of the exhibition), says Eva Borner. In «Blackbox» she gives back a clear voice to individual fates, who in the information and media flood otherwise frequently remain unheard.

Art without provocation

A piece on the upper floor shows how we have lost the art of creative, empathic dialog in politics and society. Eva Borner has staged a chamber piece for a man and a woman by Dmitrij Gawrisch. She accentuates the increasingly surreal phrases and sentences full of alienation and characterized by the protagonists speaking at cross-purposes with a video of approaching and retreating ocean waves. In the context of the audio piece the seeming calm and regularity of the ocean tableau acquires an oppressive touch.

Some hundred olive soaps, laid out by Eva Borner in the form of two triangles touching at the tips, are the raw material for a further

piece. Olive soap, a popular souvenir from Greece, or soap with which we wash our hands of the matter?

The soap blocks, given to the artist for free by a Greek company, could also remind us of the coffins we are familiar with from the gymnasiums of Lampedusa. Engraved in the soaps are the currently most disregarded human rights. Again, Eva Borner succeeds in presenting a powerful piece in a calm, subtle and non-provocative way.

Until 16/12, Kunsthalle Wil (Grabenstr. 33); Thu–Sun, 2–5pm; artist talk: Wed, 21/11, 7pm

Tagblatt, November 2018



dingzihù, Installation view, fiac, Paris, 2014

钉子戶 | dingzihù | nailhouses

3-Kanal-Video- und 4-Kanal-Soundinstallation 2014

15 Min 53 Sek

Videolink: <https://vimeo.com/132719880>

钉子戶 | Dingzihù, the title of the installation translates as “nailhouse,” meaning a building whose owners refuse to leave the house in favour of a new building, in most cases a bigger commercial building. These ruinous houses stick like nails in the midst of already modernised surroundings, delaying their certain demolition. Living conditions are slum-like, and most of the inhabitants live in poverty. This dilemma of urban development, China’s intended global supremacy and the problematic process of modernisation linked to it have driven me to develop an artistic work in this very location, where different conflict-situations, worldviews and eras clash (overlap).

The installation that consists of three projections and three sound layers shows a series of impressions from one of these destroyed areas of Shanghai, China. A man is seen moving through a derelict area, dancing. The dancer’s movements and the choreography were conceived by Iker Arrue. His studies of movements refer to the figure and thoughts of the Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist and founder of logotherapy, Viktor Frankl (1905-1997), a survivor of the Holocaust. The choreographies are supposed to be an experimental layout, trying to analyse values and purposes of humanity; especially to reflect the existential experience of suffering and hopelessness, and thereby to question some of society’s ideals.

We are giving a common hybrid aesthetical space to Viktor Frankl’s survival strategies on the one hand, and to Shanghai’s derelict quarters on the other. The Installation is accompanied by a composition of sound recordings of these surroundings and by musical arrangements. The exhibition is supposed to be seen and heard from different angles. Therefore the three projections are being shown on different spatial levels and ordered in a well-specified manner. These different perspectives demand the onlooker to move around the room and interact with images and sounds of the installation. On the level of sound we perceive a virtual reality that reflects the dancer’s real surroundings, his thoughts, feelings and perceptions; especially his views of the bleakness and loneliness of his environment.

<https://vimeo.com/132719880>

Installation View, Paris, fiac 2014: <https://vimeo.com/331487949>



Installation view, fiac, Paris, 2014



Installation view, fiac, Paris, 2014



Installationsansicht, fiac, Paris, 2014



Installation view, fiac, Paris, 2014



Installation view, Kunsthaus Zofingen

„....At first we see only broken stone rubble and ruinous buildings, then a foot, a hand, a body, a person push themselves into the picture. It is a dancer who balances the floor with his body and measures the space. In the background, the skyline of skyscrapers becomes visible. Light burns in one house, a shadow moves in another. These houses from Shanghai, which could actually stand anywhere, are so-called nail houses, i.e. buildings whose owners refuse to move out. The camera comes close to the stones, focuses on the broken, but also on the traces on them and on the hardness, the toughness. It's a place where people don't give up, where they live despite everything. The dancer and his movements stand for those people living there who are not visible at the moment, but who are nevertheless present. As groundlessly sad or angry as such a destroyed floor can make you, on the aesthetic level of the picture it also functions as an element of showing (in the sense of: That's how it is there!) and more hopeful: the persistence of things and people. The dancer, whose choreography is inspired by trauma therapy, and with him the camera, demonstrate that catastrophes must be perceived and worked through if they are to be overcome.

The groundedness of the dance thus becomes the prerequisite for a gesture of liberation, for which one has to do something, for which one has to exert oneself...“

From the opening speech by Dr. Yvonne Volkart (media theorist, art critic)

Hour of the Stars

«For at the hour of death a person becomes a shining movie star, it's everyone's moment of glory and it's when as in choral chanting you hear the whooshing shrieks..» Clarice Lispector

A wooden bridge on a moonlit night provides the stage for "The Hour of the Stars". Electronic music by the Swedish musician Christian Berg gives sound to the landform. Yet silence reigns. Light direction makes visible the bodies rolling silently over the wooden bridge. Elusive, then clearer, closer, more corporeal, as they come towards us; the reverse as they move away from us. Always, they remain in the bosom of the night. And suddenly they are gone. Was what we saw merely a fata morgana? Or did they do it and manage to defy gravity?

The slowly flowing video is accompanied by a sentence by Clarice Lispector, who describes the hour of death as the stage of light. In the art of the Christian cultural sphere, death usually appears as pain; from the crucified to Hodler's Valentine Godé. Not so in Eva Borner's piece: in "The Hour of the Stars", she relates death to the primal yearning for boundlessness. Here, death does not appear as a gift from heaven but as a process that requires full commitment. The bodies do not roll weightlessly across the bridge, the effort is visible in their movements; maybe even fear, but at the same time also desire. The light is the force. The path demands courage; the aim is unknown and yet is anchored in the parameters of the finiteness of all living beings.

Eva Borner's video is extraordinary; due to its subject matter on the one hand, but also due to the way in which the risk of traditional clichés is kept in check through reduction, rhythm, repetition; through silence, caution, respect. As a viewer, you at times feel that you should hold your breath so as not to disturb what you are seeing. This reflects the character of the video itself – and that is its quality.

