

ТЯДНСЭҮҮЯӨРӨ FESTIVAL

DEMOCRACY,
EQUALITY,
CULTURE
BEYOND THE
NATION STATE

MAY 6—15 2011

 european
alternatives

ТЯДНСЭҮҮЯӨРӨ
NETWORK
DEMOCRACY, EQUALITY, CULTURE
BEYOND THE NATION



ТЯДНСÉÛЯФрă
FESTIVAL

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EQUALITY,
CULTURE
BEYOND THE
NATION STATE~~

~~MAY 6—15 2011~~



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TĀDANSÉÜYÖPĀ FĒŠTĪVĀL

Edinburgh

Cardiff

London

Amsterdam

Berlin

Paris

Lublin

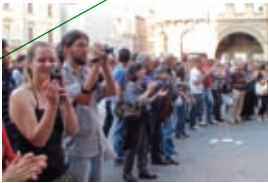
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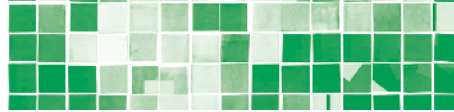
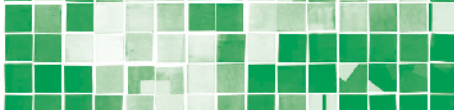
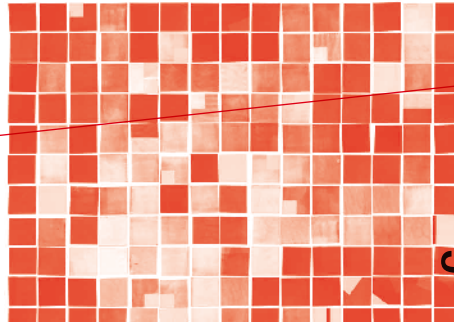
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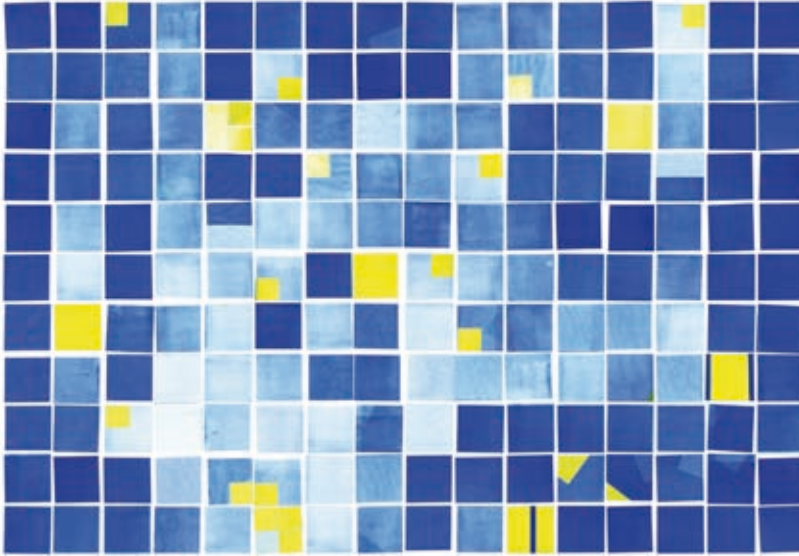
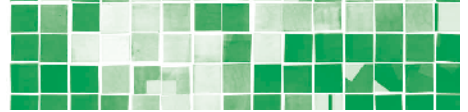
Sofia





ABOUT THE FESTIVAL





Jonmar van Vlijmen
EU flag
1,00 x 1,50 m
2011



TRANSEUROPA Festival is at once a cultural festival and a political event. It is the first transnational Festival happening in 12 cities simultaneously: not twelve different festivals at the same time, but one festival throughout Europe promoting democracy, equality and culture beyond the nation state. Transeuropa creates a common political and cultural space for exchange, debate and action.

Using a plurality of mediums - from debates, lectures and congresses to art installations, projections, and music, - the festival promotes innovation, experimentation both in its politics and in its cultural production, and sees the visualising of a new community through the arts as an inalienable component of building a new society.

TRANSEUROPA Festival does not shy away from the most pressing and difficult topics confronting European society and the rest of the world. In 2011 the main themes of the Festival were *migration, Roma and traveller rights, media freedom, and a more just economy for after the crisis.*

These main themes were chosen by **TRANSEUROPA Network** for their importance and were discussed and explored in all twelve Festival cities, conclusions and experiences passed from city to city until the closing weekend, when transnational forums took place on each theme.

The Festival's Art Programme is the result of a series of collaborations among practitioners from all over Europe. The Festival has been offered as potential platform to experiment new formats and tools as well as to launch new calls.

The collaborative and participatory approach that such a scenario demanded lead to the involvement of more than twenty-five cultural operators, including artists, curators, and filmmakers, who engaged in a productive dialogue to deliver shared outcomes.

The result of it is an articulated art programme that echoes throughout the Festival cities.

The Festival is coordinated by European Alternatives and is organised by

TRANSEUROPA Network: a transnational team of activists, writers, thinkers, artists and curators from throughout the continent.

FESTIVAL themes

The Festival touched on a plurality of themes ranging from sustainability to gender equality. Four key themes, however, were selected and discussed in all festival cities, with closing forums bringing representatives of all the cities to exchange their view and experiences. These were:

Migration and human rights: the new borders inside and outside the EU

As Europe becomes ever more afraid of a large influx of migrants approaching from foreign shores, as 'multiculturalism' is declared 'dead' by some of our most influential politicians, and as the boundaries of free movement change within the European Union, the condition of the migrant in and on the borders of Europe must be challenged and investigated. Detention camps in bordering countries of the European Union as well as within Europe have been condemned by many international organisations for their conditions. Throughout the festival the way in which migrants are treated at, behind and beyond the borders of the EU, was discussed and exposed in several ways, including through film, lectures and workshops. Moreover, the 'deterritorialisation' of Europe's borders

and its implications for the way 'Europe' is understood was artistically and conceptually explored, both in 'capital' and 'peripheric' cities of the EU.

The question of going beyond multiculturalism was posed by the Festival: after the failure of national multicultural and national integrationist policies, can a trans-european perspective open new possibilities for thinking of a cosmopolitan form of political belonging? This thematic was dealt with in all festival cities and the conclusions brought to the closing forum in Paris.

Roma and Traveller Rights

The rights and welfare of Roma and Traveller communities has become a pan-European issue. Ongoing expulsions of Roma communities from Italy and France since 2008, attacks against Roma in many European countries, and widespread discrimination throughout the continent have made the Roma a symbol of Europe's intolerance and often of its hypocrisy. Through this theme of the Festival we aim to present a different image of Roma culture than the stereotypes allow for, underline the unacceptability of discrimination, and investigate alternative policies for improving the situation and rights of Roma and

Traveller communities. The Roma question has become tied up with the question of the meaning of European citizenship.

Activities on this theme included debates and discussions in Berlin, London, Prague, Sofia and a simultaneous and connected event in Bologna and Paris, a travelling reading with the Roma in Bologna, and urban walks with the Roma in Cluj-Napoca. In addition a Festival film made on the theme by **TRANSEUROPA Network** which was shown in all Festival cities.

Conclusions and experiences from all Festival cities were brought to Cluj-Napoca for a Transnational Forum the closing weekend.

Europe After the Crisis: a new economy for a more just world

The economic crisis has seen European leaders take unprecedented steps of coordination between national budgets. This has been accompanied by huge protests throughout Europe at the austerity measures they have adopted, and the lack of action regulating the banks.

In this thematic, the Festival looked for a more just future for the European economy, taking into account the interlinking of European societies with the rest of the world, and the differing contexts throughout Europe. Through all the Festival cities the effects of the economic crisis were discussed, and the bases for a new economy were explored.

In Prague, Bratislava and Cluj-Napoca, the discussion focused on comparing the Eastern and Western European experiences and economies. In Sofia and Cluj-Napoca the unequal impact of the crisis on different genders was the theme of debate, and in Paris, Bologna, Bratislava and London the impact of the crisis on the most excluded was explored.

In Bologna the rights of interns in Europe was investigated.

These conclusions came to London on the final weekend of the Festival for a citizens' congress on the future of the European Economy on May 14, attempting to build a common, transnational platform.

Media Freedom and New Media

Media freedom and pluralism seems to be coming under attack in a growing number of European countries. The press in Italy, Romania, and Bulgaria is considered only “partly free” by leading international NGOs. Recent media legislation in Hungary led to unprecedented protests in the European Parliament and worries of democratic regression. The growing influence of Rupert Murdoch in countries such as the UK is a source of preoccupation for many.

At the same time, triggered by events in North Africa, the role of new media in shaping original forms of collective action seems to be in the spotlight as never before.

TRANSEUROPA Festival investigated the theme of media freedom with this double focal point. On the one hand, the necessity to guarantee free, pluralistic, and independent media in all European countries, and the role of European institutions to guarantee this.

On the other, the capacity of new media to trigger the emergence of new, transnational forms of mobilisation.

Events in most festival cities led to a transnational Forum in Bologna where NGOs, media, and civil society organisations from all festival cities developed a common action-platform to launch a European Initiative on Media Pluralism.



European Alternatives is a civil society organisation devoted to exploring and promoting transnational politics and culture by means of campaigns, conferences, publications, artistic projects, and **TRANSEUROPA Festival**. We believe that today democratic participation, social equality, and cultural innovation are undermined by the nation-states in Europe, and that transnational forms of collectivity must be fostered to promote these values.

With offices in four European countries and a network of activists and local groups stretching to over ten, the organisation is unique in being at once a breeding ground for new ideas and proposals for politics and culture at a European level and in being a political and cultural actor with a truly transeuropean activity, staff and support base.

www.euroalter.com

Interview with festival coordinators

Guido van Hengel interviews **Niccolò Milanese**, **Ségolène Pruvot**, and **Lorenzo Marsili**



When and why did you decide to support transnationalism and create European Alternatives and Transeuropa Festival?

European Alternatives was born over a plate of pasta in Rome in Summer 2006 – and a long conversation about the ills of Europe and the world.

Above all it was born out of frustration with the political and cultural impasse that we were experiencing in all countries of Europe – the lack of political alternatives to the present and political courage for opening new possibilities for living together, a cultural conservatism which may fetishize the most outward marks of distinction, but which craves above all conformity. These two phenomena we found to be stultifying the possibilities of collective innovation and ultimately undermining the possibilities for auto-determination in our ‘democratic’ societies.

So we decided we ought to do something about it, and that the answer would involve at least two components: transnationalism and culture.

Transnationalism for us meant at least three things: that the answers to the common political and cultural ills one finds in all European countries will not be solved by acting in any one country alone, but must be sought across countries; that the nation state is neither the most adequate political form for organizing our collective life, nor a political form in which innovation is possible or will be promoted; that Europe must nourish itself from the dialogue with the cultures and societies outside, around and running through it. This is the meaning of the European Alternatives symbol: that Europe is not defined by its borders, but as the space of overlapping influences of Africa, Asia, the Atlantic sea and the Americas.

Culture for us was fundamental because it is the space in which new forms of living together and organizing our collective life are incubated, and the practices and common imaginaries which either hold us back (in our current conservative society) or are constantly enriched through a process of exchange and experimentation.

For this reason we started with a Festival as our first action – the London Festival of Europe in 2007. In order to better reflect our transnational outlook, this festival has now become Transeuropa Festival from 2010 onwards. The Festival isn't all European Alternatives does or stands for, but it is the most all encompassing public expression and presentation of our work throughout the year and a call for more people to participate.

On the site I read "democracy, culture and equality – beyond the nation state".

To what extent do you think Europe is suffering mostly from nationalism?

Growing nationalism is apparent in many parts of Europe, both in the growing support for explicitly nationalist parties, and in the normalization of nationalist discourse in mainstream political parties. Nationalism is the symptom of the underlying structural nationalism of Europe, which is in many ways actually being exacerbated by the European Union in its current form:

whereas before wars between European countries were explicit acts of aggression, now European countries are 'punished' or 'rewarded' by the most economically powerful nation states in Europe, and this punishment or reward tends to get inflicted on the most vulnerable people in those societies.

Nationalism is becoming increasingly attractive as the only solution to political and social ills which people are experiencing, because it seems like the only available way to restore some sense of control over the decisions which affect their lives. One way of addressing this tendency is to construct the possibilities for transnational democracy, and that also involves persuading enough people in its possibility to make it true.

How do you find creative minds in order to enlarge the network of European Alternatives and Transeuropa Festival?

We are an open organization which wants to facilitate its members in taking initiatives to promote democracy, equality and culture beyond the nation state, and all our activities are directed towards persuading more people to do so, whether as part of our organization or on their own/with their own organisations.

TRANSEUROPA Festival would not have been possible without a wide network of activists - thinkers, artists, students, researchers, and young workers - stretching all over the continent and contributing, as much through psysical labour as through ideas, to the making of the Festival. Transeuropa Network is a gamble in transnational forms of bottom-up democratic organisation: we are aiming to build a structure that allows individuals from Edinburgh to Sofia to engage around issues they care about, building common projects, concepts, and campaigns to create a better Europe for a better world.

The Network has just opened its membership, and created new democratic structures that enable everyone from anywhere to participate while remaining goal-oriented and effective.

More information on www.transeuropanetwork.com

The big narratives of Europe, such as 'The Fall of the Berlin Wall' or the 'Generation of 1968' have inspired many to stand up for equality and freedom. If you would choose a 'new' narrative to inspire Europeans, what would you think of?

The ongoing narrative of Europe is one of the progress of democracy and its setbacks – the fall of the Berlin wall and the events of 68 can both be understood in this way.

This theme is as powerful now as it has been before: from London to Madrid to Bucharest to Athens people feel that the current democratic system is not reflecting their opinions nor looking out for their welfare, that they have little chance to influence the political decisions which affect them and that there are few political leaders who represent them.

This is both a failure of our democratic institutions, and a failure of citizenship which has let our institutions become detached and unrepresentative, as well as being a failure of political power which has allowed notably the financial sphere to become too independent of political control. People still need to be persuaded that the answers to these problems are not to return to previous forms of democratic institutions which may have worked well in the past, but to work on new forms of transnational democratic institutions which innovate both in direct democracy and in forms of representative democracy; we also need to understand that the building of institutions is not something purely formal, but that if the institutions are to live they must be lived everyday by the citizens they represent, and this demands engagement and active citizenship.

One of the main themes of 2011 is Roma and traveller rights. Can you please tell me how you deepen this particular focal point and practically implement it.

Our interest in Roma and traveller rights came from indignation at the treatment of the Roma and traveller populations by the governments of France and Italy over the last couple of years.

We wanted to approach the topic above all from the angle of European citizenship and fundamental rights: firstly that it is unacceptable for us that anyone in Europe be treated in the way the Roma population is being treated, and secondly that the rights of European citizens must be protected and enforced by the European Commission and by European citizens themselves, where European citizenship is ignored or scorned, all of our rights are affected, not just those of the Roma.

In order to treat the theme we explored the situation of the Roma in different European countries, we welcomed Roma scholars, activists and artists to talk with and work with other people working on fundamental rights and social issues.

At the end of the Festival we had a forum in Cluj-Napoca on the topic in which the experiences and conclusions from throughout the continent were brought together, and platforms for common actions and initiatives were established.

Interview with Michael Thoss

Michael Thoss is the Managing Director of Allianz Cultural Foundation



Is Europe today culturally conservative?

In recent years, there has unfortunately been a growing retreat in many European countries back towards their own national cultures. Especially in Eastern Europe, the culture of the majority population generally defines what is regarded as national culture. Thus, the culture of ethnic, national, and religious minorities is frequently ignored. This is an alarming development. Today's Europe must admit to its cultural diversity, which is not simply the sum of European national cultures but consist of a different mixture of cultures in each member country.

What is the role of artists and cultural actors in promoting political reflection/experimentation?

Does contemporary art respect national borders? Or has it become entirely de-territorialised?

The (successful) contemporary artist has become a natural 'global player' in the process of museums, exhibition houses, art biennales, and art fairs growing in their international perspective. Nonetheless, for most of these artists the local context continues to be an important source of inspiration and contributes to the seriousness of their work. Artists are taken seriously, only if they offer new and unusual ways of access to their realities (which is always also part of our own) by providing us with an aesthetic experience and an opportunity to gain new insights, thereby participating in a common knowledge production.

