

CHRISTINE WÜRMELL

Christine Würmell is a Berlin-based artist. She has graduated from the California Institute of the Arts, and from the University of Arts Berlin.

Exhibitions include: Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin (2019), Zilberman Gallery Istanbul (2018); Kunsthaus Vienna (2016); Weserburg Museum for Modern Art, Bremen; Kunsthalle Krems/Forum Frohner; Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna (2011); Temporäre Kunsthalle, Berlin; Bonner Kunstverein, Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen (2009); CCA Wattis, San Francisco; Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin; Kunstverein Göttingen (2007).

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Object Group: Konvolut

„While researching the development of what was formerly Leninplatz at the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg district archive in 2005, Christine Würmell came across archived materials from the early 1990s on the demolition of the Lenin monument, a controversial affair at the time. In her new work Object Group: Konvolut, the artist places photographs of archive-material backings improvised from various paper scraps—such as recycled flyers from rent-hike demos, event posters, GDR gift-wrapping paper—alongside images of specific newspaper articles. The juxtapositions of archived debates and all of their varied to polemical positions with the reverse-side documents thus become randomly configured indices offering insights into the everyday socio-political life and culture of the post-reunification period.“
(Bettina Klein)



Object Group: Konvolut, 2005/22, Exhibition View Salon am Moritzplatz, Fine Art Prints, 42 x 59,4 cm each



Object Group: Konvolut, 2005/22, detail, series of Fine Art Prints, 42 x 59,4 cm each

The Revaluation of the Public and What Remains Public (as a Result) Or: In Volkspark Friedrichshain, Berlin's First Communal Park—Opened in 1848.

„For the series of photographs ..., Würmell juxtaposes views of the sculptures taken between 2007 and 2008 and the empty pedestals photographed in 2015. In contrast to a standard, long-term observational approach, where an effort is made to reproduce the same camera angles and lighting conditions in the before & after shots, here the images retain the spontaneity of their making and capture the individual atmosphere of their surroundings. Presenting the pedestals free of their backgrounds creates a particular spatiality, suggesting a kind of slippage between abstracted white surface and realistic depiction. When comparing the images, closer inspection reveals that at least one graffiti element on the left pedestal is visible on the right-hand one—a medium considered so fleeting has outlasted the bronze sculptures.“ (Bettina Klein)



The Revaluation of the Public and What Remains Public (as a Result) Or: In Volkspark Friedrichshain, Berlin's First Communal Park—Opened in 1848. 2018.
To the left: detail view, to the right: exhibition view Zilberman Gallery Istanbul, series of 4 Fine Art Prints mounted on MDF, 40x60cm and 30x80cm.



Einzeltitle von links nach rechts:
Friedrich B. Henkel, Große Metamorphose Landschaft (1994), aufgestellt, anlässlich des 150. Jubiläums des 1. Berliner Volksparks, 1998; wegen Vandalismusschaden entfernt. 2007/2015.



Werner Stötzer, Sitzende mit aufgestütztem Arm (1967), aufgestellt, anlässlich des 150. Jubiläums des 1. Berliner Volksparks, 1998; 2014 von Unbekannt entwendet. 2008/2015.



Wieland Förster, Große Stehende auf einem Bein (1968-70), aufgestellt, anlässlich des 150. Jubiläums des 1. Berliner Volksparks, 1998; 2014/15 vom Grünflächenamt Berlin Friedrichshain demontiert und im angrenzenden und vom öffentlichen Park abgegrenzten Garten des Werkhofs von Graffiti gereinigt neu aufgestellt 2014/15. 2008/2015.



Birgit Horota, Turnübung (1977), 1983 aufgestellt; 2014/15 vom Grünflächenamt Berlin Friedrichshain demontiert und im angrenzenden und vom öffentlichen Park abgegrenzten Garten des Werkhofs von Graffiti gereinigt neu aufgestellt 2014/15. 2008/2015.

Signature Style (Thälmann)

Signature Style is an ongoing series of photographs of the Ernst Thälmann Monument in Berlin. Ernst Thälmann was chairman of the German communist party, KPD, in the 1920s and was executed on direct order by Hitler in 1944.