Annelise Zwez

VIDEOLINK: <https://vimeo.com/132730045>



Installation view, kunst lokal Rheinfelden 2016

Stunde der Sterne

Video: Eva Borner

Music: Christian Berg

VIDEOLINK: <https://vimeo.com/132730045>

Joy City

Fotoserie, 2015

Pigmentdruck auf Fine Art Baumwollpapier, auf Aluminium



Joy City

Fotoserie, 2015

Pigmentdruck auf Fine Art Baumwollpapier, auf Aluminium







霄玉百货商店

烟草网络商店
旅游定点超市

地址:北京东路131号





«I want a truth that has been invented» 2012 -2013

photomontages (13-teilig)

Pigmentdruck auf Büttenpapier, auf Aluminium (diverse Größen)

«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist» 2012 -2013
Fotomontagen (13-teilig)
Pigmentdruck auf Büttenpapier, auf Aluminium (diverse Größen)



Diese Bilder setzen sich aus digital bearbeiteten und montierten Aufnahmen einer Digitalkamera zusammen. Sie konfrontieren den normalen, menschlichen Standpunkt mit irreal entrückten und oft surreal modifizierten Ansichten.

Innen- und Außenraum beginnen sich aufzulösen:

Es sind realistische Fotografien und sind es doch nicht; indem sie scheinbar vertraute Möbel im Innenraum in scheinbar fernen Landschaften zum Erscheinen bringen, eröffnen diese Bilder einen dritten Ort, an dem sich die Grenzen von Objekt und Umgebung, von Subjekt und Natur immer schon überschnitten haben und doch ihr Recht einfordern. Sie stellen den fotografischen Blick in Frage als dessen Resultat sie sich darbieten – jedoch nicht im Sinn eines bloßen Als-ob, sondern in einer raffinierten, die Möglichkeiten des fotografischen Sehens befragenden Kombination von realistischer Geste und imaginativer Komposition, mit der zugleich die Undurchsichtigkeit vieler Lebensverhältnisse im Zeichen der Globalisierung zur Anschaung gelangt.





eva borner

«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

eva borner



«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»



eva borner

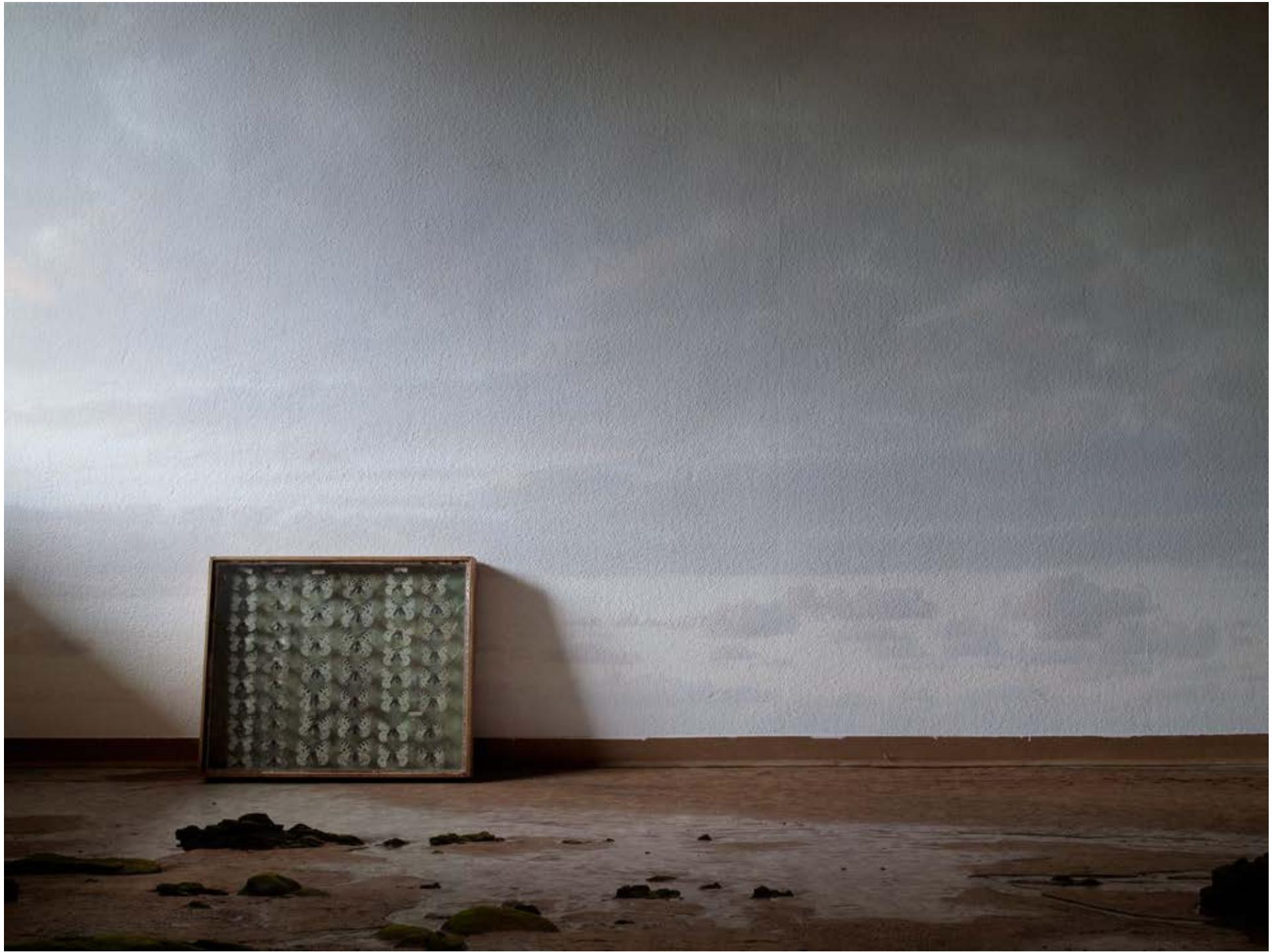
«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

eva borner



«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

eva borner



«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

eva borner



«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

eva borner



«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

eva borner



«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist»

«Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist» (I want a truth that has been invented)

On Eva Borner's latest series of photomontages. Text by Anna Daphne Alessi, culture scientist