The Roma peoples have been an integral part of Europe for millennia. It is noticeable in the 18th and 19th centuries there was a Romantic idealisation of Roma traditions, bohemianism and now that seems to have been largely forgotten.

Do you think there is scope for revalorising Roma cultures in contemporary Europe?

The Roma can be seen as the "first Europeans": national borders are not as important to them as to the majority of the population. Their nomadic tradition and their non-territorial sense of identity, thus, appear in many ways very modern to us. It would be a mistake, however, to 'romanticize' this, for the still existing clan structures are by no means modern and approximately 90% of the "gypsies" in Europe are sedentary today. It is, therefore, especially unacceptable to continue allowing discrimination against Europe's largest minority group and leaving it to frequent misery. In November, our foundation is, thus, organizing a European Roma-summit in Berlin, to which politicians and scientists but also Roma-artists and writers from different European communities will be invited to join.



JANUSZ ADAM BIEDRZYCKI (Chorea Theater, Factory of Art), Lublin Transeuropa



**TRANSEUROPA
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2011**



TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL 2011



**CITY
REPORTS**



CITY REPORTS





*JANUSZ ADAM BIEDRZYCKI
(Chorea Theater, Factory of Art),
Lublin Transeuropa*



Paris

Transnational community of differences

Through debates, conferences, artistic installations, film projections, and concerts, Transeuropa Festival promotes innovation and experimentation in politics and culture.

The Festival considers that exploring artistically the concept of community is an essential element for building a new society.

Touteleurope

Nowadays the feeling of community is threatened by individualism and intolerance. Reinforcing the community at transnational level is at the heart of European Alternatives' and the Festival's approach; it means reinforcing a *community of interests* for any citizen living in Europe; but it also means strengthening a *community of people* beyond national borders and geographical/ethnic origins. Community goes along with **diversity**: while the feeling of cohesion and community is shrinking, intolerance is growing: there is a need today to fight against the non-acceptance of difference and the Other.

This is exactly the framework of the Transeuropa Festival in Paris. The opening party aimed at celebrating diversity against discrimination: The "Playing the identities!" motto gave the occasion to hear Olga Trostiansky, deputy mayor for solidarity family and fight against exclusion, calling for sustainable solutions for Tunisian and Afghani migrants in the Paris region. The famous and amazing Romanian artist **Rona Hartner** with DJ Tagada also sang to celebrate the Otherness and difference.

When we think about community, the first issue that comes in mind is the question of migrants: how can they be part of the community? An amazing way of understanding the inputs of migrants in the country of arrival has been to discover and learn more about where they live: the first day of the Festival, about 50 people walked through the Pakistani, Indian and Tamil areas of Paris, between la Chapelle and La Goutte d'Or. The sociologist and urbanist Vasoodeven Vuddamalay ran the itinerary that taught the attendees... how migrants dynamize and contribute to economic development and how they act on the physical shape of the districts.



A great example of empirical cultural exploration! The issue of migrants' set up in Europe is still a burning issue; **North African revolutions** highlighted the European uneasiness about it. Therefore Transeuropa invited Catherine Wihtol de Wenden to talk about the new migratory roads in Europe. Mrs Wihtol de Wenden blamed the rigidity of migratory legislations in Europe: migrants are obliged to stay a long time in their country of arrival fearing that leaving would mean seeing re-admission denied, and this is the reason why they end setting up in the country. She claimed that today migrations are fluid, for instance most of the migratory flows between Europe and the Mediterranean are comings and goings. A fluid legislation will enable to inhibit the migratory conflicts embraced by legislative inflexibilities.

Another burning issue at the top of the Transeuropa agenda was the Roma situation in Europe. Roma people are European citizens, and they constitute the first minority in Europe. Despite being part of the community of European citizens, they are discriminated everywhere with little respect of their fundamental rights, particularly in France where the government decided to lead massive expulsions in 2010. The awareness about their situation is at the heart of Transeuropa Festival in 2011. As in Bologna, Transeuropa Paris collaborated closely with *Hors la rue*, an association that works with isolated children and teenagers mostly of Roma origin. The Director Damien Nantes talked about the real situation of Roma behind the pervasive political discourse and media coverage. On the artistic field, *Hors la rue* exhibited some pieces of their photo project with Roma people. On each photo, a Roma person is standing with a cardboard with some words written on it. To break the traditional stereotype of the Roma holding a cardboard begging for money, the personal story of each of them is written on the cardboard, to tell us about how and why they came to France. All these events have been led to remind a simple and legitimate claim: Roma rights are **human rights**.



Exploring culture and arts, talking about community, diversity, and fight against discrimination is the leitmotiv of the "Unity in Diversity?" project European Alternatives leads both in France and Romania. The first part of the project started in France during the Transueropa Festival, with two **Ant-Discrimination Days** organised in Paris and in a city close to Paris, Montreuil, where an important Roma community uses to live in. During these two days, EA activists created ludic activities for **children**: through role games, food and cultural initiations, drawings, stories, the aim was to talk with children about what is a migrant, what are the cultures and folklores of Eastern Europe countries, what "LGBT" means, and how to learn more about the Roma community. This project is a plea to fight discrimination for accepting diversity.

Diversity was also at the core of a fun "transnational" Kiss-In for Equality. Simultaneously with Transeuropa in Amsterdam, members of the Transeuropa team in Paris as well as the public staged a kiss-in to sensibilise the public to the still present risks of homophobia and sexual stereotypes in Europe.

Diversity not only concerns social cohesion; facing the numerous signals of a lack of media freedom and pluralism in Europe. In Paris, the role of **social media** has been discussed with Internet and European politics specialists. They pointed out the transnational character of new media and their ability to overtake political censorship. Social media has a great potential to strengthen the political community. In the meantime, some examples put in relief political attempts to limit the 2.0 freedom both in autocratic regimes and democracies.

These and many more debates, screenings, and artistic performances reinforced the fundamental belief of Transeuropa Paris: Community is being reinforced by more diversity, which implies equality, tolerance, freedom, and respect.



Bologna

Looking for sustainable alternatives

The four main themes of Transeuropa are developed in a very good articulation of round tables, debates, workshops, screening and theatre shows, perfectly defining Transeuropa's soul as a bridge between a cultural festival and a political event.

SERGIO ROTINO, *La Stampa*

We believe that Transeuropa Festival is a very important initiative which allowed us to go beyond a local mentality and catapulted us in a European and transnational dimension.

SARA MONTIPÒ, *Associazione Naufragi, Partner of Transeuropa Festival in Bologna*

In Bologna the Transeuropa Festival became a real platform where different actors of the city – from artists to politicians, from migrants to scholars, from students to homeless people – could intersect their perspectives and be involved in an enriching, multivocal and transnational debate, trying to find possible alternatives for a more sustainable, inclusive and just European society.

The first weekend was completely dedicated to imagining a different society, with the packed programme of events revolving around the concept of *sustainability*, as a term encompassing both the environmental, the social and the cultural dimensions. We spent a full day in the public space to try and rework this idea with the broadest public possible. On the first Sunday morning one hundred people woke up early, took their **bicycles** and peacefully invaded the streets of Bologna, joining an environment-friendly tour to discover the hidden corners of the city, where migrant actors told their stories connecting them with the spaces we traversed. The tour ended in the central public square Piazza Re Enzo, where a **moving performance** recreating the experience of migration involved an even wider public, touched by the personal yet still universal feeling given by the actors. The square then became a laboratory where citizens could experience in real facts what sustainability is about: flowers, strawberries and plants coloured the square, in the **urban garden** made up by the organization of BiodiverCity, with the help of children and different people passing by. A workshop by the association La Pillola allowed people to discover that art can be created even starting from the ugliest garbage. Local and international best practices were presented in lessons which were brought back to the street, sharing knowledge in a process where everyone could take part. With all these activities, the square and the streets were reappropriated, regaining their life as proper public space, where different people meet and share common moments of debate and conviviality.



A more just society cannot ignore the rights of the most excluded: **Roma, migrants and homeless people** were real protagonists of Transeuropa. The festival was opened by a debate on Roma rights, with the prominent Italian anthropologist Leonardo Piasere, the French sociologist Olivier Peyroux and the representative of the Romani Federation Nazzareno Guarnieri. Talking about Roma became a way to talk about citizenship and what European citizenship entails and to debate on the different ways to build a common and shared memory.

'From station to station / straight connection' sung the Kraftwerk, celebrating the mythical train network connecting European cities. Today a new transnational connection is created by the activist network European Alternatives, through a cultural festival and political event, which goes through 12 cities.

GIULIA TONUCCI, Zero Edizioni Bologna

Transeuropa Festival in Bologna: Shows, debates, installations and documentaries in places of emargination and cultural spaces.

MASSIMO MARINO, Il Corriere della Sera

The same ideas were further developed throughout the Festival, also using different media and diverse languages: a reading of Sinti life histories and the photo exhibition Pancarta by Olivier Peyroux approached the issue from a subjective point of view, while the theatre show Comune Spazio Problematico by the recognized contemporary theatre company Teatrino Clandestino gave a different stance on Roma culture, drawing on the concept of the "Roma intellectual".

The **Transnational Congress on Media freedom**, which took place in the beautiful Auditorium Enzo Biagi on the 13th May, was another key-moment of the festival, bringing together NGOs, media, citizens and activists from seven European countries to build a common action and advocacy platform in defence of media pluralism. Prominent political and professional actors, activists and experts such as Monica Frassoni (Co-President of the European Greens), Roberto Natale (FNSI), Ioana Avadani (Centre for Independent Journalism), Istvan Hegedus (Hungarian Europe Society), Niccolò Rinaldi (MEP) gave their contribution to promote the idea that European institutions should safeguard the right to independent and pluralistic information as sanctioned by the European Charter on Human Rights.

The congress was completely live-streamed on www.altratv.tv, thus enjoying the participation of an online public, which interacted through social media such as Twitter and Facebook. A large audience attended the conclusive panel, where different views on media pluralism were interconnected, with the presence, among others, of Pierre Sorlin, professor at Sorbonne University, who drew attention to the importance of a differentiated mediascape for a European plural and diverse society.

The artistic world was also involved in the rich and variegated debate of Transeuropa, with a workshop on the **Gender dimension of transnationalism**, with Nicolas Maleve and Maria Ptqk of GenderArtNet, and a lively discussion on the connections between activism and artistic work, featuring the presence of the scholar and artist Marcelo Exposito, dialoguing with the curators Elvira Vannini, Martina Angelotti and Emanuele Guidi (more information in this catalogue in the section "Art Programme").

The Urban Center in the Sala Borsa, re-structured and re-imagined by Can Altay's installation, was the main venue of the festival, but many other places were "transeuropised" and reinvented for the Festival: more "classical" cultural spaces as the university and the MAMbo, Museum of Modern Art, where accompanied by more unusual spaces, like a dormitory, which become a cinema for one night hosting the screening of *Il Sangue verde*, documentary about migration, followed by a discussion with the photography co-director of the film and some of the migrants living in the dorm, sharing their experiences with the large attending public.

The festival involved partners from various local contexts (from the institution to grassroots organization, from the University to the Art world) and was very well attended by a diverse and very participative public. It had a very good media coverage: **Radio Rai3** (national radio part of the national broadcasting service) gave space to the Festival in two important programmes, the cultural programme Radio3Suite and the political Radio3Mondo; thanks to the media partnerships with the local radio Radio Città del Capo, every festival event was featured in the news and some got special space through interviews with the protagonists and festival coordinators. Important national newspapers (such as *Corriere della Sera* and *La Stampa*) gave space to the Festival, which was actively promoted also by a very effective viral communication through social networks. The art programme arose a special attention on the specialised media, featuring a whole dossier on the magazine *Arte e Critica* and a special on the very popular online portal *undo.net*.

All in all, Transeuropa Bologna was a very successful edition, re-imagining local spaces through a European and intercultural dimension, and engaging a very diverse public in a collective exercise of imagining a more sustainable future European society.



London, Cardiff, Edinburgh

a rainbow of colours

TransEuropa 2011 encourages audiences to consider topical themes within the unique space of Shoreditch's Rochelle School, and the challenging environment of a London double decker bus on the move!

THE EVENING STANDARD

London

The Rochelle school was home to nine exciting action-packed days of Transeuropa London. The stimulating events attracted hundreds of guests who came together to debate and discuss issues central to Europe and to participate in an articulated programme of artistic performances, screenings, and exhibitions.

The festival started its journey on the Big Red Bus to Brixton market with a storyteller who reflected on how *'the most fundamental human right is being allowed to tell your own story'*. Around 50 people enjoyed the bike tours and scavenger hunts at Brixton while another 60 people witnessed numerous artistic performances organised by Arts4HumanRights at the home of the festival, including poetry readings, theatrical performances, and participative sound installations. To close the first full day of festivities, a large crowd gathered to hear Oxford Professor and member of the Reflection Group on the Future of Europe, **Kalyso Nicolaidis** speak on Europe, Transnationalism and post-national democracy. When speaking of European identity she asked, *"Why spin the rainbow white when we have many colors?"*

Kino Belezhke and Tobias Hering initially contextualised the intense film screening session of the London edition reflecting on the 1975 film *'Kino Beleške / Film notes'*, detailing its 1970s creation in Belgrade's 'Student Cultural Centre' by a Marxian collective who then ruthlessly critiqued the subservient art industry via jarring monologues expressing frustration at art's marketised nature and their imperative to re-politicise it.

The concluding discussion posed serious questions as to the prospect of autonomous, collaborative organisation today and its potential political value broadly.



The festival has been a fantastic experience. I very much enjoyed the events that I attended, as they brought together theory and practice into vibrant discussions that I warmly hope will contribute to shaping tomorrow's Europe.

NICCOLO DURAZZI, European



Will Hutton's **Europe Day Speech**, in the context of widespread economic crisis, stressed the need for 'a more just economy' which would curtail the widespread growth of Euro-scepticism and far-right xenophobic politics which threaten to undermine the tradition of European unity and multi-cultural gains.

A large audience attended a passionately chaired debate covering a range of issues around **migration and the EU** which featured four contributors with diverse areas of expertise and activism. Although a debate, key points of agreement were the contradiction of 'free market liberalism' which refers to the free circulation trade and finance but not labour; and how the gross geopolitical inequities highlighted by the experience of migration must be confronted by developed countries to eradicate the causes of forced economic migration at their roots.

Pablo de Soto provided a fascinating and morale boosting overview of the Hackitectura.net cooperative of transnational online activists who formed in 2003 in Seville. Participants witnessed their highly creative new forms of sociopolitical action which included counter-hegemonic mapping enabling the visualisation of an alternative and enhanced sociability. As a case in point, Pablo presented "Commoniversity", a creative mapping of the state of higher education in Europe and the recent students' protest movements, produced as part of the *Visualising Transnationalism* project (see information in this catalogue).

Academics Thomas Acton and Eniko Vincze, Amnesty EU country coordinator Richard Kotter, and artist, playwright and 'extreme citizen' Fiorenza Menni united to discuss **'How can Europe prevent discrimination against the Roma from recurring?'** While Thomas Acton stressed the importance of understanding the history of racism against the

Roma and looked forward to a time when the Roma could educate the rest of the world about their needs and desires, Eniko Vincze concentrated on how European nation states have legitimised institutionalised discrimination and the European Union has failed to react against it. Providing an artistic and aesthetic counterpoint to the talk, Fiorenza Menni discussed her two year experience living with the Roma in Macedonia in order to 'occidentalise' herself and rid herself of the racism that, according to her, we are all born into.

The final day of the Festival in London attracted almost one hundred participants to discuss **Labour and Social rights in Europe**. This transnational congress for generating propositions for a more just and sustainable economy for Europe and the world was the closing event of over a week of well attended inspirational events (see dedicated information in this catalogue), and brought together over 40 participants from all other Festival cities to draw a common, trans-European programme.

In a city like London where it is difficult to take a moment away from a hectic life, the Festival reminded Londoners and Europeans that uniting to discuss issues which are of vital importance to our everyday lives is a duty in today's world, a duty which can prove to be fun. The Festival's participants of all ages and backgrounds greatly contributed to the discussion and atmosphere of the events. A rainbow of ideas and opinions were brought forth, new friendships were made, and for many, feelings of hope were kindled and strengthened; hope for a bright future for Europe.



Any future European identity will rest on how we come to address the challenges of climate change and migration.

LUISA PASSERINI, Columbia University and European University Institute

Cardiff

The day began with stalls from the European Commission Representation in Wales, the British Council, CILTCymru and European Alternatives, followed by an opening address from Cardiff Council Leader Rodney Berman and Head of the European Commission in Cardiff Andy Klom.