The monument (by the Russian sculptor Lew Kerbel) was inaugurated in 1986 (only three years before the end of the GDR). From the monument's three part ensemble, two narrativizing parts have been deinstalled, what remains is the bust in the center of a wide square. The spacious square is currently still a kind of empty and open space in the city. It is popular as a meeting place among all sorts of people to skateboard, or simply to hang out.

The monument itself has become a "canvas" for changing graffiti of anonymous writers. In their parasitic relationship to the monument, the graffiti proclaim the obsolescence of the originally intended political function of the monument. At the same time they make it visible anew again and again. Once a year, for Thälmann's birthday, the monument is cleaned, flowers take the place of graffiti and its original function is re-enacted in a ceremony in his honor.



Signature Style (Thälmann)
2004- ongoing, Lightjet
Prints in archival sleeves,
30 x 40 cm each; to the
left: exhibition view Kunst-
raum Niederösterreich,
Vlenna; to the right:
detail views.





Solo-Protester and Support Structure



The protest signs are based on circulating images of the re-enactments of the Standing Man protest in Istanbul. They stand in Support Structures, which combine the elevating function of a plinth with the supporting function of a frame.

On June 17, 2013 Erdem Gündüz, the so-called Standing Man, stood motionless for several hours (until his arrest) to spontaneously protest the eviction of the Gezi Protest Camp and the ban on assembly that had just been imposed on Istanbul's Taksim Square.

Solo-Protester and Support Structure, 2018-9, detail views from a series of sculptures, mounted fine art print, acrylic paint and wood.



Improvisational Assemblies I-IV

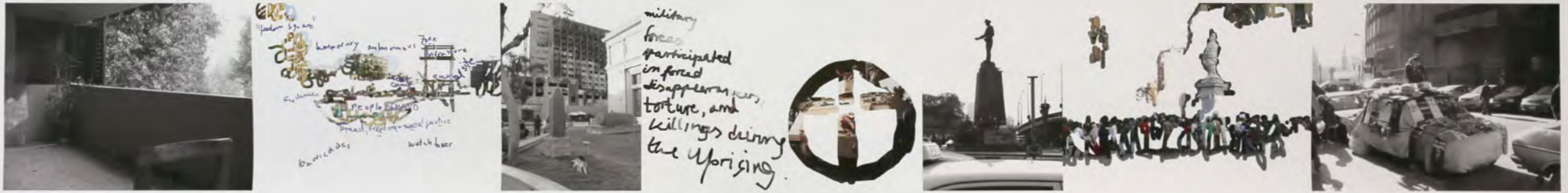


Broadway (ehman Bankru, September 2008), 2016, Fine Art Print, size variable



Improvisational Assemblies I-IV explores the sites of some of the democratizing protests that have come to be known as the Occupy Movement and the Arab Spring, as well as it investigates the articulation of these protests in social media.

1. The series *Prefigurative* refers to a participatory horizontal model of democracy, but also to participatory emergent social and material forms. The prefigurative is evoked with a process of digital post-production.
2. The *B/W-Series* consists of images that I took on site before or after the protests between 2008 and 2019. Referring to a tradition of social documentary photography the image files were rendered as b/w-images.
3. The series *Scrolls* consists of a montage of both image forms, which in part appear to be „stitched“ together via newspaper clippings. They produce an experimental, collage-like narrative of the specific protests and their context



Scroll 2 (Public Life), 2012-19, Fine Art Print, 61 x 450 cm

Improvisational Assembly 1

While the images in the media were focused on the center of the revolutionary uprisings, showing masses or scenes of escalating violence, I photographed traces of the freely developing use of public space at the margins of the protests.

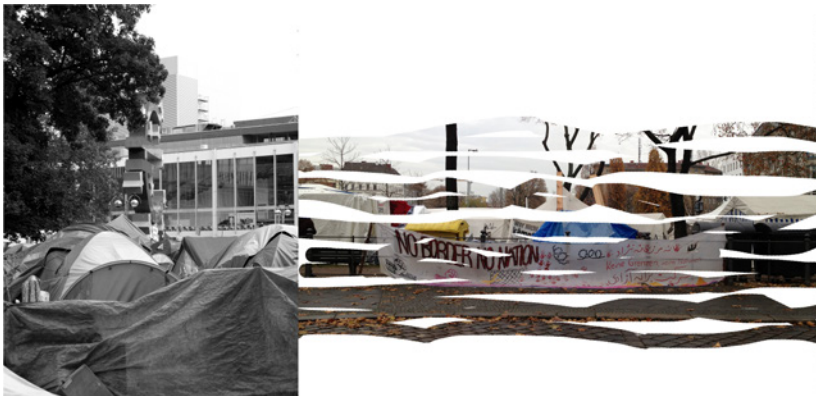
I photographed DIY-structures, revolutionary and feminist messages written and painted on the walls or the many improvised sales stands where T-shirts with symbols of the revolution were now offered for sale alongside typical tourist motifs, such as the pyramids.