Eva Borner's photomontages, being assembled from digitally treated images made with a digital camera, are unsettling. The onlooker's eye is drifting up and down, left and right, searching for a normal perspective, but cannot find it: the image evades any classical perspective by confronting the human standpoint with irreally displaced views, often surreally modified. Interiors and exteriors start to disintegrate: we're dealing with realistic photographs and yet they aren't. By placing well-acquainted furniture in interiors on floors that belong to seemingly far away landscapes these images open up a third place, a place where borders between object, surroundings, subject and nature have long been transcended and still ask for their right of being. By offering themselves as a result of the photographic view, they question it at the same time, but not in the sense of a simple "as if", but in a more refined combination of realistic geste and imaginative composition. This combination visualises the intransparency of many people's lives in the sign of globalisation. An everyday object, placed in the middle of a natural landscape, or a natural perspective locked inside a room are immediately recognisable, but the object or the landscape are displaced from their natural surroundings and set into a new and surprising context. The natural scale of things is distorted, the object seems enormous compared to the landscape surrounding it, and the shadows it had thrown in its original surroundings are still there. This discussion of the image as well as actually looking at it convey treacherous contemplative calmness, well-ordered aesthetics and supine knowledge. Often one can only guess at whether it is one photo or a montage of various photos that led to one of her images. Sometimes one can't even be certain if an image only shows one single view. Are those clouds or just a dirty wall? Is the object in a room which is enlarged by the montage of a landscape, caught by its own shadow that is cast onto the landscapes hinting at imaginary walls? The tonality, statics and the aesthetic objects, harmonic views of nature that were chosen by Borner on the one hand, and the plentiness of ideas evoked by the pictures on the other hand grind against each other. Is the world being nicely collaged here, dismembered beyond recognition, or are things getting even more real than they actually are through the chosen perspectives? In the same manner in which these objects impose themselves over nature by their fictional size and in which they show their history and cultural background through their traces of wear, have they forever lost their natural context, their purpose and their homes. And even though they are momentarily freed from their instrumental purpose, they still cast their original shadows. Then you suddenly see them standing in their original locations, ghostlike and eroded by time, the river that will eventually carry everything with it. In her series of photomontages Eva Borner is playing with the interdependence of multiple contexts and boundaries, not least with the famous ones like subject and object, nature and culture. The question seems unanswerable and still dominates the room: is nature merely a subject, subjugated under the reign of the "all-object" created by man? Or is the man-made artefact only possible thanks to nature's elements? By questioning any final possibility of objectivation and subjectivation of something or someone, even if simultaneously suggesting the longing for this possibility, Borner is subtly criticising culture and authority. And all of a sudden one isn't so sure anymore if the chest of drawers or the pitchfork aren't simply artefacts but rather an extension and representation of man who, in an unpacifiable tension between nature and culture is representing the intersection between peripherals. Borner's pictures rekindle this tension inside us, getting it to move until, irritated, we move our eyes away to walk on to the next picture.

**«Um zu leben, brauche ich Geheimnisse» 2013
(To be able to live I need secrets)
17 (out of 60) photomontages
Pigmentdruck auf Büttenpapier, auf Aluminium, 61 x 43cm**



„Before the invention of the mirror people only knew their own faces by their reflection in the waters of a lake. After some time everybody is responsible for the face he or she is wearing. I will now look at mine own. It is a naked face. And if I ponder that there is none in the world like mine it makes me flinch anew. There will never be one alike again. Never is the impossible: I like the Never. I also like the Always. What is there between never and always, that links the two indirectly and inseparably?“

Clarice Lispector: Aqua viva (1973)















Eva Borner – Um zu leben, brauche ich Geheimnisse by Eva Borner, Text Anna Daphne Alessi, culture scientist

Eva Borner's photomontages show seventeen women who all have the same face. It's a puppet's head that was mounted on the photos of the women's bodies afterwards. This montage has two distinctly different effects on our perception: on the one hand, the female bodies are uniformed in their entirety by the masks and, on the other hand, the figures develop a strange identity despite their identical masks: it is as if each woman developed a facial expression of her own, i. e. as if the puppet's head obtained a new identity depending on the body on which it rests. In the first case it is our concentration on perceiving what is equal, in the second case what is different. In our interaction with other humans we are used to reconducting all our impressions to his or her face. And we are accustomed to deducing the mood, inner constitution and the truth of the person opposite from his or her facial expression. This face that is so important for us because we can read it has been replaced by a uniform farce. The human being as a uniformed individual, throughout his historical, social, familiar and sexual determination, has seemingly always been caught in mental and corporal patterns of behaviour, normed by society. The social norm asks for two things: to respond to uniform and to individual demands. The medium of digital photography with its elaborate possibilities of cosmetic surgery seems just right for the static representation of the interaction of uniform and individuality: potential disturbances of norm are being cleansed whereas the qualities reaching the phantasm of individuality are being left or even supported as to create an acceptable individual thereby. The visual totalitarianism having long become the medial rule in our society is an over-redundant fact, even though still being disturbing, if viewed from close-up as in these photographs. Uniforming, in Borner's eyes a negation of one's own face, is happening every day: by changing our faces cosmetically in front of the mirror; by smiling at work even if we would rather cry; by indifferently shrugging one's shoulders

if we'd rather disappear after being asked a question. But, would it really be more authentic if we simply showed the hidden? Don't we need the agreed conventions and attitudes our own awareness, that tells us in which mood we really are, mysteriously repels? Is it not thereby that heterogeneity and difference are finally experienced? Of course social masks begin to become threatening if we're not conscious of them and are unable to rid ourselves from them. But what could be the meaning of dropping them? Photography is some kind of spook, it has been righteously said to be an artefact that represents the visual presence of something absent. Borner is extending these possibilities: her figures are present as absentees, whilst, at the same time, the uniformity of the faces creates another level of absence. The true, the proper face and, therewith, the authentic traces and movements of a singular life are not to be found in the montages, though. But as something hidden they are the more questioned. And, thus, the (postmodern) question, if there is something like an authentic face, is by no means artificial.

The ability to use one's face as an instrument for social interaction and the ability to recognise someone's state of mind by his facial expression are both cultural techniques that can mislead, as shown in Borner's pictures. In those cases we'll have to search elsewhere for traces of the treacherous, the personal, the scandalous: there will always be some trait that tells us more about the other's mood. The way our interlocutor hides and masks the phantasm of his self might mean a more direct access to him and to ourselves. The search, that is otherwise unjustly focused on the face, will be continued on the body: where can we find a sign of rebellion against social norms? Isn't that a hand reproachfully stretched out to threaten? Another figure is hiding his/her hands completely; a leg, carefully turned inside, means insecurity and withholding; disheveled hair is a promise for wildness and chaos. We are

fulfilling socially normed orders whilst undermining them at the same time by confusing the code of norms and by emitting contradictory signs. We can recognise the latter looking at the photographed bodies. Thus the body becomes tangible as a place of silent, partial, but constant resistance against conventions and against our daily petrification often linked to those conventions.