A mini opera from The Opera Group entitled 'Saving the Diva' explored themes of consumption and climate change, themes that were then discussed by key figures from the environmental movement in Cardiff who explored how important are links with Europe in setting high standards of sustainability, and in supporting local environmental groups. "The membership of the EU is a hugely beneficial thing," said one audience member after the discussion. "Where there is EU regulation there is also funding, and there are EU initiatives which have been put in place to help us act, now."

The evening events began with readings of the winners of CILTCymru's European Language Poetry competition, run in schools and colleges across Wales especially for the festival. Then T. S. Eliot winner Philip Gross, Amsterdam based poet Tsead Bruinja and a team of translators contributed especially commissioned poetry, written on an exchange journey between Cardiff and Amsterdam, and performed in over 20 languages. The evening ended with a unique interactive poetry event run by Glenn Davidson of Artstation. A truly Europe finale!



Edinburgh

The day in Edinburgh began with a discussion ‘Is there a **Scottish way to Europe?**’ between Head of the European Commission in Scotland Neil Mitchison, John Brand of the European Movement in Scotland, and Scottish National Party researcher Toni Giuliani, a debate made especially interesting as it came in the wake of the SNP’s electoral success three days previously. This was followed by a discussion and performance of violin music from across Europe by award winning fiddle player Jani Lang, and the afternoon ended with storyteller Kati Waitzmann exploring the connections between European storytelling traditions, a particularly apt event as the festival was held at the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

In the evening, Professor Luisa Passerini delivered her keynote lecture, ‘European identity in postcolonial perspective’, concluding that “any future European identity will rest on how we come to address the challenges of climate change and migration. “The day ended with singer Paolo Barilleri, supported by the Italian Institute in Edinburgh, with a performance telling the story of European integration through popular European songs.

All partners would be keen to collaborate again in similar events, and a wider range of both participant and performers could be reached, particularly young people and students, through increased contact with schools and universities. Whether or not there is a Scottish way to Europe, there is definitely Scottish interest *in* Europe!

Cluj-Napoca

Or about the importance of accepting (and expanding) one's identities



*Courageous and subtle, and
hopefully, effective!*

BOGDAN BRETOIU, *FlipFlop.ro*

A home of the Festival created by a Turkish artist in a former synagogue situated in a small Roma neighbourhood just in the middle of the Hungarian historic centre of this Romanian city is a glimpse of what Transeuropa Festival Cluj signified. Cluj stands for almost as many geographies as people in the city, different in space as in time.

With European integration reaching Central and Eastern Europe, the century-old multicultural model needs to answer questions it does not even dare to ask. The frame of thought that led to the events taking place in Transeuropa Festival Cluj approached the specific issue of migration, internal and external, together with those of the impact it bears on minorities, urban public space and postcommunist society.

The majority of the events happened at Casa Tranzit, a former orthodox synagogue recently turned into a contemporary art space: an original venue that impressed the international guests as well as the audience. It is the place where two exhibitions cohabited and even complemented each other: Can Altay's "Home of Festival" *The Ground was divided...we jumped* and *Pulse, within the Veil*, a project inspired by *Ars Homo Erotica*, presented at the National Gallery in Warsaw last autumn, including artworks by Romanian and international artists offering an intimate, delicate and, at the same time, extremely powerful approach to **sexual identity and LGBT rights** (see section Art Programme of this catalogue for more information).

It is at Casa Tranzit that the Festival opened with Trans-political narratives, a series of documentary films on postcommunism, tourism and self-commodification, part of Transitland Europa archives that were presented by celebrated artist **Joanne Richardson**. Discussions were more than vivid, ranging from the legacy of communism in Central and Eastern Europe to funding of critical art projects in the same geographical space.



The same venue witnessed one of the key talks on migration that have taken place in Romania on the evening of Europe Day May 9, when the projection of the film *Morgen* was followed by intense debates on the nature of the borders of Europe and the part that Central and Eastern Europe play in the framework of globalization, in particular in view of accession to the Schengen area.

On May 10th, Transeuropa Cluj moved for a few hours to the very popular *L'Atelier Café*, where young artist (and European Alternatives volunteer) Sânziana Crăciun opened her exhibition on *Urban Spaces: Old and New*, a graphic and photography project developed during her visit to London as part of the Transeuropa Network.

Another very special event took place at the Cărturești Bookstore, a very important meeting point for all lovers of literature and contemporary art. Here, Transeuropa Festival organized a reading session entitled *About and aside the Roma*, aimed at debating the **existing clichés on the Roma** as they have developed in literature.



The excerpts were read, and also performed, by the Transeuropa Cluj volunteers team, together with our Australian and Canadian friends Alice and Teodora, respectively. This event was very well received by the media, due to the visibility provided by the venue and to the originality of its concept. As Paula Boarță from popular news portal FlipFlop.ro remarked, *“This reflection of the image that the Roma and their culture have borne across time allowed a closer view and a different perception on certain stereotypes that are associated with this minority, and showed, notably, the importance of the angle and the context from which the Roma are perceived.”*

On May 13th Transeuropa Festival Cluj inaugurated its collaboration with the University of Cluj by organising *Is Europe too Social?*, a key speech followed by a roundtable (with plenty of student remarks) among the academics Juraj Draxler (*Anglo-American University, Prague*), Norbert Petrovici (*Faculty of Sociology, Cluj* and member of *Grupul pentru Acțiune Socială*) and Sergiu Mișcoiu (*Faculty of European Studies, Cluj*). The discussion focused on the possibility of Central and East European states bearing a **postcommunist heritage** of acting together in providing a model for the dismantling Western welfare state.

On May 14th, Transeuropa Festival moved to Piața Muzeului, a very pleasant pedestrian square situated in the middle of the mediaeval town, turned into a social market for one day. There, a joyful crowd of young and old, Romanian and non-Romanian, joined the spirit of free-sharing, that ranged from English comics to face-painting, playing the violin and drawing mindmaps of Europe. In the evening of the same day, towards dusk, the square became full of cartons and chalk writings, which made citizens stop and ask themselves what kind of event could re-frame their familiar public space in such a way.

It was the *Space, motion, emotion*, a workshop that had previously taken place in Transeuropa Festival Prague and aimed at discovering possibilities for improving public space, based on people's feelings about the one they currently share.

Transeuropa Fest Cluj ended on May 15th with a **Transnational Forum on Roma Rights**, including several panels and one keynote speech by Professor Thomas Acton, one of the two professors of Romani culture in the world, who previously participated in Transeuropa London.

Sparkingly vivid and strong, the Forum captivated the audience for more than double the time it was meant to last, so that the same audience could almost immediately enjoy the closing event, a DJ set entitled *Burghesinia plays ON the New Minority*, performed by Burghesinia Collective.

In brief, Transeuropa Festival Cluj showed that a city of geographies as varied as the ever expanding multicultural character of its population can and should perform the exercise of self-assessment. It can only do it well and for the better.



Lublin

Festival for a Europe without prejudices

The main exhibition of Transeuropa Lublin, *Love is Love, Art as LGBTQ Activism: from Britain to Belarus* should be the example to follow in the canon of art's initiating a discussion about minorities...

GRZEGORZ JOZEF CZUK, "Getting to Know the Other", *Gazeta Wyborcza daily*

Transeuropa Lublin reminds me of looking under the carpet and dusting the uncomfortable problems which are pushed to the margin: social inequality, the rights of women and sexual minorities, access to education. The word democracy refreshes its meaning.

MARTA RYCZKOWSKA, *Zoom monthly*

"I left Rome on a sunny spring day and arrived in a freezing Poland. However, taking part in Transeuropa Lublin could not have made me feel warmer. The Festival managed to attract a large group of diverse citizens interested in hearing about or visually experiencing themes and issues that are still quite marginal in Polish public discourse. From gay rights to abortion, from recycling and composting to exploring the Jewish heritage of the city, Transeuropa Festival did not shy away from topics that can be thorny everywhere in Europe and particularly so at the Eastern border of the EU. Not being able to understand Polish, I did appreciate mostly the visual arts elements of the festival, in particular the exhibition *Love Is Love* on gay visibility in Europe, featuring campaigns on LGBT issues from around Europe, contrasted with shocking images of violence during the Gay Pride parades of Zagreb and Belgrade."

ALESSANDRO VALERA, *Rome*

Held in Lublin between 5–15 May 2011, Transeuropa celebrated hospitality, the rights of women, minorities and refugees. Through exhibitions, performances, debates and workshops, it fostered the acceptance of LGBTQ community, feminism and transnational cultures. The Festival tried to remember and revive the murdered interculturality of this city at the Eastern border of Poland. Before the Holocaust, Lublin was a major centre of Jewish culture; that is why we organized a number of talks on Jewish life: about the rebellious women coming originally from the Lublin area (Rosa Luxemburg, Bela Shapira, Nan Goldin), Goncourt-winning writer Anna Langfus, and a conversation with Professor Irena Grudzinska-Gross of Princeton who demonstrated Poland's anti-Semitism in her book *Golden Harvest*, co-authored with Jan Tomasz Gross. At Tektura alternative collective, Grenoble-Lublin poet Adrien Gros read his poetry on looking for his own Jewish roots in this city.



The transnational character of Lublin was further explored in the presentations by Roma and Ukrainian communities. We also met with Chechen refugees who presented their precarious situation: exclusion, unemployment, problems with education and residence; Chechens feel neglected by the municipal institutions.

Gender and queer culture was another aspect developed in the Festival, vital to this city where the political class has turned religion into an ideology. Feminism and homosexuality were examined in the exhibitions mounted especially for Transeuropa: *Love Is Love, The Body, The City of Love* and *The Madonnas*. Curated by Pawel Leszkowicz at Labirynt Gallery, *Love Is Love. Art as LGBTQ Activism: from Britain to Belarus* surveyed performative campaigns for lesbian and gay visibility across Europe; through the video art of Igor Grubic (Croatia) and Bergamot (Belarus), it showed the burning issues of anti-gay violence in Belgrade, Zagreb and Minsk. The exhibition was accompanied by a discussion on Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka, feminist and LGBT rights advocate, killed in the Smolensk air crash. She was instrumental in mounting Poland's lesbian and gay visibility campaign *Let Us Be Seen* presented at *Love Is Love*. In the context of this exhibition, together with invited panelists, we participated in lively debates over *Art as Performing Human Rights* and *Art as Gender and LGBTQ Activism*. A sexual panorama of Lublin *The City of Love* by Piotr Nazaruk sparked a discussion over artistic freedom. Curated by Magda Linkowska at Labirynt Gallery, *The Madonnas* presented feminist paintings by Katarzyna Holda; critic Iza Kowalczyk called them "courageous works which break conventions". In his exhibition *The Body* at Zacheta, Pawel Korbus explored the social body, commenting on the problem of homelessness in Lublin.

The performances by Szymon Pietrasiewicz and Piotr Salata problematised the political issues of this region of Europe. Salata protested in front of a "Catholic centre for curing homosexuality". Theatre productions analyzed femininity and masculinity through the work of choreographers/dancers Pawel Korbus and Janusz Adam Biedrzycki. An evening of homoerotic poetry and a workshop on transgender were coordinated by the Campaign Against Homophobia. We also organized a lecture about the problem of sexually transmitted diseases in the Lublin area. A debate for the democratization of higher education, rooted in our academic protests against the threat of firing 400 university auxiliary personnel in 2009, was also held.

The Festival made news in the nationwide editions of broadsheets *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Rzeczpospolita*. Poland's biggest newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* defined the Festival as "Getting to Know the Other" and "Art Breaks the Taboo"; its chief art critic Dorota Jarecka wrote on Labirynt's *Love Is Love*, Tektura alternative collective and the "bold nudes" of *The City of Love*. The fundamentalist Radio Maryja took to calling Transeuropa a "festival of sodomites"; its daily *Nasz Dziennik* claimed that "swarms of reformers of the traditional social order and of Polish mentality were invited" to the Festival. Transeuropa thus served as dissidence just as Lublin was a hub of dissenters in the past: in the sixteenth century this city constituted a centre of the Reformation. When socially radical (anti-war and anti-serfdom) Unitarians/Socinians had been exiled from seventeenth-century Poland, they found refuge in Amsterdam and Cluj. Via Transeuropa, we could connect again with these cities as well as with Paris where our inspirers, thinker Julia Kristeva and theatre-maker Ewa Wojciak, spoke at the Festival.

Transeuropa is not only a festival of knowledge and art. It is also a test of openness in society.

RAFAL CZEKAJ, *Krytyka Polityczna*

Transeuropa is a rich programme of debates, workshops and performances.

MALGORZATA SZLACHETKA, *Gazeta Wyborcza daily*



Transeuropa Lublin was well-attended: we had over 150 guests for the openings of *Love Is Love*, *The City of Love* and *The Madonnas*. The Festival integrated a variety of milieux ranging from Labirynt Gallery, known for its postconceptual exhibitions, to countercultural Tektura, and including Grodzka Gate-NN Theatre, Campaign Against Homophobia, Amnesty International, Krytyka Polityczna, UN Social Programme Spoldzielnia, Zieloni, Homo Faber, Lublin 9-L'Étrangère and a number of individual scholars/artists/activists. The Festival cherished hospitality in the sense of philosopher Hélène Cixous; Lublin is becoming again a city of a variety of cultures, identities and loves.

We have decided not to conclude Transeuropa, but continue it in a postsituationist way of a non-stop action for social and cultural change: a Festival of Every Day to create a Lublin and a Europe without anti-Semitism, misogyny and homophobia.

TOMASZ KITLINSKI

Amsterdam

The art of politics



Several of the events and topics in Amsterdam presented a cross-over between art and politics. A project led by artist **Jonmar van Vlijmen** addressed our perception of the unapproachability and distance of European politicians by collecting personal letters addressed directly to European Council President Herman van Rompuy. The project aimed to break down barriers between people and their potential for positive collective action. We also tackled several themes which are shared across Transeuropa Festival all over Europe, such as combating populist xenophobia and promoting media freedom – to get the transnational debate started! The festival ended on a positive note, with a ‘flashmob’ of people exchanging kisses to promote the rights of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi, transgender and queer) people across Europe, an event which also happened simultaneously in Paris.

Most of the events for the festival in Amsterdam were located in one venue and were presented on one day, Sunday May 8. We kicked the day with a workshop “**Positive Populism**”. The Danube Foundation was invited to give this workshop with which they try to use the tools of xenophobe parties for something more positive. After a presentation by Eefje Blankevoort on how images are used for political communication in Iran, participants were invited to make their own “zines”. A zine is a home-made magazine in which people can express their creativity and ideas. It is easy and cheap to make and distribute.

A second important event was a debate on **media freedom in Europe**. With this debate we wanted to introduce European media freedom in the Netherlands as a pressing issue. Clearly this is a pressing issue in some EU countries, but the Netherlands are in a more fortunate situation. We asked our speakers what press freedom is and what the situation is in different European countries. The speakers - Judith Sargentini (MEP Greens), Marietje Schaake (MEP D66), Leon Willems (Free Press Unlimited), Thomas Bruning (Nederlandse Vereniging van Journalisten) and





Eric Karstens (European Journalism Centre) - and audience were so engaged in this conversation that we did not even touch upon the question why Dutch people should care. We guess they already do.

The exhibition of the Transeuropa Festival art project *Visualising Transnationalism* was presented by Pablo de Soto from Hackitectura.net, explaining how transnationalism is already well embedded in the fabric of European societies, and presenting his mapping of higher education and students protests conducted collaboratively for the Festival.

Connecting the Amsterdam edition with Transeuropa Cardiff was *Sounds of Europe*, a performance of poetry and translations especially composed for Transeuropa Festival by T. S. Eliot Prize winner Philip Gross and Amsterdam poet Tsead Bruinja, exploring the connections between translation, movement, and displacement. Appropriately for the themes explored, the poems were written by Philip and Tsead during train journeys between Cardiff and Amsterdam, and were performed during Transeuropa Festival in both Cardiff and Amsterdam. During the events the poems were translated live by the multicultural audience members using phones and tweets. The result? Translations in Greek, Polish, French, German, Spanish, Arabic, Welsh, Persian and Yoruba.

During the main events participants were entertained with several side activities. A TV with headphones showed two films, one on "coming out" for LGBT in Europe and one on Roma rights, both produced by young Festival activists from throughout Europe. Several of the posters and visual material produced a part of the *Visualising Transnationalism* project were also on display. Lastly, people could enter the office of an EU civil servant to have their level of "Europeanness" checked and write a letter to Herman van Rompuy.

