

INTERVIEW WITH MARGIT GREINÖCKER

You went to Tallinn within the URBAN INTERVENTIONS. Have you been there before? Did you visit the city again after you took part in the artist exchange? What did you experience in Tallinn?

It was my first visit in Tallinn and Estonia. Tallinn was going to be the European Capital of Culture in 2011, Linz had the pleasure in 2009. First I focused on the changes within the arrangements for Tallinn 2011 and compared what happened in Linz to what is happening in Tallinn. (New architecture, cleansing issues,...) Which stories are told by the city, by the urban structure, by its architecture, what do the peoples faces tell me?

While I was examining the city my thoughts became projects and two of them were developed and presented in Tallinn, Linz and Vienna.

I have a lot of contacts since the artist exchange that I never want to do without anymore. My wish to go back to Tallinn is very strong (for now my work travelled alone to the exhibition). I had a few Estonian artists staying at my place in Linz and we were already making plans.

How did you experience the local art scene and how did the exchange with local artists and residents work out?

If I compare it to other project scholarships abroad, where no institution was taking care from the first day on (like showing me around the city, telling me some historical information, giving me accommodation, introducing me to other cultural organisations and Offspaces,...) here I could start to focus on my work right

away. I had the possibility to talk to others all the time, for project issues on one hand and within an Austrian-Estonian cultural mediation on the other. A lot of the Offspaces offered an entertaining program, besides the middle age style touristic, but still nice, city centre. What I also discovered was, that there is still a separation between the Russian-speaking and the Estonian-speaking people. Everyone can see this separation in the architecture, the districts, the society, daily life and in between artists. For my urban research, it was very important to talk to people who are not part of the art scene. I shared my studio with "Kulturiikatel", "Composers Union" provided an apartment and organised the exhibition, the team of the Capital of Culture office gave me a warm welcome and introduced me to a lot of people.

Describe your projects you developed there.

TALLINN SEASIDE©2010 Margit Greinöcker

Paper fish, photography

The European Capital of Culture Tallinn 2011 was dedicated to the topic "Stories of the Seashore". The city and the sea, often a difficult relationship: Where the sea could meet the city a street is spreading... spreading wide. So why should we walk the long way to the coast, if the sea is to be found in the TeatriVäljak?! A lot of water appears in between the rough concrete (and also in your shoes) on a rainy day. So I gave life and the freedom to tell their story - stories from the seashore -, to hundreds of fish in the temporarily waters in the middle of the city.



KESKLINN INTERFACE©2010/2011 Margit Greinöcker

Photography and video: Margit Greinöcker

Composition: Erkki-Sven Tüür

Ensemble: NYJD, conductor Olari Elts

"Kesklinn Interface" is moving Kesklinns architecture. The district Kesklinn is Tallinn's city centre. The neighbourhood is characterised by conservative and touristic buildings from the 15th century. The video mainly focused on the eastern part of Kesklinn, Maakri. In the early 1990s, after Estonia recovered its independence, Maakri became the commercial and financial centre. A range of skyscrapers made of glass rise up in the sky. They rise up over the few, still existing, delicate wood and brick houses.

A few steps further, in the Rotermann area, you can see the youngest architectural face of the city. As stiff as this historical ensemble seems to be, Tallinn is moving a lot due to its (social) political and economic position. Are these different architectural styles eclipsing each other or do they communicate at eye level?

In the beginning of "Kesklinn Interface" I was walking through the city and took photos of the buildings meeting points. When I was moving, so was the architecture. The pictures played a game with the architecture. I was separating architectural parts and activated a new perspective and composed the city in another way. Erkki-Sven Tüür's musical composition "Symphosies" tensed this meeting into a never ending appearing and disappearing of urban structures.



CAR DUMP ©Margit Greinöcker

A Concept to slow down the multilane main road, between the sea and the historic city, by irritating it with a temporarily car dump. (Has not been realised because of the costs)

In which way could you present your projects and which reactions did you cause?

The presentation of "Kesklinn Interface" was taking place in the architecture museum Tallinn, in cooperation with the "Composers Union" and the Capital of Culture team. Further presentations happened 2012 in Linz and Vienna.

"Tallinn Seaside" started as an intervention in public space and is now continued in postcard format.

"Car Dump" was developed because of an invitation after my residency in Tallinn, but it became too expensive to be realised.

The Presentations brought new cooperation possibilities, options for exhibitions, points of discussion and therefore new ideas.

Can you describe the residencies influence on your work? Which effects had it retrospectively?

- Increased investigations on Baltic countries
- More investigation on the individuality or equality of cities...globalisation, tourism marketing...
- More activities in public space
- Growing significance on sound settings in videos
- Residencies come with some time to clam down from the exhausting daily life of an artist at home and give you time to



reflect your own work and to restructure yourself to continue work stronger and wiser than before.

- Growing network of interesting people and institutions
- The option to continue with projects
- Invitations and options for exhibitions