Borner's photographic round of human auto-positions consists of about 60 pictures, 17 of which were chosen for this exhibition. It shows many things: most of all the necessity of the fragmentation of the uniform, perfectly stylised self-portrait. One stops in front of these women as in front of sphinxes. They throw us back on ourselves. What does my own personal round look like? Who am I and how am I positioning myself. Do I know and like my attitudes? Where is my resistance, where the access to my longings? Do I live my (fragmented) freedom, do I value my secrets?

«Realities» 2013

Artists' Window in the dock, Basel 2013

Media: Spiegelfolie, schwarzer Molton, Leuchtkasten, Zeitschalter



„At first sight „Wirklichkeiten“ (2013) denies our view inside the shopwindow, underlining the window's surface and its frame by its reflective surface. It's an impressive image in which our surroundings and we ourselves are reflected as a fleeting and superficial image of the now. The mirror confronts us with ourselves and invites us to our self reflection and to play with our own image. The sentence “I would have been born for a carefree life” that suddenly pops up, interrupts the reflective mirror-image. The underlying (thought) room breaks through and irritates us with an evolving chain of thoughts and questions – throws us out of our narcissistic self-reflection. This word- and mirror-play sends us off on a quest for the great questions of life – the un-lived perspectives of carefreeness and the question, where we have lost it. The reflection of the pharmacy opposite can be read as a further hint at seeing the recipe for our happiness, at enjoying the lightness of being – a possibility of encountering the probability of this “would...”

Patricia Wolfensberger, curator, dock



«Wirklichkeiten» 2013, Artists' Window, dock, Basel

«then I get sad just in order to relax» 2013

image and sound

Soundscape and Viola: Barblina Meierhans

Mix: Hans Peter Gutjahr

Media: Lightbox, headphones (Composition:7Min 15Sec)



The image shows something other than what the sound tells us. We watch seabirds, but we hear opposing acoustics.

Aspect: the noises of a city (Rome, Ostia). Cars are passing by, some are honking, some are pulling up, and the swoosh of the traffic is omnipresent. A viola begins to play, its tones horn in the described fabric. As an observer, we take up the position of the seabirds, like ossified creatures sitting on wooden stakes. The music seems to move the image; the city becomes visible in our imagination.

<https://vimeo.com/152545679>

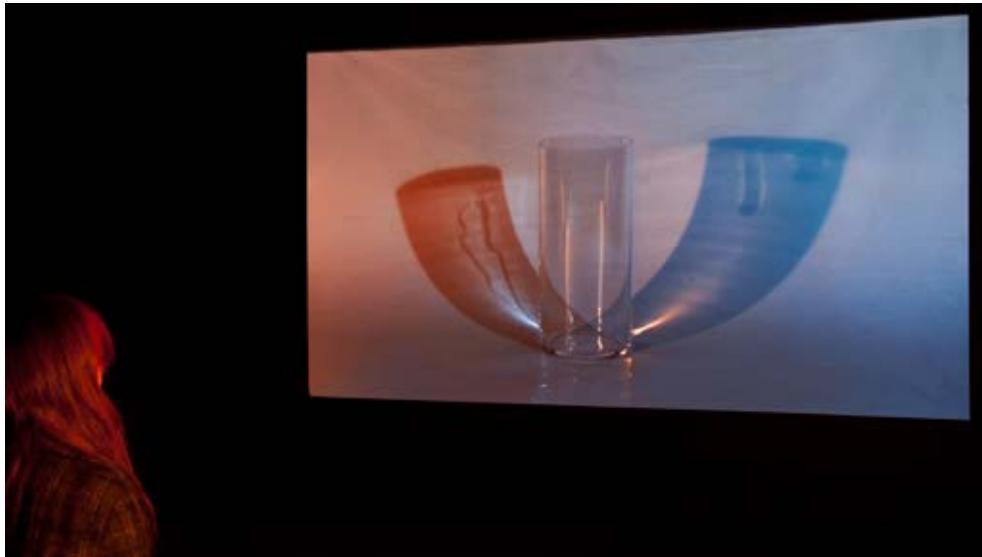
«I'm momentarily inventing the present» 2011

Video-Audio-Installation for two F1220, 2011

Co-Author: Hans Peter Gutjahr

double bass.: Markus Fischer

Media: Video (14 Min 20 Sek) und zwei akustisch raumfüllende Boxen (F1220)