On Europe Day May 9 we had one last event in Amsterdam. Attracting significant media attention, **Kiss me for Equality** was a **flashmob** during which participants kissed on the streets of Paris and Amsterdam at the same time to ask media attention for LGBT rights in Europe.

All in all we were pleased to find that the quality of the events was high and we were successful in attracting an international audience and bringing different nationalities that live in Amsterdam together. We will most definitely continue to build a network in Amsterdam to make the festival in 2012 even more successful.

Bratislava

city to live in!

***Transeuropa made me understand
there are European solutions to
local problems!***

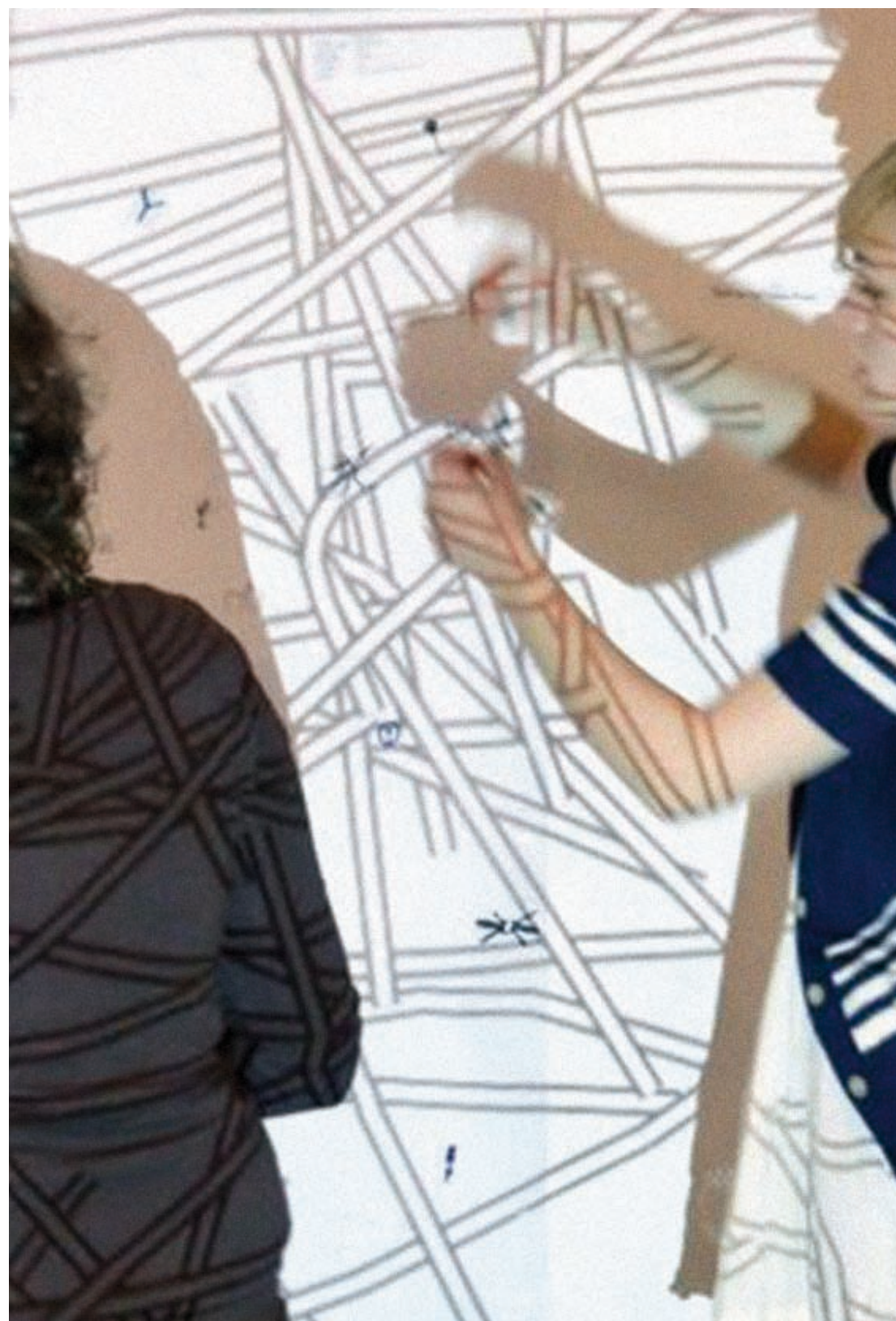
ADELA AUGIAS, participant

When we learnt about the possibility to organize the Transeuropa festival in Bratislava, we found it as a great opportunity to put to cooperation many interesting groups, projects and places in the city we were born or have been studying and working in for many years. The enthusiastic group of young organisers managed to create interesting program with variety of issues starting with homeless theater and ending with discussions about secularism and austerity measures in Slovakia.

What connected all of these events was mainly our willingness to put together a program “without borders”. We wanted to organize it without any constraints to the topics and forms of their presentation because we believed that there are not minor and major problems when there is a willingness to talk about it. Our activity resulted in seven indoor and outdoor activities during the second week of May 2011 as a part of the huge Transeuropa festival holding in 12 cities in the same time.

We started our “beyond the borders” festival on 6th of May by spectacle of **Theater without home**, who performed the play *Kuca Paca* where homeless, disabled and socially excluded people were the actors. “We live in very busy times, with many deadlines and little space for thinking. This spectacle showed me that there is no more important thing than our time and our own space. We should value what we have, not running for what we do not need to have”, one of the visitors remarked after the spectacle.

The second event was held in BAtelier, an exciting new art space in Bratislava. The young Slovak artist **Ivana Šateková** presented her exhibition *Nobody put the baby in the corner* where she was connecting the elements of Slovak folk music with cartoon pictures connected with similar drawings in all pictures.



Thanks to the nice weather the 8th of May was the great day in Bratislava to organize **bike ride** through city district Petržalka. We passed through main cycle routes and found a lot of problematic places for the cyclists. The continuation of this event was on Wednesday where we discussed difficulties for cyclists with the representatives of **city hall**. After the ride we went to the cultural center Dunaj to watch movie "You never bike alone" about the cyclo movement Critical mass in USA and Canada. The same organization was the coordinator of this event in Bratislava, and we got some new interesting ideas how to reveal the cycling problem and how to persuade the local politicians and citizens that creating the space for cycling is prosperous for any city in the world.



From Monday to Thursday we had the four discussions in Bratislava multi-art space *A4 Nulty priestor*. The topics were quite broad, from social rights on Monday to **Secularism** on Tuesday, Bratislava as the city to live in on Wednesday and **austerity measures** on Thursday. We tried to make those discussions as much transeuropean as it was possible. For example Czech economist Ilona Švihlíková came to Bratislava to search for similarities and differences in austerity measures and their impacts in such close countries as Slovakia and the Czech Republic are.

Thanks to two press releases announcing the upcoming Transeuropa festival we were published in two major Slovak press agencies (TASR and SITA) and in biggest news portal www.sme.sk. Even if it was a challenge to bring together such a wide variety of themes and activities, it was exciting to be a part of the Transeuropa spirit with a lot of powerful ideas and demanding tasks.

Last but not least, it was a great experience for us, organizers, to hold such a meaningful but exhausting programme of events in several days in May.

We hope that we will maintain those good elements of the first year of the Festival in Bratislava improvig as we work towards 2012.

We are very pleased we had a possibility to contribute to the idea of a festival “without borders”, an idea which should be a value for all of us.



Berlin

building / searching / enabling... collectivity in networks

It may seem that European responsibility is not exactly a sexy topic.

It's high time to dust off the issue of Europe a little. That's why Transeuropa Festival is here!

MICHAEL VOGTMANN, bln.fm

As in London or Paris in Berlin the transeuropean experience is lived on a daily basis through its multicultural inhabitants and passer-bys. Surely, we wanted more than that: we wanted to engage citizens into a debate not only on transnationalism itself but on what we feel are transnational issues that ought to be tackled by us at this moment. For Berlin we singled out immigration, or more precisely EU migration policy, as well as the discrimination against Roma and Sinti and the challenges of transnational or **global democracy**.

The opening night of the festival was hosted by *rehearsing collectivity*, an arts project at the Uferstudios Wedding. The Italian philosopher, political activist and writer **Franco 'bifo' Berardi** spoke to a packed audience under the title "the General Intellect is looking for a Body" on *network building and critical awareness in times characterized by crises, consumption and acceleration*. In a stimulating debate the audience engaged the philosopher on his theory of network-building and the general intellect. Bifo sees strong potential in critical forms of communication and sought to promote experimental forms of social and political action within such networks.

What can such forms of action look like and how can we assure more transparency in decision making? The activists' group Equality is promoting global transparency or even global participation in decision making processes through the idea of global referenda or a world parliamentary assembly. These were the themes at the heart of an event hosted at the Haus der Demokratie und Menschenrechte Berlin. We singled out a concrete starting point for transnational democracy in the new European-wide **Citizens' Initiative**, allowing European citizens to bring a legislative proposals directly at the Commission.



ph © Roberto Beani

The final days of Berlin Transeuropa festival with events on Friday, Saturday and Sunday night at the eclectic bar/ club/café Südblock and cinema Arsenal at Potsdamer Platz were marked by the recurrence of the themes of migration, transit and **transnationalism**. On Friday night at Südblock the German Green MEP Ska Keller discussed with Oktay Durukan, from Istanbul-based *Helsinki Citizens Assembly*, current EU asylum and refugee policies and reactions to the North African refugee crisis.

Bodyless borders, borderless bodies – transnationality in focus at the Transeuropa Festival in Berlin.

GREGOR DÖMLING, *blog Freitag.de*

"Today once again we must speak of fortress Europe rather than lighthouse Europe when we look at the EU response to migrants in the Mediterranean", summarized Gregor Dömling in his blog on *Der Freitag*. Ska Keller MEP underlined that Europe does not wither under a few thousand migrants now entering the EU as a result of the upheavals in North Africa. She called for more **European solidarity** and spreaded optimism to progressively gain ground for a more welcoming and collaborative migration policy.



The last two events of the Festival in Berlin were again the result of a collaboration with established artists and curators in Berlin. The **Arsenal cinema** hosted a film-screening and debates program that attracted a strong crowd across the arts and political scene. In collaboration with the Institute for Film and Video Art and the Contemporary Art Space Savvy five video works have been shown depicting the body as a language and allegory. The painful experience of displacement and ethnic cleansing was picked up on Sunday's film night, "Welcome home " by Eliza Petkova, which described impressively the fate of Roma families deported from Germany back to Kosovo.

The festival in Berlin was a successful first-time experience on which we can strongly build for the future. We took the message of the opening lecture - networking - serious, and established important links with organisations ranging from Amaro Drom e.V., organisers of the Roma festival Herdelezi, to Der Freitag, a well known weekly who became the Festival's media partner. It's just the beginning!



ph © Roberto Beani



Prague

beyond Czech borders

As a festival that tries to span the gap between culture and politics, Transeuropa is unique in its style of putting urgent events into a cultural context and putting a vibrant, youth-oriented spin on issues of international concern.

STEPHEN DELBOS, *The Prague Post*

The energy associated with Prague spring is very well known. Transeuropa Festival, held 6 – 15 May, embraced this positive energy and offered something unique to Czech civil society: a **network** of engaged people both inside and outside the Czech Republic, looking inside and outside of borders, to work towards positive change.

The festival was well attended, with hundreds of Czechs and expats living in Prague gathering to celebrate the opening of the festival at club and cultural center 2.patro. It was clear throughout the week that many connections were made, as many audience members and participants returned for multiple events and engaged in conversation with the panelists and organizers. After 10 days of cultural and political events and activities, it was clear that the festival brought with it a gust of fresh (spring) air to the city!

The festival aimed to evoke a new, outward-looking kind of engaged civil society in Prague.

In the past 20 years, the country has sustained a whirlwind of transition. The festival in Prague wanted to bring to light these transitions and changes – and help Czechs become more accepting of these movements of people and ideas, bringing a new understanding of the cooperation between EU states (to contrast Czech president Václav Klaus' prevailing Euro-skepticism).

It is clear that the festival will lead to further work towards a platform for people to develop new and dynamic solutions for these issues, in Prague and across European borders. Transeuropa Prague focused on European citizenship, migration and multiculturalism, and Roma rights thematics. These concepts were defined and redefined in debates, panel discussions and hands-on activities, whether it be in a public workshop about public space, or a seminar which prompted participants to create their own Utopian city.



The active panel discussion *Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Citizenship 'Lite'* examined what it means to be a European citizen, be aware of one's national identity and be a third country national living in Europe's borders. After an engaging two hour discussion among the panelists with thought-provoking involvement from the audience the discussion arrived at the essential question: **What do we mean by citizenship?** Martin Wilhelm, director of the youth foundation *Citizens for Europe*, discussed the citizenry process throughout the EU, especially for third-country migrants, while Czech Prime Minister's Advisor on Foreign Policy and Human Rights and director of Občanský Institut (Civic Institute), Roman Joch, brought up a more controversial perspective on the importance of national citizenship and identity. Finally political theorist and philosopher, panelist Pavel Barša who described himself as a "multiculturalism fan", brought up the importance of multiculturalism and its potential to integrate by acknowledging people's differences, as well as the importance to embrace the idea of a multicultural citizenship.

This discussion was in many ways continued the next evening at the event **Deconstructing the Migration Experience in Central Europe**. Moderated by political and social commentator Hrishabh Sandilya, who also led the panel on citizenship, thought provoking questions were posed to both the panel members and audience.

What does it mean to be an immigrant in Europe? Is integration an idealistic expectation or is it possible with the right institutional structures to integrate those who migrate to Europe? The constantly evolving idea of what it means to be a migrant was discussed from a political, academic and an NGO perspective during this event. Marie Jelínková from the Multicultural Center in Prague brought up an important point which is that **integration** cannot happen if people are struggling within the system and cannot even attain basic rights. The panel concluded with the question: Is migration a right or a privilege or both? Other panelists include Andrea Baršová from the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, Zhivka Deleva from Comenius University in Bratislava and John Godson, the first black Member of Parliament in Poland. Mr. Godson emigrated from Nigeria to Poland in 1993 and in 2007 took his seat at parliament.



Godson discussed his experience both as a migrant and lawmaker, which provided an interesting perspective.

Roma rights were another theme explored during the Transeuropa festival in Prague. More than 200,000 Roma live in the Czech Republic alone, but many are afraid to say that they are Romani. Several short films profiling the Roma community in Central and Eastern Europe entitled “Colorful but Colorblind: **Beyond Roma Stereotypes**” were screened, followed by a discussion with Robert Rustem from the European Roma and Travellers Forum, a division of **Council of Europe**. The films showed glimpses of Roma life, aspirations and challenges that still face this ethnic minority in most European countries, as well as how important it is for the future integration for everyone to break from the prevailing generalizations which impede the progress of the community. This screening was followed by a panel discussion, also featuring Rustem who spoke about the importance of seeing Roma as whole people with multiple identities, not only by their Roma identity.

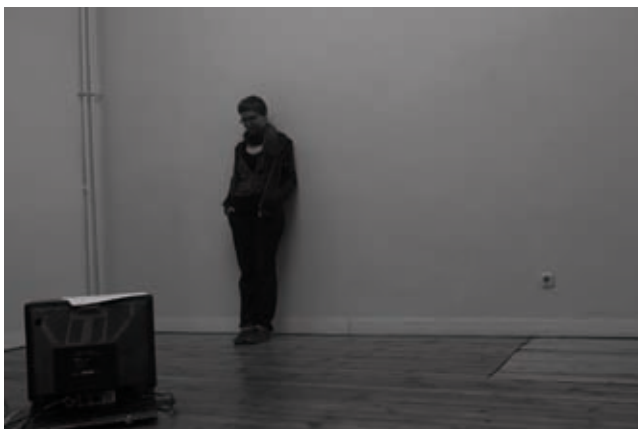
The Festival featured many more events, including discussions of social welfare in Europe, an important exhibition on **sustainability**, public transport, and environmentally-friendly cities in public space in Prague, a participative workshop on concepts of the **utopian city** in Europe, a bike-ride through the city, and much more.

Further events are taking root as festival volunteers and participants are eager to continue working on the concerns and issues that were illuminated during the Transeuropa week. As stated in an article by *The Prague Post*, “The festival is just the beginning.”