Scroll 2 (Public Life) consists of a variety of images that were captured in Cairo during the 2011 revolution and the ongoing protests in 2011/2012. Instead of producing a continuous movement, they create repeated ruptures by juxtaposing b/w images with obviously photoshopped color images.



Mohammed Mahmoud St / Tahrir Square, December 2012, 2016, Fine Art Print, 58x77 cm

In **Improvisational Assemblies III** the open form of the post-produced color photographs of the Occupy Camp in Frankfurt in 2012 (from the series *Prefigurative*) are juxtaposed with a b/w-print from 2018 titled European Central Bank. The European Central Bank was part of the Troika, whose supposedly no-alternative austerity policy was a cause of the protests.



Occupy Frankfurt Scroll 2 (2012-2015), 2022, Detail, Fine Art Print, 61 x 170 cm



European Central Bank, 2018/9, Fine Art Print, 200 x 150 cm



Gezi Scroll (2013-2018), 2022, Fine Art Print, 61 x 390 cm

In *Improvisational Assembly IV* I juxtapose post-produced color photographs of the Gezi protests in 2013 with photographs taken in 2018. The b/w photographs show the opposite ends of the central Taksim Square in Istanbul.

While the Palace of Culture, a symbol of a secular Turkey, is being demolished on one side of the square, one of Erdogan's large-scale construction projects, a mosque, is being realized on the opposite side.



Taksim Square (17 June 2013, Duran Adam), 2016, Poster, 70 x 100 cm

widersprechen

www.returningfromgermany.de is the name of the website for the cynical campaign „Your country. Your future. Now!“ that the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community launched in consultation with the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in 2017. In its own words, it is aimed at „people obliged to leave the country and people with little prospects of staying.“ The additional posters distributed throughout Germany at the end of 2018 immediately triggered various forms of dissent on the posters in public spaces and in analogue and digital media.

From various images of the campaign that others have taken and shared on the net, details were chosen, contrasts emphasized and protest signs produced, to underscore the blatant rhetoric and the conceptual design of the campaign in its tense relationship to the many opposing interventions - which use a common language and appear as an alternative alliance.

widersprechen, 2019,
series of protest signs
and open plinths, detail,
exhibition view Haus
am Lützowplatz.





widernsprechen, 2019,
series of protest signs
and open plinths, detail,
exhibition view Haus
am Lützowplatz.

Showroom/Mauerstreifen



Showroom/Mauerstreifen, 2010, from the series *Stadtarchiv (Berlin)*, photographs, size variable

Oberflächenaktiv II (Version1)

“What happens when the semiotic language of protest is transferred into the museum? Does it become a mere quote, experience an aesthetic change of meaning, or raise increased attention for forms of protest outside the museum? ... it remains open what the artist is showing: a museum wall that has been attacked on which framed objects defiantly assert themselves, or a collage comprised of an Actionist, spontaneous art process and explanatory elements of meaning. Raimar Stange speaks of “de facto incompatibilities” in Würmell’s art. She expects us to recall entombed anarchic protest in the abstract picture, to divine the aesthetic content in protest, and at the same time to sense the incompatibilities of both modes of perception. Whether art requires the inflammatory spirit or protest requires aesthetic concretion remains equally as open as the problem of the interpretation of her semiotic language or its denial of meaning.” (Guido Boulboulé, “Color in Flux” exhibition catalogue)