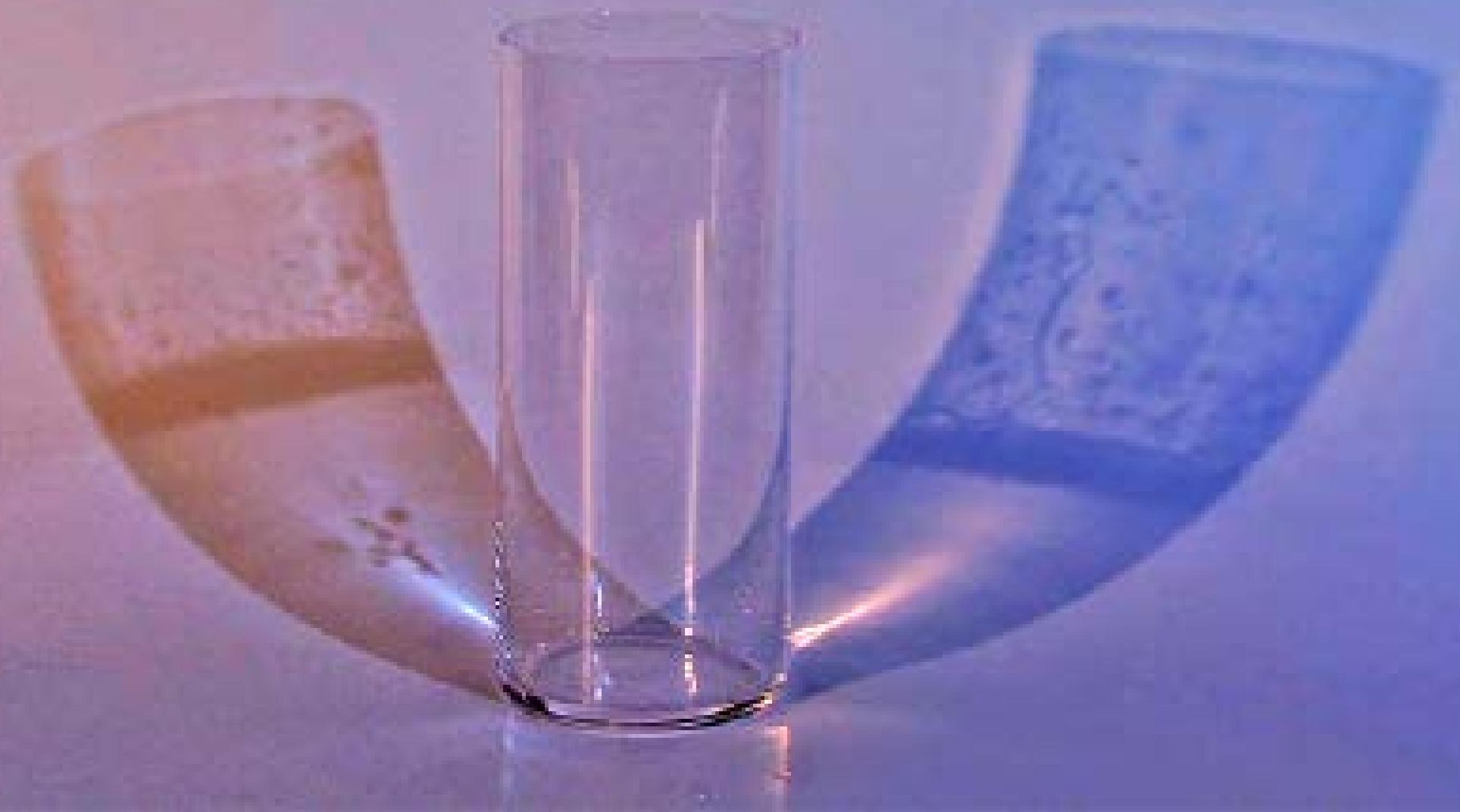


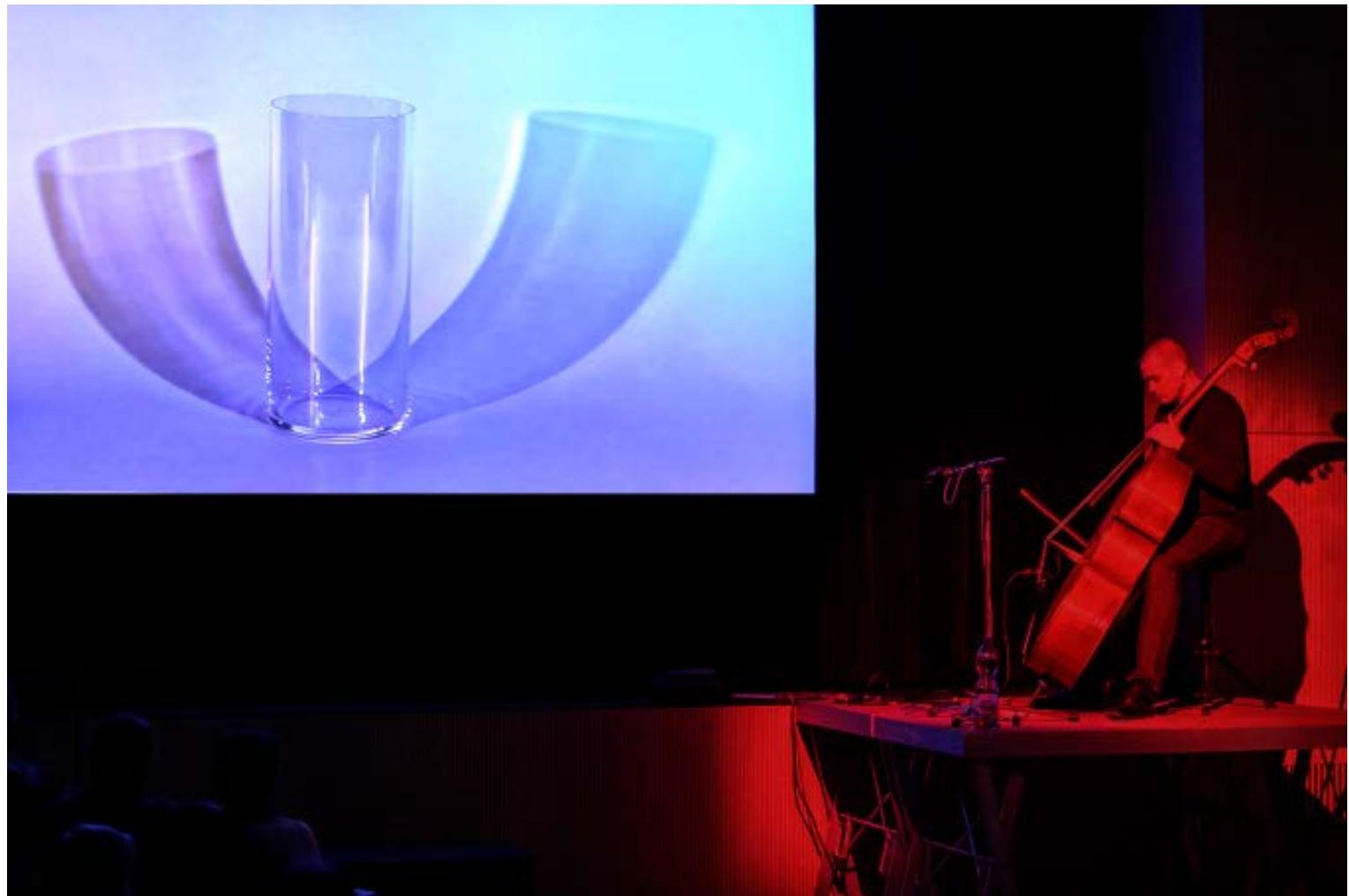
In the video you see an empty water glass which casts two shadows on the wall. The glass is always empty; the shadows begin to fill with water. The glass and the drawing of the light do not obey the same rules, and the shadows tell more than what appears in visible reality. The musician Markus Fischer interprets these pictures with his double bass and performs it live in the exhibitions.