Sofia

questioning borders



A very intense week full of events, the Transeuropa Festival Sofia made the way for some of the marginalized and grossly omitted cries of the day in Bulgarian society. These issues were wrapped in our main thematic axis – **Border**, a concept that we used to point at the dividing lines in Bulgarian society nowadays.

We began on Monday with an eventful day: Lyubomir Draganov's video installation inspired on migration experiences was the official opening at the **Red House Center for Culture and Debate**, our main festival location. The opening of the exhibition was the relay for a lively debate called "The **elusive frontiers** of Europe". With speakers such as Mauro Longo (researcher of the readmission agreements between Italy and Libya), Marina Lyakova (University of Karlsruhe) and Zvezda Vankova (expert in refugees' rights and legislation) we went through the worrisome future of Bulgaria's border control and its grim present as to how refugees are in fact criminalised.

On Wednesday we focused around the obstacles around **Roma inclusion** and tried to identify - through a debate and an activist visual project by Emanuele Guidi - strategies of **emancipation** instead of administered inclusion. Among the participants was Bulgarian Roma activist and intellectual Vassil Chaprazov, Gergo Pulay (anthropologist from Hungary) and Marton Rovid (political scientist and analyst of the EU policies towards Roma).

On the day next the most interactive and attended event took place: called "scavenger Hunt", the event engaged people to "compose" poems commissioned especially by Bulgarian poets, and participants spread all over Sofia downtown to both hunt the bits of words and get to know an old and forgotten Sofia by using a 1920s map.

An engaging and rich debate took place on Thursday: a mix of contemporary artists with hybrid national belonging such as Boryana Rossa and Krassimir Terziev from Bulgaria, Nika Dubrovski (Russia/Germany) and Oleg Mavromati (Russia/Bulgaria) all gathered to discuss with guests of the Haspel Social Center the intersections and successful crossroads of art, activism and politics.

A similarly transgressive blend of **activism and research** prevailed in the debate on “Feminization of labor and poverty”: we first watched the documentary “City of Women Badante” by director Stefan Komandarev to see how economic migration from Eastern to Western Europe affects male identity, only to discover later in the debate how similar logics prevail in economic migration from the South to North thanks to Rose-Myrliè Joseph (Haiti/France). Dr. Elena Stoykova, a sociologist from Sofia University highlighted the policy structures and legislation that make possible a feminization of labor, while Dimitra Kofti (University College of London) made a presentation about outsourcing and privatization in Bulgaria to reveal how even men become subjects of “feminization” in terms of labor conditions and rights.

Our final day was reserved for the festival’s guest lecturer, Prof. Jelisaveta Blagojevic from Belgrade who delivered a mind-blowing lecture on Europe and “**European provincialism**”. Prof. Blagojevic not only gave examples of such provincialism but also made us think about the price and reverse effects of euro-integration. As she said “public discourses in Balkan countries on their road to EU, as well as in the EU itself, are in many cases reinforcing the spirit of the provincial and thus reflecting mutual provincialisms.”



There was a strong media interest throughout the festival week: Capital weekly published a review with festival highlights, focused on the themes of migration and roma integration, and the city space game Scavenger Hunt, which took place in an old migrant and multicultural neighborhood of Sofia. Lorenzo Marsili and Stefan Krastev appeared on one of the most viewed morning programs, *the day is starting* of Channel 1 of **Bulgarian National Television**, to speak about the festival and the migration theme in particular. The same morning at TV7 Emanuele Guidi and Mariya Ivancheva were presenting the artistic program of the festival in Sofia and the other festival cities. Gergo Pulay, an anthropologist from Budapest and guest of the festival, spoke about the need of roma emancipation and a new start of the integration policies towards

the roma, on the morning program of the Horizont, **Bulgarian National Radio's** prime channel.

Both the opening and closing parties of the festival gathered young and socially engaged people who came together to both dance and discuss the plentitude of unaddressed and remaining questions throughout these seven days. While everyone was going home - guests, organizers, and visitors, - we could not help but think: while it gets better, we don't have to forget that it can always get worse if we don't continuously address issues such as xenophobia, homophobia, misogyny, and discrimination everyday. We have to work to continue.





**TRANSEUROPA
FESTIVAL
2011**

**DOSSIER:
EUROPE
BEYOND
THE CRISIS**





APPROVED!
Madrid, Puerta del Sol



Uncouple the welfare of Europe from the totem of national sovereignty

NICCOLO MILANESE

The only progressive choice is for greater union and greater democracy within economic decision making.

We have reached the point where even the welfare of the people of Europe is sacrificed to the totem of national sovereignty. This is the fact which must be rigorously understood, and which must be ceaselessly made explicit as the populations of Europe experience the worst of effects of a needlessly severe recession and its aftermath.

In 2009, it was made clear to anyone who doubted that the world financial system depends on the State for support. In 2010 and early 2011, it has become clear that the nation state in Europe depends on the financial markets. The nations of Europe have made the market ratings of their own sovereign debt the rule for their actions. **The future of a nation state** is locked into their debt ratings, which has been made the measure of a nation's virtue.

Before these last years, one might have thought that the most pertinent reason for taking the transnational horizon as the basis for progressive political action in Europe was related to climate change, or development, or global conflict mediation. These reasons remain highly important, and some are ultimately more important than the relative welfare of Europeans. But there is no chance of dealing with them effectively for as long as the essential actors of the political situation are not understood. In 2009 and 2010 it has become clear not only that the nation-state is alive in

Europe, but that the European Union in its current form, far from being a challenge to the nation state, is actually accelerating the most deleterious effects of the national form also within Europe, and is inflicting them on its own people.

The only solution to these problems is a reform of the European Union itself such that it overcomes the nation state and becomes **a new kind of political entity**, one which is not prey to the shortcomings of the national and state forms.

The European economic area is the largest single market in the world. Large parts of it, including the most economically powerful parts, share a single currency. Yet no economic government exists and each attempt to establish such a government is undermined by member states which wish to retain either a competitive advantage against other member states or the idea of national sovereignty over their own economy, or both.

Germany, for example, wants to protect its own competitiveness and not be treated as the deep-pockets of Europe, even though it has become competitive and rich thanks to the growing deficits of other countries: where there is a trade surplus in one country there must be a trade deficit in another. That is simple bookkeeping and is not a moral issue.

We must think not only of transnational solutions to our economic problems, but of transnational institutions which can make democratic politics work.

The debt crisis in Europe, both inside and outside the Eurozone, has shown the hollowness of national sovereignty in contemporary Europe. In countries with debt crises, whether inside the Eurozone like Greece and Ireland, or outside like Hungary, **decisions over the economy** including over social spending have been largely surrendered to the IMF and the EU. Even the paymaster Germany cannot pretend to have sovereign control over its economy, both because its banks and the state are now massively exposed to bad debt, and because its economy is strongly linked to those of debt crisis countries.

The United Kingdom has justified a massive austerity program by reference to avoiding the kind of crisis Greece is experiencing, which shows that from a political point of view, being inside or outside the Eurozone is not decisive.

'Contagion' as a concept is not limited to debt or to the economic domain, but could accurately characterise decision making in contemporary Europe. Europe is neither a federation of insulated polities which can make decisions independently, nor a single sovereign unit which would become a sovereign state once all traditional forms of sovereignty (control over currency, over the army etc) are reunited in it. It cannot be either of these things. Contemporary politics in Europe is and will remain determined by situations of overlapping competences, spheres of influence and competing or conflicting levels of decision.

We must think not only of transnational solutions to these economic problems, but of transnational institutions which can make democratic politics work at a transnational level, and make decision making navigable for citizens and politicians alike.



ph © Camil Tuncan

Seven theses for a more just and democratic Europe

Seven theses on the basis of these reflections may be of use to get us thinking:

- 1.** The economy must become thoroughly a political domain once again, and that means not only the concern of technocrats or administrators, but a political concern in which alternatives are possible. With the exception of far right and nationalist parties, very few political parties currently advocate any **real alternatives** to the current model, and deal only in degrees.
- 2.** Even if Greece defaults out of the Eurozone and returns to the drachma, most likely followed by other countries in the Mediterranean, there will still be a question of the direction the remaining Eurozone economies will take: towards greater fiscal and political union, or towards a gradual and more or less orderly return to national currencies: for the risk of a repeat of the Greek experience will be too great also for the market, unless fiscal and political union is put in place. Of these the only progressive choice is for **greater union and greater democracy** within economic decision making: only by working together will European economies have the possibility to influence world-decisions, a return to purely national economies will be highly inequitable for some nation states, and only at a transnational horizon can transformational policies for the European economy be realised.
- 3.** Instead of punishing the people of Europe for their past 'bad' governments, the leaders of Europe should be concentrating on building a **better democracy** for the future, and investing in the people of Europe. Both would be possible by building a European democracy which is able to politically control financial markets and the economy, and by the creation of joint Euro-bonds which would allow transeuropean investment in education, infrastructure and sustainable energy from which the whole economy of Europe would benefit. The creation of Euro-bonds would be a forward-looking acknowledgement of the interdependence of European economies.
- 4.** The effects of the economic crisis fall disproportionately on young people, but this is above all a structural issue within European economies which predates the crisis, and one that will only get worse with the aging population of Europe. The phenomenon of the growth of unpaid or **exploitative internships** as the only access to paid employment (for the lucky) and persistent and growing youth unemployment must be dealt with as a matter of urgency, and requires a structural change in the European economy, making it an economy in which education and training are valued and remunerated but not a prerequisite for paid jobs, in which all jobs are conceived as valuable contributions to the good of people, and none are conceived as exploitation for the purpose of profit or the exclusive benefit of a minority of others.
- 5.** What counts as valuable work must be reconsidered. The good education of children by parents, for example, ultimately adds much more value to the economy than any one regular person's day-job, but is unrewarded under our current system. On basis of a renewed understanding of what is valuable, public support for a reformed welfare state, and perhaps even a citizens' wage, would be assured.
- 6.** Precarity is transnational. It is transnational both empirically in its omnipresence throughout Europe, and also in its essence, since precarity is determined not only by labour standards and regulations in the home country of the worker, but by the comparative advantages open to Capital in other countries. Trade unions cannot hope to fight precariousness and protect precarious workers without becoming transnational themselves.
- 7.** The programs of most political parties and governments remain trapped in the thinking of either an industry based economy, a financially based economy, or a service economy of small for-profit businesses. In an age of innovation, our business models also need to be innovative, and promote coproduction and cooperative models, which do not serve only the end of profits for the shareholders.

Economic alternatives for solidarity after the crisis

ECONOMISTES ATERRÉS

***Why is it that the lessons
of the crisis have not been learnt?***

The decisions and projects of the European Council to deal with the economic crisis over the past months have not even reassured financial markets, let alone done anything to challenge the structural problems of the European economic model. In mid-February 2011, the tariffs imposed by the markets for 10 year bonds was 3,2% for Germany and 3.55% for France, but 4.8% for Italy, 5.35% for Spain, 7.45% for Portugal, 9.1% for Ireland, 11.7% for Greece. The financial markets anticipate that these countries will stop paying their debts at some point, and some speculators are working on the assumption of a break-up of the Eurozone. In order to continue paying their debts, the countries under attack must deal with higher interest rates, adopt budgetary interest rates, and reduce their salaries to re-establish their competitiveness. This condemns them to a long period of **stagnation and unemployment** which will ultimately prevent any real reduction of their deficits.

Why is it that the lessons of the crisis have not been learnt? It is due to the economic strategies based on pressure on salaries and public expenditure, the lowering of demand being compensated by gains in competitiveness in neomercantilist countries such as Germany, or by financial and housing bubbles and growing indebtedness of homeowners in the Anglo-Saxon and southern European countries. The bankruptcy of these two strategies has obliged the nation states to allow their public deficits to grow in order to limit the recession. Reducing these deficits cannot be achieved

until another economic model has been defined, which must on the one side be based on an augmentation of salaries and social income, in the neomercantilist countries like Germany as in the Anglo-Saxon countries, and on the other side based on a new industrial politics, which looks to organise and finance the change-over to a sustainable economy.

The difficulties of public finances before the crisis came from the strategy of organised fiscal competition. The restoring of public finances will be achieved by the fight against fiscal evasion and fiscal paradises. In order to reduce public deficits, taxation must be increased on financial revenue, on capital gains, and on high revenues which were amongst the causes of the crisis due to their growth. At the European level, that will be achieved by a strategy of fiscal harmonisation, fixing the rates of minimal taxation for businesses, for high salaries and for inheritance ensuring for each country the possibility of taxing its businesses and residents.

To resuscitate Europe will require a total change of paradigm. Europe must not look towards a future of infinite austerity, but look to bring to life a specific model of society which must be profoundly renewed. Of course, not all critical economists are in agreement when it comes to what this renewal should look like. Some of us would like to see Europe direct itself towards sustainable development, a “green new deal”. Others say that we should move to an alternative model where “living well” would no longer be measured by GDP. We are not unanimous either when it comes to which measures should be privileged in order to get out of the current dead-end which threatens the future of the European Union. Some of us think that the European Union should guarantee all of the public debts of member states, which would mean that financial speculators could no longer demand prohibitive rates based on the risk of default. Others think that public debts which are largely illegitimate in the first place (arising from lowering taxes on the rich, the financial crisis and saving the banks) should first of all be restructured and even largely renounced. This is the **democratic debate** which must develop and ultimately allow for the people to decide.

Nonetheless, we are unanimous in thinking that the European treaties must be reformed in order to reduce the importance of the financial markets, undo the strangle-hold they have on the people and construct a **real solidarity between countries**, which is based on cooperation and harmonisation in progress.

A first demand to break the nation states away from the grip of the financial markets would be to guarantee the repurchasing of public bonds by the ECB if necessary. The member states should be able to finance themselves directly through the European Central Bank at a low rate of interest. It is not permissible that private banks are making record profits in lending to States at high rates while they themselves are financed at a very weak rate by the ECB.

A second necessity is to redirect the costs of the recession and the bank losses onto their shareholders and directors. It is unacceptable to impose unemployment, precarity and the lowering of salaries in order to preserve the domain of finance. The record profits and bonuses of the banks in 2010 are indecent. **Icelandic citizens** have indicated the way in refusing through referendum to pay for the follies of their banks. The Greeks and Irish have expressed loudly and strongly their unwillingness to continue in this direction. The direction must be changed.



ph © Chris Devers

The third urgency is to disarm speculation which is continuing to work against Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain... Taxing financial transactions, starting with transactions involving the euro; strict regulation of the markets dealing in derived products, notably those based on primary materials and agriculture as well as the Credit Derivative Swaps; limit drastically the activity of speculative funds and in particular the "leverage effects" which multiply the opportunities and risks of speculation; prohibit speculation by banks for their own accounts and deconstruct those which are "too big to fail"... these urgent decisions can no longer be delayed.

The fourth imperative is to bring about **cooperative European economic policies**. Instead of privileging competition always and everywhere and the race to the bottom, pressure must be put on Germany to increase salaries and social expenditure in order to reduce its commercial surplus which destabilises the whole of Europe. The fiscal competition which undermines public budgets must be stopped, by harmonising towards the top the taxation of businesses. Public finances must be re-established by undoing the neoliberal counter reforms to the taxation system and restoring a progressive fiscal system. A real European budgetary solidarity must be created by a united taxation on financial transactions and on fossil fuels.

To resuscitate Europe will require a total change of paradigm. Europe must not look towards a future of infinite austerity, but look to bring to life a specific model of society which must be profoundly renewed.

Believing that the reforms of the European treaty that are currently planned will re-enforce European solidarity would be a grave error. On the contrary, what is currently planned will tighten the stranglehold of finance on the European Union. The planned reforms would validate the austerity plans already imposed and prepare for their generalisation. They carry the Union further on its course towards implosion. This course must be changed.

(this is a translated extract from the paper «Réforme du traité: une Europe plus solidaire... avec les marches?»

Full text in French available on the website www.atterres.org

The general intellect is looking for a body

FRANCO BERARDI BIFO

The movements which have spread in the universities and in the schools of many European cities are the first glimpse of the insurrection of the general intellect.

The following is an extract from a lecture given at the Tanz Fabrik, Uferstudios Berlin on the 6th of May, 2011 as opening lecture of the Transeuropa Festival Berlin organized in collaboration with the project Rehearsing Collectivity – Choreography Beyond Dance and with the support of the Zentrum für Bewegungsforschung at the Freie Universität Berlin.