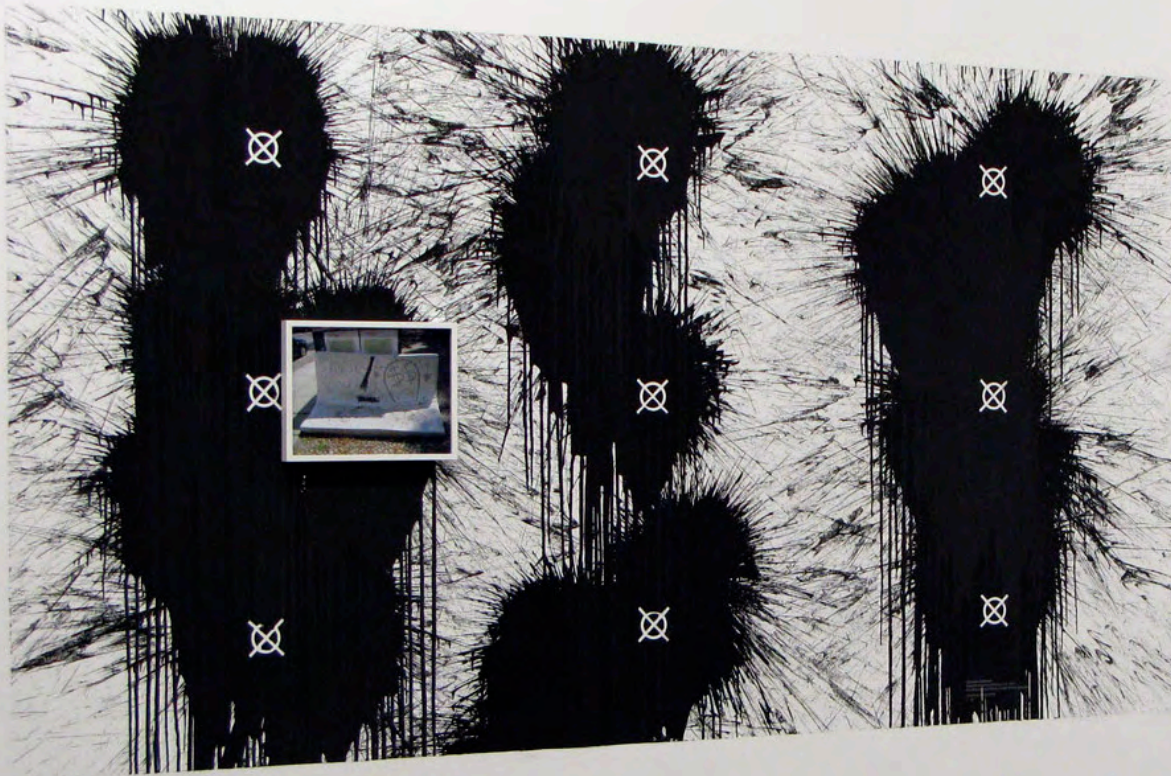
Oberflächenaktiv II

(Version1)

2011

inkjet-print (framed)

62 x 82 cm



Oberflächenaktiv II (Version 1), exhibition view
 Weserburg Museum für Moderne Kunst Bremen,
 2011, acrylic paint on wall, inkjet-prints (framed),
 sticky label, 146,3 x 269,3 m + 62 x 82 cm