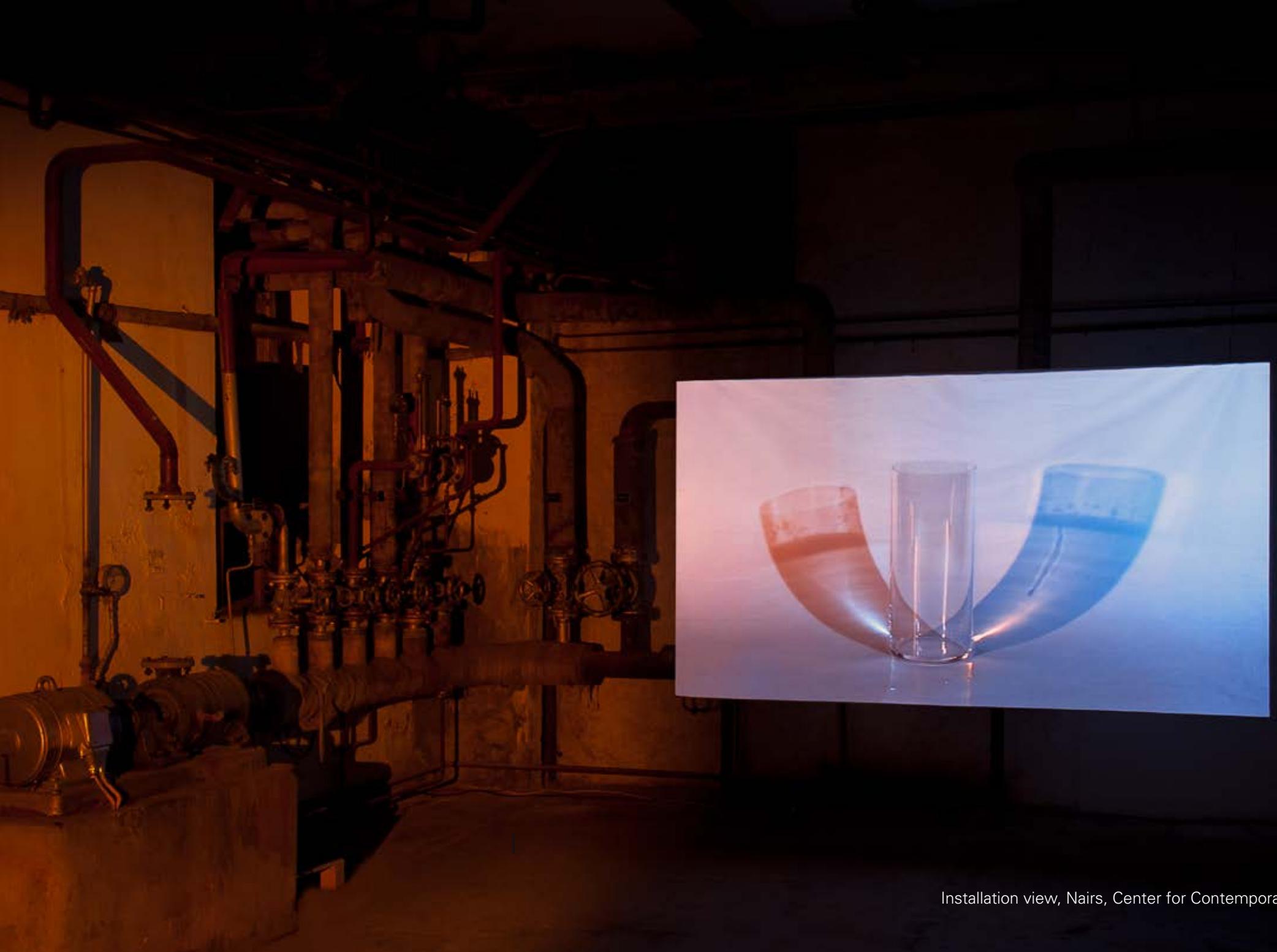








Installation view: Performance with Markus Fischer, kunst lokal, Rheinfelden



Installation view, Nairs, Center for Contemporary Art

«In Between»

video installation, 2009

Media: 2 projections, (one) screen, 4 speakers, 2 DVD players, 1 audio player, 90 minutes of film and sound.