During the last years, and particularly in the aftermath of the financial collapse, a conflict has exploded, opposing the dominant financial class and the social forces of cognitive labor.

The student movements that have shaken European cities in the last months of 2010, from Paris to London to Athens to Rome, and the upheavals of Arab youth that have overthrown the Tunisian and Egyptian dictators, and are unraveling the oppressive order of many Arab regimes, are the harbingers of a general insurrection of knowledge against financial capitalism.

What will be forms of deployment of this insurrection is hard to predict nowadays, but I believe that the contradiction between the potencies of collective intelligence and the narrow interests and dogmatic ideology of the financial class, are the core of this process.

Notwithstanding the cultural differences of **Arab and European countries**, notwithstanding the different contexts in which are acting the Arab and the European movements, the social landscape is quite similar. Those who are revolting in the Arab countries are students or highly educated precarious workers, or unemployed – like in London, in Athens and in Rome.

Let us look at what has happened in the European Union during the year 2010-2011. In the aftermath of the Greek crisis of Spring 2010, a sphere of unified political decision has been created, but unfortunately, the political unification of European decision overlaps with the instauration of a financial dictatorship. The Merkel, Sarkozy, Triché directorate has started to unify the parliamentary processes of every country under the flag of the prevailing interest of the financial class. One after the other the European countries have had a reduction in social spending enforced upon them.

Education has been especially hit by the cuts, and the effects are becoming more evident every day.

Thatcher declared 30 years ago: “there is no such thing as society”.

That was not a description of reality, it was a self fulfilling prophecy. The Neoliberal politics, that Thatcher has started and enforced in the '80s in the UK, and then has gone global, has destroyed the very

conditions of social solidarity, and has jeopardized the very possibility of a process of recomposition of labor.

In this sense we may say that Thatcher has succeeded: there is no more such a thing as society and the new Thatcherism of Osborne and Cameron is aimed to dismantle not only the welfare state, which has already been destroyed by the Thatcher government and by the Blair government, but the very conditions of social civilization itself, which is the legacy of five centuries of humanism, of enlightenment, and of socialism.

We are dealing here with a downturn which is going to change deeply the prospects, expectations, possibilities of life, education, and of survival of the next generation.

The **movements** which have spread in the universities and in the schools of many European cities are the first glimpse of the insurrection of the general intellect.

The offensive of the neoliberal governments of Europe, and the dogmatic obsession of the monetarist European Central Bank have not receded after the student's rebellion and researcher's protests. Far from it.

They have opened a new, possibly decisive, field of struggle: the struggle for the autonomy of knowledge, the struggle for the reconstruction of the social body and the affective body of the general intellect.

Reactivation of the social body as full deployment of the General Intellect

Since 2001 the Swiss economist and writer Christian Marazzi has been warning of a process of dismantling of the general intellect, that started after the dotcom crash of Spring 2000.

During the first decade of the new century cognitive labor has disempowered and subjected to the form of precarization.



ph © Roberto Beani

The social and affective body of the cognitive workers has been separated from their daily activity of net-producers. The new alienation is based on this separation, on the virtualization of social relations. **The new alienation** takes the form of psychic suffering, panic, depression and a suicidal tide featuring the behavior of the first generation of people who have learned more words from a machine than from their mother.

The cognitarians of this generation are going to the streets to recompose their social and affective body. I call cognitarians those cognitive workers who are working in a proletarian precarious condition and who are living in a condition of psychopathogenic de-realization as far as concerns social communication.

By this point of view the student's struggles that exploded in the Fall 2010 are not to be seen as a sudden outburst of rage, but as the beginning of a longlasting process that will encompass the next decade, a cognitarian insurrection of sorts. When the general intellect will be able to reconstitute its social and erotic body, the capitalist rule will become obsolete. This is the new consciousness that comes out from the explosion of the last months of 2010, from the reclaim of autonomy of knowledge.

In the same period of the student's revolt, the event Wikileaks has exposed the other face of cognitarian subjectivation. Wikileaks has shown the infinite potency of the collective networked intelligence. The unleashing of the creative force of the general intellect is the great event that Assange has been able to orchestrate. I don't think that we really needed to know the contents of all those cables and emails that Wikileaks disclosed. What is more important in that event is the activation of solidarity, complicity and independent collaboration between cognitarians: programmers, hardware technicians, journalists, and artists who take part in a process of information. The activation of the potency of connected intelligence in autonomy from the capitalist use, is the lesson of Wikileaks. And the new generation of rebels will find in this lesson a way to autonomy and self-organization of the general intellect.

Fulfilling the intents of late modern Avant-garde, art activism has overcome the traditional limits of art, but its effectiveness has been evident only in the fields of the market.



ph © Roberto Beani

Poetical Art and re-sensibilization of the cognitarian body

What is the place of art in this landscape? During the last few years art and activism have been linked in many ways, but the effect of this marriage is ambiguous.

Fulfilling the intents of late modern Avant-garde, art activism has overcome the traditional limits of art, but its effectiveness has been evident only in the fields of the market, and mainly in the field of advertising.

Think of the Adbusters experience, one of the most interesting adventures in the field of art-activism ever. By a linguistic and artistic point of view the result has been exhilarating and important. But the social and political effects have been marginal.

During the last decade Art has also been a diagnostic act on the phenomenology of daily suffering in the precarious age, portraying the emotional palsy of bodies and the violent obsessions induced by loneliness and techno-alienation. It seems that 30% of German young people want to be artists in their life. What do they mean? What exactly do they expect by the fact of being artists? I think they see art as a possibility of escaping the **depressive cycle of production and consumption** and subjection to the financial domination.

Poetical art, I mean art as poetry, as creation of imaginary worlds of possibility, can be conceived as a therapeutic act. Poetical art is the technique for the reactivation of the sensitive body, and of the sensible mind, beyond the techno-alienation and the effects of de-sensibilization that precarity, digitalization and info-acceleration have induced in the Psychosphere.

What is at stake in the present phase of revolt is not the seizing of political power, but the reactivation of the social and erotic body of the general intellect, because only from this reactivation will come the full deployment of potencies of the social body and of the collective intelligence. This is why I think that rebels of today are acting first of all in a self-therapeutic direction. They are trying to recompose the empathy of the bodies, are rediscovering a common sphere of sensibility.

There is also a strong ethical motivation at the core of the cognitarian insurrection. I don't think to an ethic of values. Values are only the idealistic translation of the world: expectations that want to be fulfilled. I think of ethics as self respect and self love.



ph © Roberto Beani

The conceptual sphere of Aesthetics is redefining the very sphere of Ethics.

Mass Cynicism, which Sloterdijk labeled as the prevailing sentiment of the post-68 age, now is over. It's not paying anymore. The cynical class of finance and of military power has lost its glamour. We need a materialistic (hedonistic, sensitive, sensuous) refoundation of ethics, based on self-love, of the pleasure of being yourself.

Ethics and aesthetics are meeting, not in the space of universal values, but in the research of the pleasure of singularity. Kids are seeing the cynical class which is keeping hold on financial and political power nowadays as its is: ugly, disgusting, repugnant.

It's an aesthetic judgment, before a political or moral judgment.

And they also see Europe as a zombie. Dead ideas, dogmatic rules, failed ideologies overpowering living society, and living culture.

The movement of students who are raging in the European cities aims to revive Europe, to invent a new Europe, emancipated from the dogmas of competition, of accumulation and of capitalism. Thanks to this movement Europe will be reborn, and will become a place of solidarity and of beauty.



KEYNOTE LECTURE



KEYNOTE LECTURE



TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL 2011



*Performance in front of a
"Catholic centre for curing
homosexuality",
Lublin Transeuropa*



An adieu to europe: the impossible necessity of balkans politics

by BLAGOJEVIĆ JELISAVETA



“Our experience is provincial,” writes Radomir Konstantinović at the very beginning of his book *Philosophy of the Provincial*, published in Belgrade in 1969. “Province is our destiny, it’s our evil fate,” he continues by using the metaphor of the provincial in order to describe the way of life and thinking typical of the small-town mentality.

Every reading of Konstantinović’s book is actually a re-reading and re-opening of the one and same question – the question of the double and ambiguous nature of the *provincial mind*. Although predominantly targeting Serbian nationalism, Konstantinović’s criticism does not primarily refer to any particular territorial or geo-political location, but to the provincial mind in as much as “there is no country where the *provincial mind* is impossible, since it is equally impossible everywhere in its demand to ideally be barricaded – closed off.”

By invoking Konstantinović’s work, I would like to pose a question about new, contemporary provincialisms, local and global, Balkans provincialism as well as European provincialism, “east” provincialism as well as “west” provincialism – in other words, the provincialism of every identitarian logic of thinking and politics that continues to haunt, like a ghost, like a specter, every idea of a community. One can say that what is *provincial* in the concept of the *provincial mind* is not constituted within any particular position as such, but rather through denying the (ex)position towards the difference and otherness. **Therefore, what is and/or can be provincial is the very relation, not the position as such.**

Provincial mind is constituted by its uniformed and unified way of thinking, by the various procedures of homogenization of community and thus by the exclusion of what is different.

However, in some cases these strategies of excluding the differences and otherness operate precisely through the processes of inclusion, as in the domain of contemporary EU integration discourses that eventually result in annihilation, assimilation and absorption of every difference and every otherness. As Rodolphe Gasché claims in his recently published book *Europe, or the infinite task* “[not] only has Europe lost much of its economic and political clout, but the history of its relations to non-European world, as well as its relation to the others within its own borders, has cast a seemingly final verdict on the superiority and integrity of European ‘values’”.

It seems that both discourses of exclusion and inclusion - as it is with the example of applying politics of human rights as a “European value” in Serbian political context - mark the other, re-mark the marginalization of those that are already marginal, point to the ‘other’ as to the possible danger for the infantile world of the provincial. In return, the *provincial mind* has to protect its own uniformity through denying any possibility of change and through rejecting any kind of uncertainty and risk that unavoidably goes together with the kind of thinking that is always already the other thinking, *different way* of thinking. Within a province, within a small town (where it is important to underline that its smallness is constituted by the very fact that it is closed off), thinking always becomes one thinking, the same thinking, *certain* thinking.

Provincial mind is the mind of ready-made solutions, the mind of life patterns and life routines, “values” if you want, with ready answers to all possible questions; it is about the constant re-establishing of tradition, perpetual renewal of inner and outer walls that serve as safeguard, and does nothing but repeating the provincial past. Thus, it is the provincial mind’s refusal to look into the future that appears to be the origin of every aspiration to turn the world into a provincial place.

One of the arguments in this paper is that public discourses in Balkan countries “on their road to EU”, as well as in the EU itself - are in many cases reinforcing the spirit of the provincial and thus reflecting mutual provincialisms.

In order to support this thesis, I will use examples from contemporary Serbian society “on its road to EU”, although I suppose that some other countries in the Balkans share or had shared similar experiences concerning public discourses on EU integration in their communities. In Serbia, the idea of EU integration has the logic of a normative discourse; unquestionable nature of this “we must be part of EU” attitude has its performative effects and serves as an argument which is to be repeated and cited whenever decision-makers in Serbia become unwilling to actually confront the majority and the so-called traditional values. Let me give an example: In March, 2009 the Serbian Parliament debated over an anti-discrimination law which bans any kind of discrimination, whether

based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender or other factors. It was strongly opposed by the Serbian Orthodox Church and other conservatives; but the legislation was part of reforms to align the nation with European Union policies and was a quid-pro-quo if Serbian citizens were to gain the right to travel without visas - so the law was passed.

The Serbian Orthodox Church, supported by many other religious communities, requested changes to the articles concerning gay rights and religious freedom. Church representatives argued that the law might be liable to misinterpretation and misuse. Other critics have said it runs counter to Serbian tradition.

Dragan Markovic-Palma, the Mayor of the small town Jagodina and a member of the Serbian Parliament as the leader of the United Serbia Party offered this argument the logic of which is rather hard to follow: "In Serbia, there are over 3,700,000 women. Out of 3,700,000 women, we can say that 3,650,000 are very beautiful women. If this [anti-discrimination] law passes, and it's been known that a large number of women are already finding it hard to cope with the global financial crisis, if we vote for this law then, these women will surely have a problem." He also claimed "If we are to proceed towards Europe in the company of homosexuals it would be better not to go at all". Now, we will try to understand what the Mayor of this small town in Serbia actually wanted to say: first, the vast majority of Serbian women are very beautiful (out of 3,700,000 only 50,000 are not); second, most of these very beautiful women are in financial crisis (still, a remaining question is what kind of financial status are facing those 50,000 not very beautiful women?). Further, if you are a very beautiful woman who lives in Serbia in the midst of the world financial crisis, you can certainly count on financially successful heterosexual men (is it possible any other way?); and finally, if the anti-discrimination law is passed, there is the obvious danger that heterosexual men will become homosexuals, and thus financially less capable of supporting the 3,650,000 very beautiful women who live in Serbia - and Serbia will collapse. Besides the fact that this argument is absolutely homophobic and extremely macho, what it also shows is the fear that financially capable, heterosexual men in Serbia will become less manly and powerful (read as homosexuals) if they lose the possibility to discriminate against homosexuals (as well as 3,650,000 very beautiful Serbian women and 50,000 not very beautiful women).

Let us go back to the other effects of the law itself. It appears that those who voted "yes" for the anti-discriminatory law voted, in fact, for traveling around Europe without visas. However, since the vast majority of Serbian citizens cannot afford to travel due to the economic crisis, they will also have to vote "yes" for the law that introduces extra taxes for Serbian citizens in order to fill holes in the government's budget. Furthermore, given that most of the people struggle in their day-to-day existence, they would vote "yes" for everything that promises money and investments.

Hosting *Universiade* in Belgrade, for example. But then, in order to have *Universiade* in Belgrade, we will have to vote “yes” for the re-allocation of Roma citizens from the locations necessary for Belgrade’s city government to present Belgrade as a city of 21st century to their EU business partners as “Roma free”: namely, the future capital of the Balkans and, of course, the great opportunity for foreign investments.

In this ideological vicious circle, the line of argumentation and political decisions does not really go along with any kind of thinking that advocates human lives and quality of life in certain communities; this line of argument has the same trajectory as the neoliberal logic of money and ideology circulation. Consequently, it is neither about our lives nor about the lives of *others*; it’s neither about the others’ right to have rights nor about our right to have rights. It is all about the re-establishment of the dominant ideological patterns, that is to say, it is all about the keeping the status quo and its provincial conservative effects.

At the end of the day, those who criticized the anti-discriminatory law and were worried that the law “runs counter to Serbian tradition” could be at peace. Serbian provincialism and its tradition remained intact since the real debate on human rights politics and anti-discriminatory policy has been almost completely silenced. In any case, it didn’t even touch upon those most important issues that such a public debate could bring to a particular community – an effort to create the space for the citizens to live together - to live together with the unbearable weight of their differences. Only such an effort could present the real search for the alternatives to the politics of exclusion as well as to the political culture and ideology based on war, violence and discrimination.

One of the best possible examples of how the anti-discriminatory law has explicitly unrevealed this logic of status quo as a political formation per se would be everything that happened around the organization of the Pride Parade in 2009 and in 2010 in Belgrade.

In 2009 - it was the first attempt to organize such a gathering after the devastating Pride Parade organized in 2001. One of the circulating explanations for such a decision after eight years was that the anti-discrimination law gave hope and motivation for the LGBTIQ community in Serbia that this time, it would make a difference.

On September 20th 2009, after months of media attention, strong arguments were laid both on political and social levels. The end result of this socio-political action resulted in the following: for the Government representatives, the Parade was cancelled for security reasons. At the same time, the organizational committee of the Pride Parade officially announced that Parade of Pride was de

facto banned by the political forefront, yet not *de jure*.

On that occasion, Dragan Djilas, the mayor of Belgrade, made an official statement in which he suggested that sexual orientation, as a private matter, “should be kept behind the [four] walls”. Accordingly, there are no reasons to demonstrate anyone’s sexual preferences in public. Interestingly enough, Mayor Djilas is a representative of Democratic Party, which declares itself to be in favour of Europe, EU integration, and anti-discrimination and human rights. It is also a ruling party in the government, which has a dominant role in the public political discourses in Serbia.

In such a context, Mayor Djilas’s words bear a dangerous dimension that cannot be silenced and unnoticed. This metaphor suggests that different sexual orientations are acceptable only if they are invisible, distanced, silenced, barricaded and finally controlled – behind the walls.