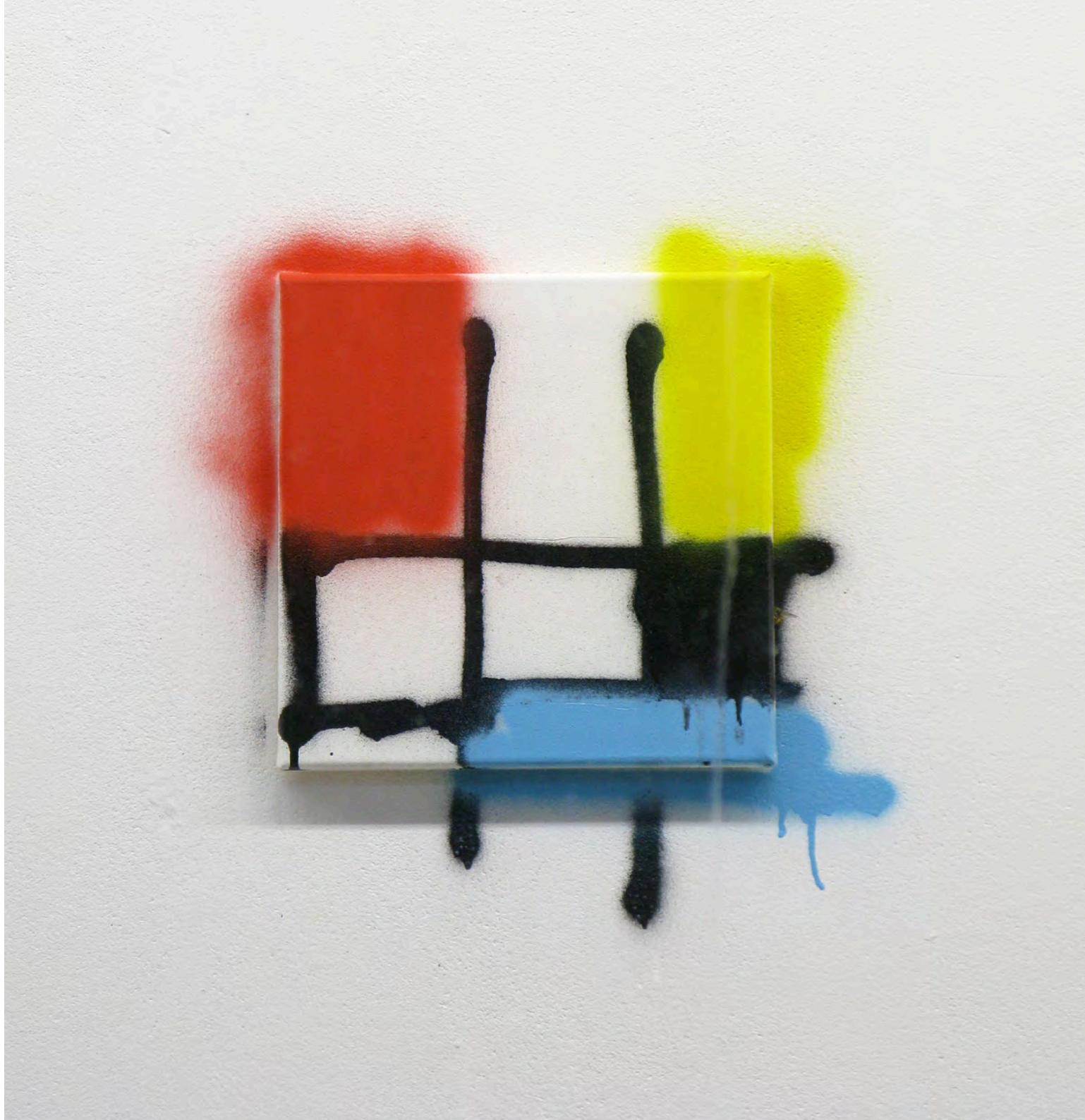
Abwertungsmassnahme

Abwertungsmassnahme,
2010, exhibition view,
spray-paint on wall,
dimensions variable



Neues Berlin

Neues Berlin, 2010
exhibition view, spray-paint
on canvas and wall,
dimensions variable



In a different light



A well-lit graffiti declares a wall in the main room of a gallery as profitable. Facing the hallway, on the backside of the wall hangs a framed photomontage. It depicts a graffiti-slogan “Wand rentiert nicht! (Wall not profitable!)” spray-painted onto two concrete walls, which are designated for advertisement.

In a different light, 2009
exhibition view Galerie
Czarnowska, Berlin,
spray-paint and photo-
collage, dimensions
variable and 30 x 30 cm



Dissonanzproduktion, exhibition view Temporäre Kunsthalle Berlin, Projektraum, 2009, mixed media, 3 x 4 x 4,5 m

Dissonanzproduktion

Paint bombs were thrown to install a White Cube in which signs of protest and Action Painting lose their difference. "With a variety of critically and reflexively edited information new meanings are inscribed, which might now lead away from a specification of their respective content and on the contrary open up unconventional and complex narratives." (Maren Lübbke-Tidow, Dissonanz in der Schleuse, von 100 Magazin #06, 2009)



Dissonanzreduktion

Dissonanzreduktion means a behavior that aims at reducing or avoiding (cognitive) dissonances. The case in point here is climate change and its different media representations. Scientific prognosis, advertising, everyday accessoires and news headlines are deconstructed, recombined and spatially new entangled.