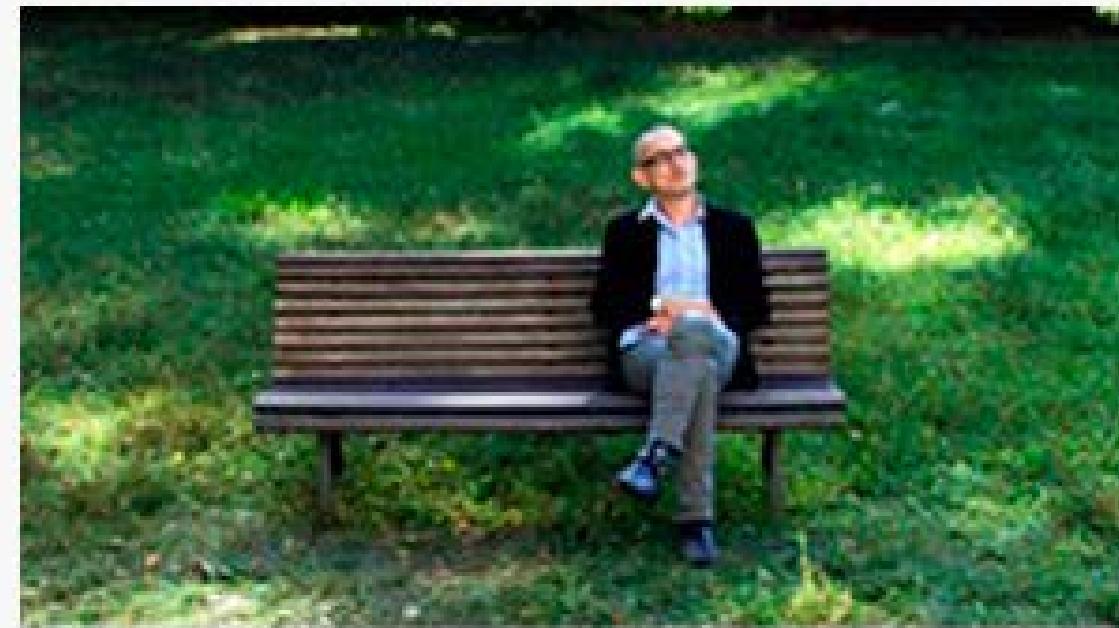


«dazwischen» Installationsansicht, Kunstraum M54 visarte, Basel

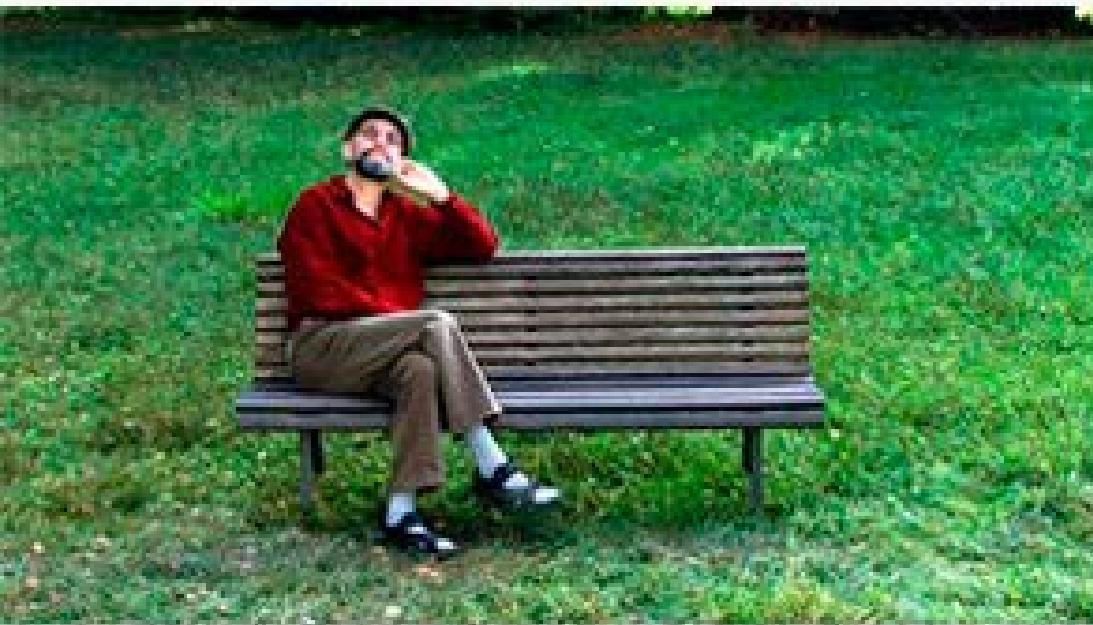


The image of a person sitting on a park bench is projected onto both sides of a screen situated in the center of the room. Due to this double projection, the illusion of two people sitting on the same bench emerges.

«In Between» Installationsansicht



making of; Videostills



making of; Videostills



making of; Videostills



«pensées» 2008

Klangobjekt

Zusammenarbeit mit Hans Peter Gutjahr



Bally-Areal, Schönenwerd

Kompositionen aus perkussiven Elementen und flüsternden Sätzen, arrangiert mit Stille, dringen aus dem Innern der Skulptur.

Mit Hilfe von Schwingungsgebern wird die ganze Fläche der Wand als Lautsprecher genutzt. Der Klang ist räumlich und gut. Es sind keine Lautsprecher sichtbar, der ganze Monolith wird als Schallwandler benutzt.

Der Gedanke, dass jede Absenz mit Präsenz durchsetzt ist, ein Kunstwerk ein Verweis auf eben diese Abwesenheit sein kann, veranlasst uns, dieser Thematik anzunähern.

Eine weisse Wand wird pensées genannt. Die Vorstellungskraft des Betrachters wird jedoch nicht auf das Sichtbare reduziert, sondern erweitert den sinnlichen Horizont um das Hören, sie erzählt und fordert dazu auf, eigene Bilder im Kopf entstehen zu lassen.

Die Suche richtet sich auf etwas Unsichtbares, auf ein Nichtsehen, hörbar gemacht aus dem Innern einer weißen Wand.



Galerie Hirschengraben, Zürich



«pensées» Arbeitsaufnahmen im Tonstudio kvv, mit Franca Basoli (Schauspielerin), Hans Peter Gutjahr (Sounddesign) und Martin Dürrenmatt (Perkussionist)

«we» 2005 / 2009

Interactive Installation

Media: Figurine with integrated monitor and speaker, bench, observation camera projection, motion detector, camera, video switchover, DVD player.

Voice actress: Franca Basoli



A headless woman sits in front of a full-wall projection. There is a monitor in place of her stomach. A looped tracking shot through a meadow is projected, where surreal elements appear like single highlights of a story that lacks a linear narrative thread. One hears the headless woman talking and expressing her thoughts in single sentences and fragments. As soon as a visitor descends the stairs to the cellar where the installation is located, the interiority(?) of the pictures in the monitor disappears. The visitor, the Other of the protagonist, the second part of the "we", displaces the inner pictures of the figure with his approach and is then himself immediately reflected in

her stomach. Since this short change in the monitor can be only observed by people who are present in the installation room, the concerned visitor cannot see this. The newcomer is an intruder without being aware of it. The border between the Self and the Other is made apparent by this interchange, and through the closed circuit. The closed circuit, a direct circulation, allows a picture to be recorded and to play simultaneously on a monitor. The protagonist waits, headless, lost in her world of pictures, for someone who will never arrive. The thought of waiting is conveyed in this installation as a large picture projected behind the figure. In a second closed circuit loop, there is a projection of the stairway from a bird's eye view of the exhibition space. The visitors to the exhibition are projected and announced: they all appear before their entrance as a fleeting strip of the stairway, first on the large projection and then in the monitor in the stomach. With the play between the object, the moving picture and sound, the artist creates the space and simultaneously shows the impossibility of the term "we" as well as its inescapability.



«wir» Installationsansicht



«wir» Installationsansicht, e-werk, Freiburg

«Images in the head»

interactive intermedia - sound installation, 2008

Realisation in Zusammenarbeit mit Hans Peter Gutjahr

Media: Kontrabass, Leinwand mit Videorückprojektion, Abspielgerät, 6 Boxen, Computer



“Images in the Head” is an interactive intermedia - sound installation that invites the public to come in, act and react. Its main topic is the “presence of the absence”. A central function of the media is designated to bring that which is absent into being. In the showroom, a double bass is on display and serves as an interface. If the observer plays the strings of the double bass, an apartment’s world of senses and moods (surround) opens up, merely represented by sound. Depending on which string is picked, different sounds come to life. These sounds may include those of a whispering woman, an answering machine, or the disappearing noises of an invisible inhabitant.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI
Bundesamt für Kultur BAK



«Images in the head» Installation View

Eva Borner – „Images in the head”, an intermedial installation

Accompanying text by Annelise Zwez

In 2007 Eva Borner was granted the Valiart-prize for Medial Art which enabled her to realise the interactive sound installation www.saiten-sprung-on-line.ch in cooperation with Martin Bircher. In the summer of the same year the media development programme (“site-mapping”) of the Swiss federal department for fine arts granted her a sum enabling her to accomplish the intermedial installation “Bilder im Kopf” (images in the head) in the Basel-based gallery Karin Sutter.