Contrary to the Pride parade in 2009 that was canceled for security reasons (interpretation of the State representatives) or banned for political reasons (interpretation of the organizers committee) - the same event only a year later **was** organized in Belgrade, but this time with approximately 1000 participants and 5000 policemen. Almost everyone – from the organizers committee to the State representatives was claiming that **this time** Pride parade in Belgrade was a success.

Unfortunately, it seems that the most serious “benefit” of passing the anti- discriminatory law in Serbia and the “successful” organization of the Pride parade in Belgrade will be that discrimination, human suffering, misery and violence against the citizens of Serbia will be better controlled and institutionalized from now on.

I would suggest that the way in which anti-discriminatory law and policies are argued, motivated and presented in Serbia does nothing else but produce subjects in need of protection without any political possibilities and alternatives left.

Thus, the most vulnerable ones will be one more time marked and reproduced in their otherness since the human rights discourse and anti-discriminatory policies are producing a certain kind of subject that needs protection.

Even if they are based on the best possible EU practices and values, human rights and anti-discrimination policies - without considerable changes in Serbian society and political culture – in fact, do nothing else but reinforce the infantile provincial mind, which is again – through the very “strategy of inclusion” - exclusive not only in respect to marginalised individuals and groups but also in terms of *searching for alternatives and political possibilities*.

I would like to recall Foucault and his writing on how a certain idea or a model of humanity was developed through different practices - juridical discourse being one of them - and how this idea of man has become normative, self-evident, and apparently universal. “Humanism may not be universal but may be quite relative to a certain situation. What we call humanism has been used

by Marxists, liberals, Nazis, Catholics. This does not mean that we have to get rid of what we call human rights or freedom, but that we can't say that freedom or human rights has to be limited at certain frontiers... What I am afraid of about humanism is that it presents a certain form of our ethics as a universal model for any kind of freedom. I think that there are more secrets, more possible freedoms, and more inventions in our future than we can imagine in humanism as it is dogmatically represented on every side of the political rainbow: the Left, the Center, the Right."

Through its conventions, the EU has already established procedures which for the first time in history make it possible for the interest of the individuals, of the citizens, to come out onto the international stage, into the field of international law, which were reserved solely for sovereign states. The tendency of internationalisation of human rights indicates the global community's willingness to increasingly take into account the sovereignty of the individual, or of minority groups and not of states. On the other hand, the process of increasingly visible globalisation of human rights testifies how the "western" insistence on the universality of human rights can function virtually as a diplomatic and political alibi for post-colonial interventionism.

If supposedly depoliticized humanitarian politics of human rights was *really* depoliticized, it would not create any normative or subject-producing dimensions; it would not carry any cultural assumptions or aims; it would not prescribe or proscribe anything; it would simply expand possibilities, alternatives, possible freedoms, and more inventions in our future.

Every other way of presenting and understanding the politics of human rights will remain a diplomatic and a political alibi for post-colonial interventionism. It will remain nothing else but the repetition of the earlier mentioned inclusive exclusion which operates through annihilation, assimilation and integration - and which embraces cultural, political, sexual, national, gender and all other differences only through erasing them. Thus, it repeats and reinforces the *provincial mind*.

Furthermore, another question that has to be asked is whether human rights politics protect innocent, suffering and discriminated individuals on the basis of universal (pre-political) human rights or on the basis of the specific political rights of citizens, members of the particular political community?

This line of argumentation allows us to invoke Agamben's notion of homo sacer as a human being reduced to "bare life." It is precisely this zone of indistinction between biological and political when a human being becomes an ideal bearer of universal human rights since s/he is excluded from the political community, deprived of its particular socio-political identity which accounts for

her/his determinate citizenship and no longer recognized or treated as human.

The paradox of human rights politics is that one is deprived of human rights precisely when one is effectively reduced to a human being as such (*homo sacer*), that is to say, precisely when one effectively becomes the ideal bearer of universal human rights.

Thus, the paradox of the politics of human rights is that they appear to be the “rights” of those excluded and removed from political community, of those reduced to inhumanity and consequently of those who does not have any rights.

What happens to human rights when they become of no use or when they become the rights of those who have no rights?

Ranciere proposes the following:

(...) when they are of no use, you do the same as charitable persons do with their old clothes. You give them to the poor. Those rights that appear to be useless in their place are sent abroad, along with medicine and clothes, to people deprived of medicine, clothes, and rights. It is in this way, as the result of this process, that the Rights of Man become the rights of those who have no rights, the rights of bare human beings subjected to inhuman repression and inhuman conditions of existence. They become humanitarian rights, the rights of those who cannot enact them, the victims of the absolute denial of right. For all this, they are not void. Political names and political places never become merely void. The void is filled by somebody or something else. [...] if those who suffer inhuman repression are unable to enact Human Rights that are their last recourse, then somebody else has to inherit their rights in order to enact them in their place. This is what is called the “right to humanitarian interference” - a right that some nations assume to be the supposed benefit of victimized populations... (...)

Here “human rights” turns out to be nothing but the ideology of modern liberal capitalism. The people of the Balkans commonly perceive themselves as permanent victims of history and very often they have been consequently subjected to other nations’ right to humanitarian interference. What could be a new form of political agency which would disrupt the present situation? Contrary to the politics of accepting the position of victimized populations, Balkan politics today should be about expanding political possibilities, about a passionate search for the alternatives and about new, possible freedoms.

In this sense, the phrase “impossible necessity” of Balkan politics “on its road to the EU” suggests that ***if there is any road*** for Balkan countries to the processes of the European integration, it is on the basis of keeping the possibilities of taking ***the other roads*** - or the roads for the other.

These roads are without any determined directions or destinations, or even more radically - **there must be possibilities of *not taking and not choosing any particular road*** - even if it is the road to the EU. Otherwise we are literally obliged to follow the so-called "road map."

What can one think and do in order to disrupt this logic of permanent exclusion? What could be the future of the politics that will change the dominant inhuman principles and values which are at the very core of human rights politics and policies?

One of the most significant tasks in today's thinking is the one of redefining, reconstructing, rereading and rewriting of the very concept of politics and of the political.

The concept of political that I am speaking about is (in) plural; It's about life in all of its complexities; It's about some hard decisions to be made; it's about the absence of certainty; it's at stake whenever and wherever the "I" and "the other" are (ex)posed to each other; it contains in itself, paradoxically, inclusion and exclusion, transcendence and belonging, absolute external appearance of somebody and something unknown and strange as well as intimacy of the familiar and close, in other words, *distance and intimacy at the same time*.

Who is then this other that is constitutive for the political, the other who is both a stranger/foreigner and someone close, both "I" and "the other"? In the spirit of Heidegger's terminology, Derrida offers the following answer:

"(it) has no shape. No sex. No name. It is neither a man nor a woman. It is not selfhood, not "I," not a subject, nor a particular person. It is another Dasein that every Dasein has, through the voice, a voice it hears... At a distance which is neither absolute – absolutely infinite – nor worthless in the absolute closeness of one's ownership... This range of voice, to-be-in-the-range-of-voice ... makes the other someone of a different kind."

Politics requires ear for the other, listening of the other; thus, politics is always the others politics, it requires the other, demands the other and is responsible to the other.

Every relation to the other would be, said Derrida, before and after anything else, *an adieu*. In this sense, *an adieu* to Europe invokes the gesture of hospitality towards the moment of separation, of departure, sometimes forever (this can never, in fact be excluded), without any return; in this sense, and precisely in this sense, it is a gesture of welcoming the unknown, foreign and strange, of what is new and different; *adieu* to Europe must be a response to the others' responsibility.



TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL 2011



TRANSNATIONAL ART PROGRAMME





CAN ALTAY
*The ground was divided,
we jumped...
Installation Detail*



A festival as platform as tool as space for future encounters...

A brief introduction to the artistic activities of the **TRANSEUROPA Festival 2011**

After a series of meetings and discussions taking place within the context of *Visualizing Transnationalism*, three main projects have been developed as direct or indirect 'consequences' of such a process.

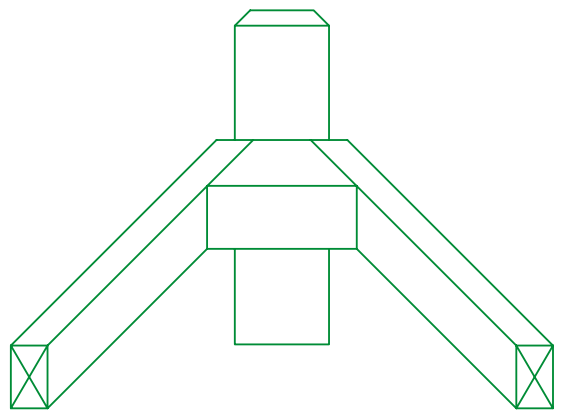
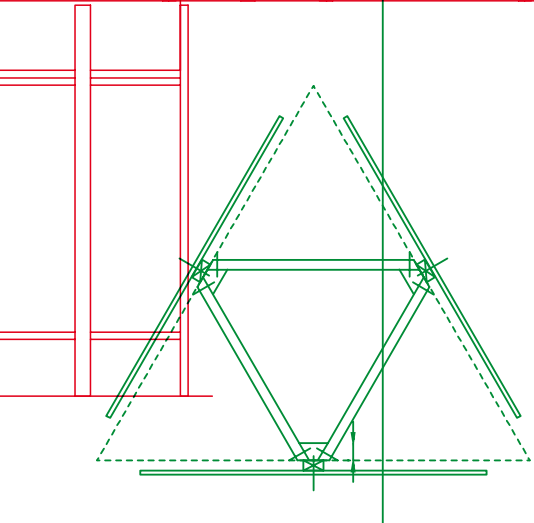
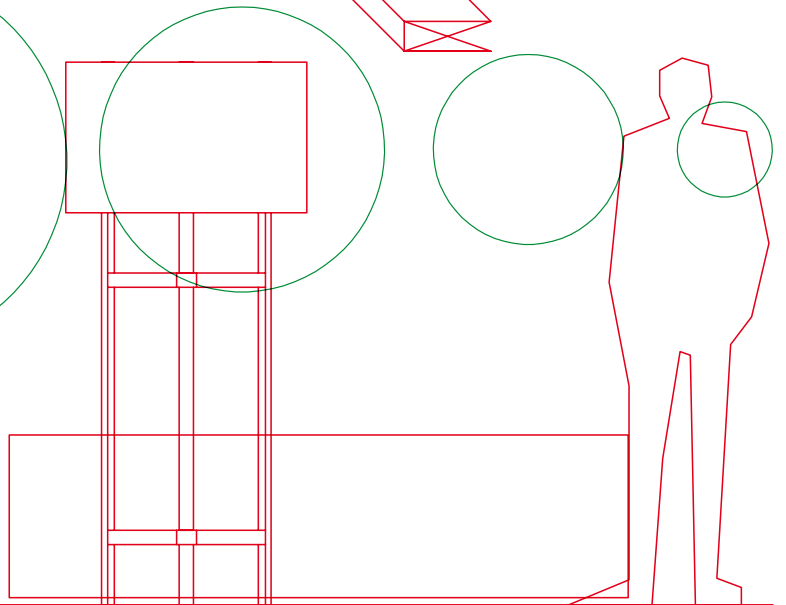
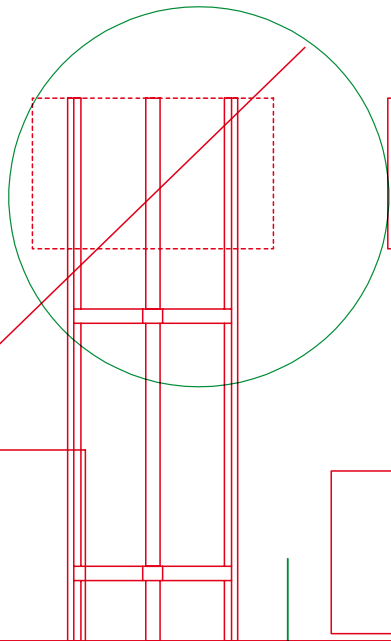
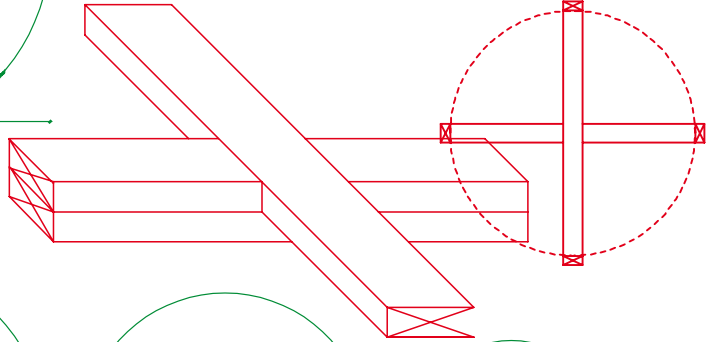
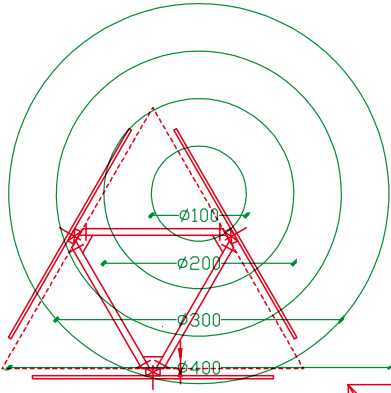
At the same time, many other art projects have been produced by members of the **TRANSEUROPA Network** as response to the same common urgency to move and take action in the complex territory defined by the diversity of so many cities and common themes.

This multi-authored festival made clear the potential of such an open platform. It did not limit itself to a succession of correlated events but, as an ongoing exercise, opened to the contributions, stimuli and critical positions of those who have been met along the way.

the ground was divided, we jumped (Home of the Festival), *Visualizing Transnationalism* and *On-board programme for the modern traveller* are three of the many projects that form the art programme of the Festival.

These three projects have been coordinated and co-curated by **Emanuele Guidi** in collaboration with film curator **Tobias Hering** (for the *On-board programme for the modern traveller*), artist and curator **Lorenzo Sandoval** (for *Visualizing Transnationalism*) and with the great support of the **European Alternatives Staff** and the **TRANSEUROPA Network**.

Furthermore the Network has been able to articulate reciprocal discourses that emerged in projects such as the ones in the city of Lublin (*Love Is Love. Art as LGBTQ Activism: from Britain to Belarus*, curated by **Pawel Leszkowicz**; *The Madonnas* by **Katarzyna Holda** curated by **Magda Linkowska**; *The City of Love* by **Piotr Nazaruk**) and Cluj Napoca (*Pulse, within the Veil* curated by **Georgiana But**).



The ground was divided, we jumped...

(Home of the Transeuropa Festival)

A project by **CAN ALTAY**

“the ground was divided, we jumped” is the title for the setting which acted as the Home of the **TRANSEUROPA Festival** 2011 in Cluj Napoca (Tranzit House), Bologna (Sala Borsa/ Urban Center), London (Rochelle School) and Paris (Espace Jemmapes).

Can Altay welcomed the invitation to design the Home of the **TRANSEUROPA Festival** as the chance to go beyond the idea of producing just a perfectly functional ‘hub’ for the festival that through its venues brings together the different local audiences and connect the cities. The plan of introducing some open-ended situations and a slightly dysfunctional nature within this context reflected the intention to critically translate the image of a world (or more precisely Europe) that is not necessarily perfectly operating and functioning. The setting hands over responsibilities, creative or not, to the audience, participants and citizens.

According to Altay, a *“setting”* acts as a space or situation of gathering for ideas and discussions to take place and where a certain production (whether material or immaterial or both) is performed.

“the ground was divided, we jumped” hosted an array of activities in each of the four venues in four European cities, and also reflected and commented on the framework of the festival as well as provided the grounds for further reflection.

Formally, ***“the ground was divided, we jumped”*** utilized linear elements to draw a range of possible inhabitations. These coloured lines indicate certain guidelines, make visible the amount of possibilities within the site, but also acted as boundary-lines inviting a possibility of shifting, by-passing and transgressing.

In each site, there were also further elements, such as forum-pillars, frame structures, and screens that can be configured and re-configured throughout the festival’s varying activities.

“the ground was divided, we jumped” incorporated gathering, discussing, speaking, showing, viewing, connecting, expanding, and transgressing through the action and inhabitation of the Festival.