Dissonanzreduktion
2008, detail, mixed
media, dimensions
variable





Dissonanzreduktion 2008, exhibition views Kunstmuseum Thurgau/Kartause Ittingen, mixed media, dimensions variable

An abstract artwork on a light-colored wall. The central focus is a large, dark, irregular shape composed of several overlapping colors: deep green, dark blue, and magenta. From this central mass, numerous fine, vertical drips of paint extend downwards. Surrounding the central shape is a vast, cloud-like spray of small, red and pink paint splatters that fills much of the upper and right portions of the frame. The overall effect is one of dynamic, energetic movement.

**Coming soon to this
location:
charming ruins**

Coming soon

In the exhibition space a slogan was rendered by paintbombs. The action in the exhibition space was extended into the streets via the representation of another slogan rendered by paintbombs and distributed in rented advertising-lightboxes in the vicinity of the art-institution. Both are protest slogans from 1968 and 2006 marking not only dates of violent political protests, but also indicating the time in which the architectural complex was built and the exhibition conceptualized. The realisation of this utopian all including structure assembles next to the art institution shops, apartments and community centers. Today, the unemployment and crime rate in this suburban area are high, and the complex is being abandoned. What forms and practices will emerge from the ruins of modernity's utopian architecture and the welfare state?



Coming soon, 2007, street view near Galerie Fernand Leger/CREDAC, Ivry-sur-Seine, one of series of backlight-posters, Lightbox, 1,85 x 1,1 m + 80 x 120 cm

People have the - Power - to the People

The frontal installation uses strategies of advertising and the media such as those of trailers and teasers. Here a narration is merely hinted at in a most spectacular way. Focusing on these strategies and building relations and oppositions on different levels, images from the fields of activism and advertising (and their respective appropriations) as well as images relating to the economy and web politics were brought together.

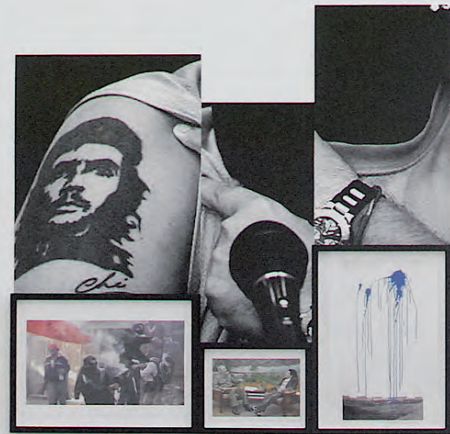
*People have the -
Power - to the People*
2007, detail,
mixed media, 4 x 8 m





People have the - Power - to the People, 2007, exhibition view NBK Berlin, mixed media, 4 x 8 m

Global Player



Global Player, 2007, exhibition view Galerie Gebürder Lehmann, Dresden, mixed media, 2,6 x 2,2 m

For the annual calendar of the Swiss art magazine „Kunst-Bulletin“, with its marked art events, a selection of activist's events for this year was added and hung onto the residue of previously thrown blue and white paint bombs. The combination of blue and white paint bombs leads to a montage of contradictory signifiers and status symbols regarding the Argentinian soccer-icon Maradona, who is depicted as a “global player” not only in soccer but also as activist and TV-host conversing with Fidel Castro.

Buffing



Buffing, 2004, exhibition view Galerie Erna Hecey, Brussels, 4 drawings and 4 photographs (framed), 1,0 x 2,1 m

Inhabitants of Los Angeles can call the non-profit organization “Hollywood Beautification Team” to come by their houses and paint over unwanted and dreaded graffiti. The 4 drawings and 4 photographs of buffing suggest a relation between this practice and Abstract Expressionism during the 1950s.

Public Library L.A.



Reproductions of all anonymous tagged pages, with reproductions of tags, in the book "Wallbanging", an academic study of gangs and graffiti in Los Angeles. The book was checked out of the public library in Downtown Los Angeles in order to reproduce all pages with mentioned graffiti.

Public Library L.A., 2003,
exhibition view Galerie der
Stadt Schwaz, series of
10 photographs in archival
sleeves, 50 x 60 cm each



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Fig. 3.18: Rudi from
Clanton 14, South Cen-
tral clique, 31st Street
(1995)

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