What is extraordinary about Borner’s oeuvre, who accomplished her studies at the Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz in Aarau, is the entanglement of technical media with content-centred visions. Her project “Bilder im Kopf”, an elaboration of her praised diploma, evokes a “real” world within the virtual space of the imagination. Her artistic means, a double bass connected to a computer, a video-projection and multi-channel speakers, are not intrinsically media aesthetics, but aiming at access to a virtual reality.

By plucking the strings of the spotlit double bass in the centre, the visitor opens the acoustic representation of a room of the protagonist’s home. The big format video-projection on the opposite wall showing a bleak façade suggests being in a flat in a rather modest neighbourhood. Depending on which string you plucked you get to either kitchen, bathroom or living-room. Sometimes the woman is home, taking a bath, singing along with the radio, or she’s in the kitchen rattling with cutlery. Often she’s heard murmuring to herself, sometimes it’s her

thoughts that are heard clearly out of nowhere. If you’ve picked a moment when she’s away you will hear her answering machine going off as a caller leaves a message.

The work is not limited to the audio structure which is solely a means to make contents audible and visible to the imagination. Without interaction from the visitor, however, there is no output. If the strings are not touched, there will only be the murmuring background noise of the apartment. If the woman is present she will usually say inconspicuous things to herself, like “I should laugh more often” or “why not sit down and read a truly serious book”, or she gets angry with herself muttering “the keys, where are the keys?”. If she’s present but only thinking to herself her thoughts are made audible: “I don’t want to have to believe reality” she is heard murmuring, or “what would have had to happen to make us more interesting to each other?” Later she realises: “I was so afraid I was panicking”. The order of her utterances is never repeated. A random generator juggles the 80 statements in ever new combinations.

Medial arts are often in inter-relation with film, photography and music. Thus, the latter also plays a role in Eva Borner’s installation in the shape of the double bass, but also when her invisible protagonist sings along to the tragic song “Slip Away” by Laurie Anderson. The connection to drama, philosophy and literature is somewhat rarer, but more important and, therefore, even more important. Neither the choice of the song nor the quotations from “Waiting for Godot” are there by accident. The chosen

quotations mirror the artist’s state of mind. Throughout months she had collected sentences that touched her personally. She found them with Fischli/Weiss, picked them up from passengers during train rides, in the literature of Arthur Schnitzler, Peter Stamm, Connie Palmen or Clarice Lispector, or simply invented them herself. The spacial and auditive experience in “Bilder im Kopf” has voyeuristic traits: the more curious one remains, the more will one learn about the virtual figure. One learns that she is being stalked by a man leaving messages on her answering machine, hears that she’s being called by people speaking English and wonders why she keeps pondering about death. The play that takes place inside one’s head is also about loneliness, about Beckett’s absurdity. Last but not least it is a mirror of our times in which we spend hours navigating in virtual home pages living the romantic illusion of partaking in real life. “Images in the head” is a multi-medial masterpiece with numerous participants. Eva Borner acts as a producer and director. She says she’s not a programmer, but uses new media because they enable her to realise her artistic imagination. She is lucky to be supported by sound wizard Hans Peter Gutjahr.

«Dilemma of Loneliness»

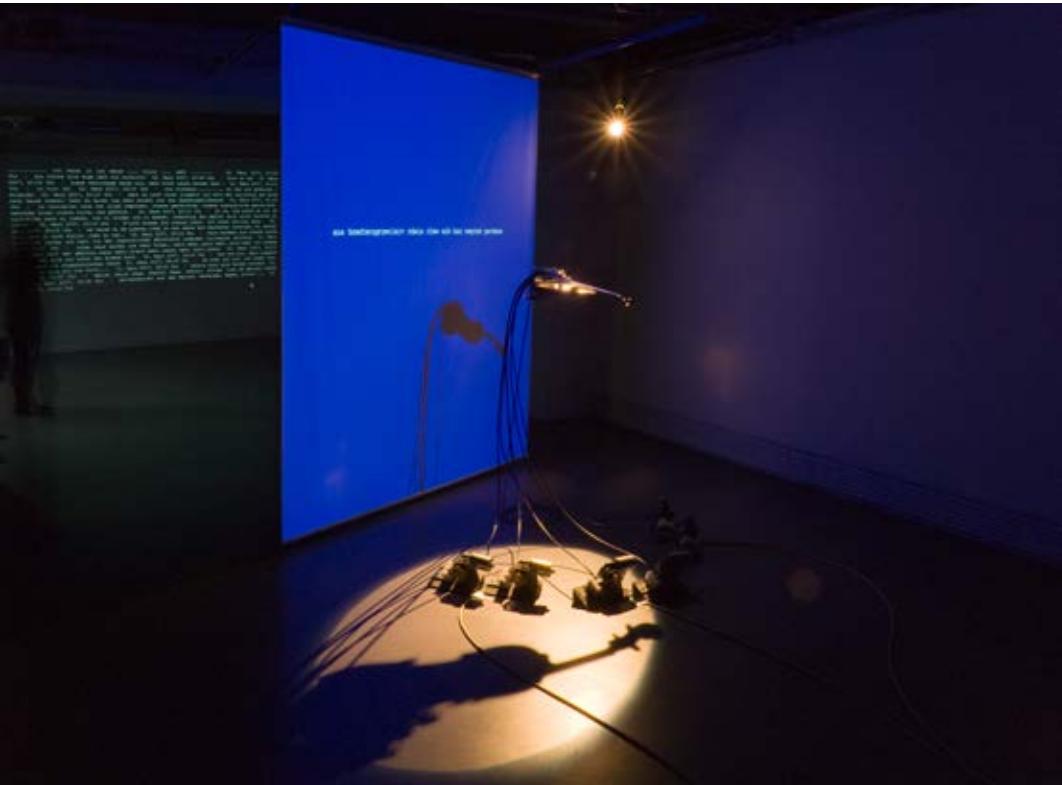
interactive intermedia - sound installation, 2007, Valiart Preis 2007

Zusammenarbeit mit Martin Bircher

Media: Media: violine with 6 Saiten, 2 Computers, Internetconection, 2 Beamer, 6 Motoren, screen



mein kopf ist voll mit gedanken an gestern



„Dilemma of Loneliness“ is both a web page from which anyone can submit a sentence no matter where she or he is located, and an electromechanical installation in an exhibition room.

The submitted words are immediately translated into a sound scheme by a program that is played by a real violin. The audience in the installation room does not know from whom the sentences that are projected a screen are sent; the sender does not receive any feedback from the installation.

«Interaktives Dilemma der Einsamkeit» Installationsansicht
Valiant Kunstraum, Bern