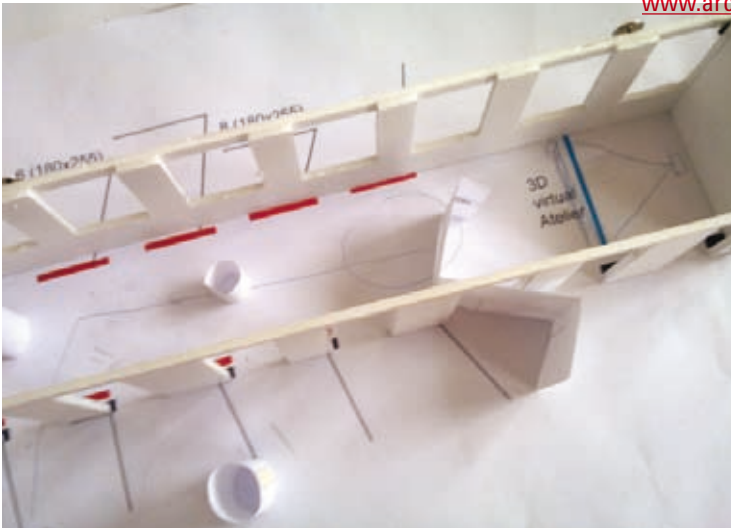
The installation *the ground was divided, we jumped* was realized thanks to the contribution of **Ozgur Atlagan, Erdođan Onur Ceritođlu, Merve Kiliçer and Nihan Somay.**

Can Altay (1975, Turkey)

is an artist living in Istanbul, Turkey.

Altay had solo exhibitions at, a.o.: The Showroom, London (2010), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2008), Spike Island, Bristol (2007). His work has been included in Biennials such as Taipei (2010), Gwangju (2008), Havana and Istanbul (2003); and in museums and galleries such as the Walker Art Center (USA), Van Abbe Museum (Netherlands), ZKM (Germany), P.S.1 MOMA (USA) and Platform Garanti (Turkey). He is co-founder of art, design and publishing collective "Diplomacy in Reflex" and Editor of Ahali: A Journal For Setting a Setting.

www.arcadefinearts.com



CAN ALTAY

'the ground was divided, we jumped...'

Maquette

Conversation between *Can Altay* and *Stephen Wright*

SW: What I derive from your earlier works, what I learned from them, is that they challenged expert culture head on. From the perspective of expertise, use is always misuse. Usership is a notoriously unruly and wayward category of subjectivity, whereas expert design culture seeks to domesticate usership into a form of docility and obedience. I am interested in how you negotiate that minefield! Because as an interventionist you don't just stand back and observe -- you put forth devices to provoke and incite in particular ways. As the project's name acknowledges, when the ground divided, you didn't just stand there bewildered -- you jumped! But on the other hand, you insist on a certain disjointedness between your settings and the broader context, that creates a mildly disorienting effect -- and indeed your work only really makes sense as a kind of critique of expert design culture.

CA: I have always been critical of the 'will to control' and the illusions it brings, chiefly to architects and designers in this context, but also reaching out to commercial and governmental analogies as well, in my opinion. So I think it's fair to say with my work I am trying to tackle these issues, by both representing as well as making statements via doing things: taking action (not forgetting to acknowledge its limits). Neither saying "control is not possible, and the masses will decide on their faith..." (which to me sounds less anarchistic and more liberal capitalist) that "...all we can do is observe and learn" (which to me is the post-modern impasse I have been trying to rid myself from); nor saying that "there are correct ways of doing things, and these can be regulated" (which to me is totalitarian); I try to choose to say 'even if limited to certain context or discourse, one should take action, take responsibility of its consequences but let it be tested by publics, or even better compose a contingent public around or on itself'. If that happens, then the responsibility is also shared, as you are never the sole author of something in "the open", when your work comes to life, whether its an audience or a usership -- they are more definitive than you can ever imagine. That's more or less one of the main premises of 'setting a setting'.

When it comes to 'the ground was divided, we jumped' it is a similar case of shared responsibility, where there are not only actors (commissioners and users) but also distinct physical spaces, and more so varying activities. So the production of the setting involves also creating a layer, a ground between the festival (with its activities and participants) and each of the four distinct spaces (the venues in each city).

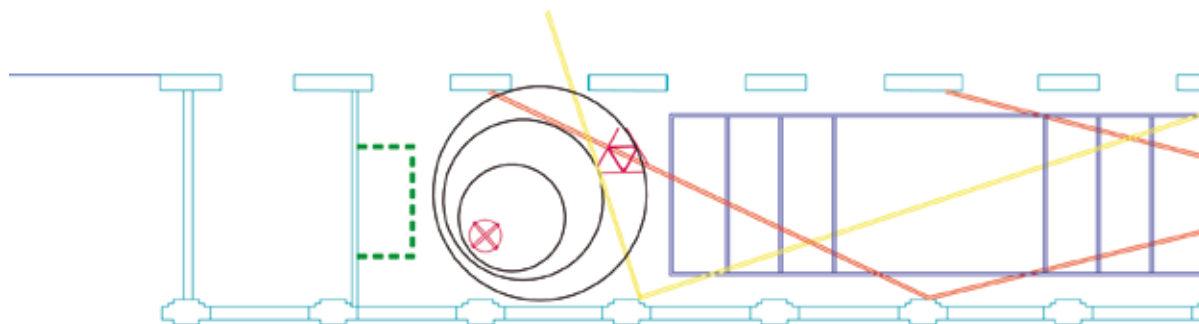
As the title suggests, it is an urge to jump, make that necessary leap, of what I believe the festival itself is also set for, because the ground is divided.

And so, the setting offers certain elements and certain “uses”, yet it also offers a visual/spatial composition of these elements, which acts on a representative layer, meaning that there is something to see and grasp, or reflect on. All of these take place on a territory that is already quite crowded with all the events that the festival brings, and the physical as well as activity attributes that each venue brings. How the setting places itself between these two is partly delicate and partly assertive. And I believe that’s where we can start discussing the absence of autonomy and start addressing how things work in the bigger picture. What I also appreciate about the outcome of “the ground was divided, we jumped” was that it was really subjected to so many actors (both living and non-living) that at the same time made visible the complexities of public space. Perhaps this applies only if you were still there to see the setting or join the activities; and its highly possible that the interventions were neglected or ‘unseen’ by some, which was a risk taken when I decided to propose the setting as this flat layer, of a playing field, with few but loud elements standing up. This layer as I said was squeezed between the festival and the venue, but its assertion did not exceed or force any of those two sides to abide by its directions, it happened only if and when there were people willing to take the setting into consideration.

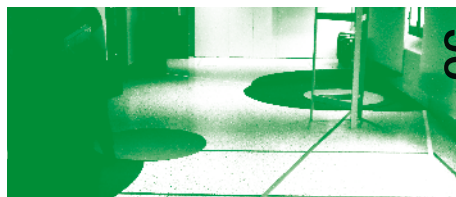
Hopefully this willingness does not coincide with the current conquest of “usership” as we know it (i.e. the mis-use) especially in the web context, after all the user’s potential has come to be fully exploited with the rise of the commercialization of the web. The money made from users actually brings us to a topic that certainly needs addressing, but perhaps not here.

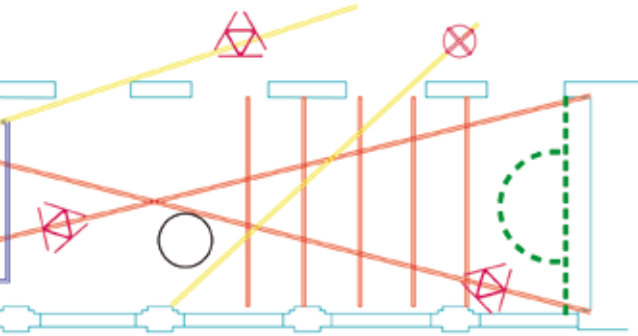
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Bologna





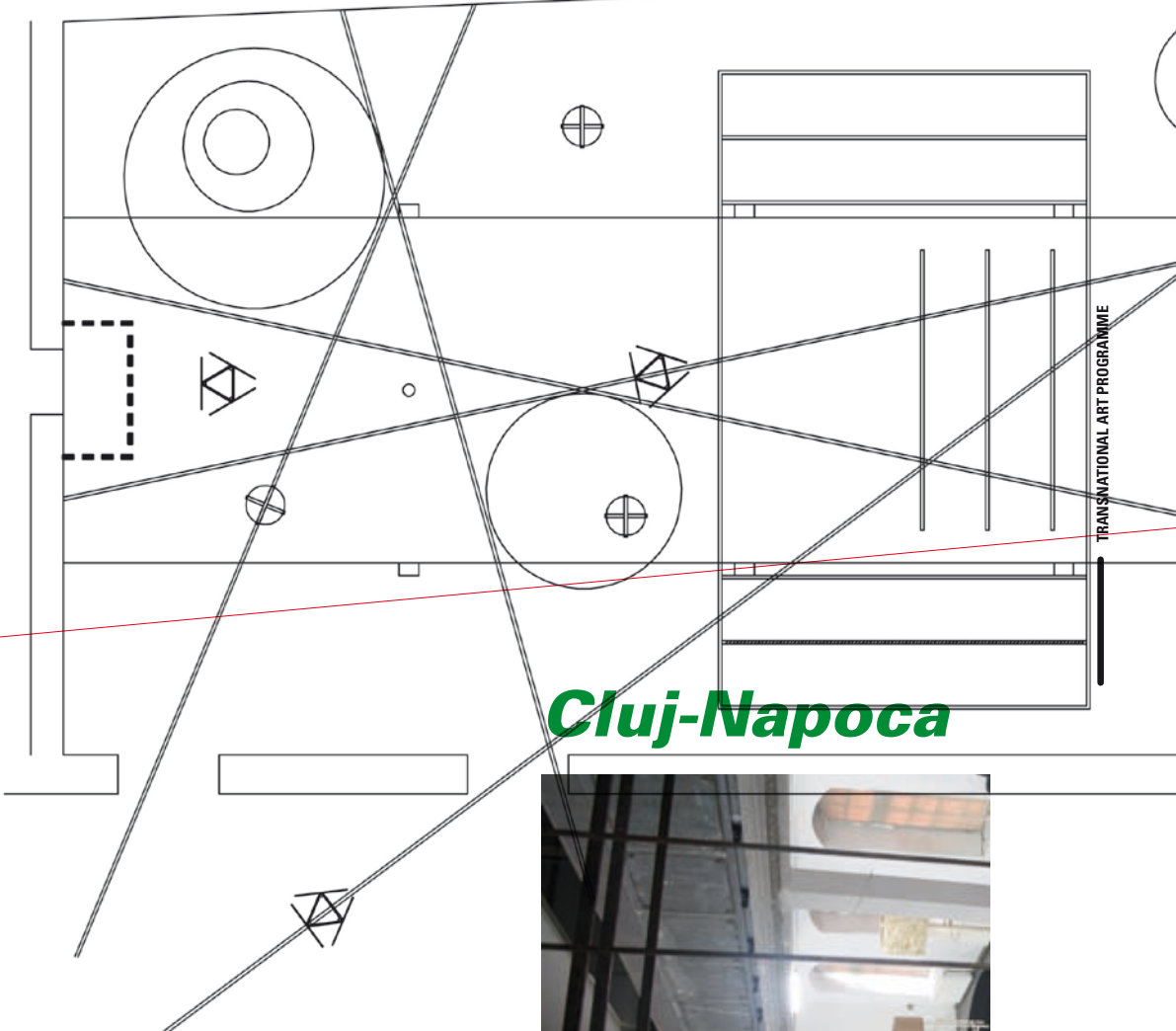
Coloured Lines

defining spaces and activities.

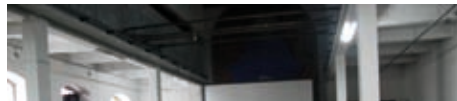
At the same time acting as guidelines, references, but also territorial marks.

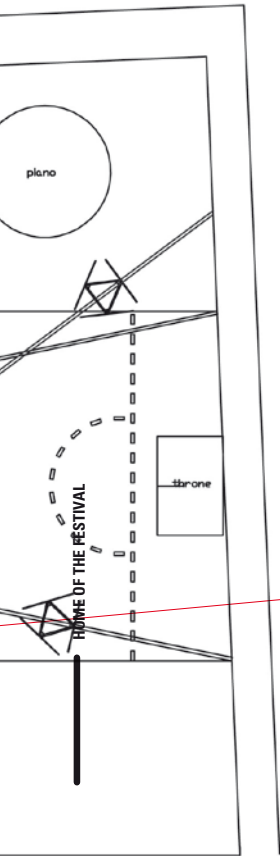
Red lines mark a screening/viewing situation; blue lines form a debate and facing of ideas; green lines indicate central positions; and yellow to direct movement into the home of the festival.





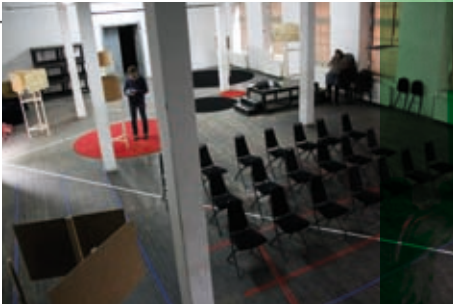
Cluj-Napoca

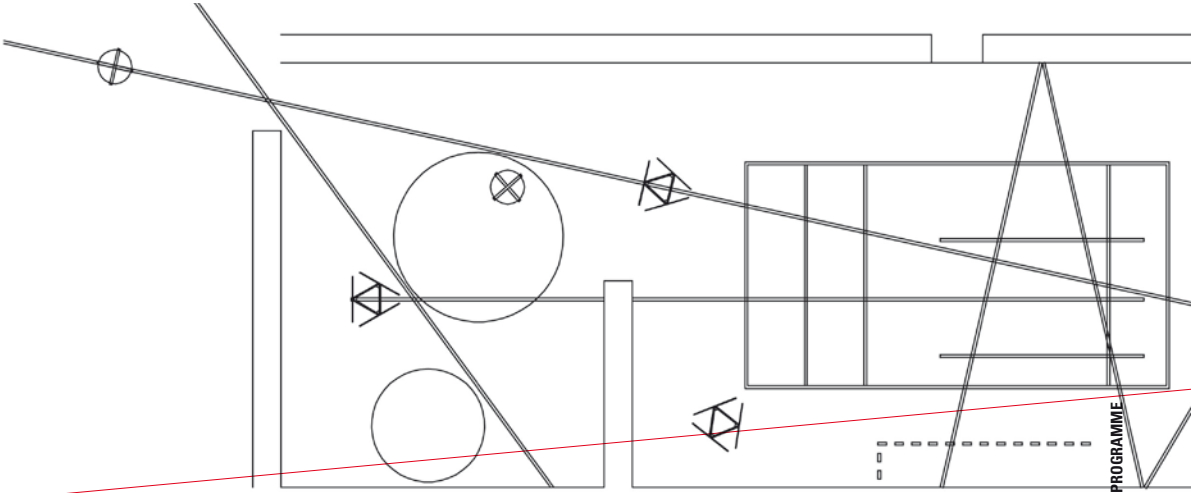




Forum Pillars

these easy to move structures serve immediate postings, as a notice board, but also for free commentary, responses, and remarks. This way the pillars keep a track of activities and of how the audience decided to react or comment on these daily events.

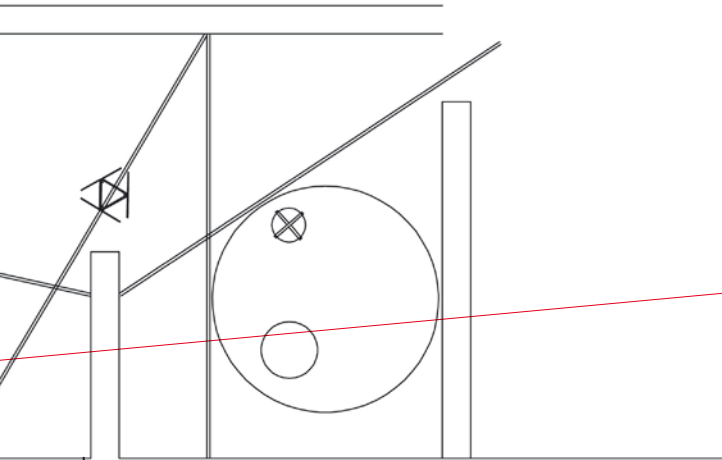




Je t'aime...
I feel the
same, ♡

London



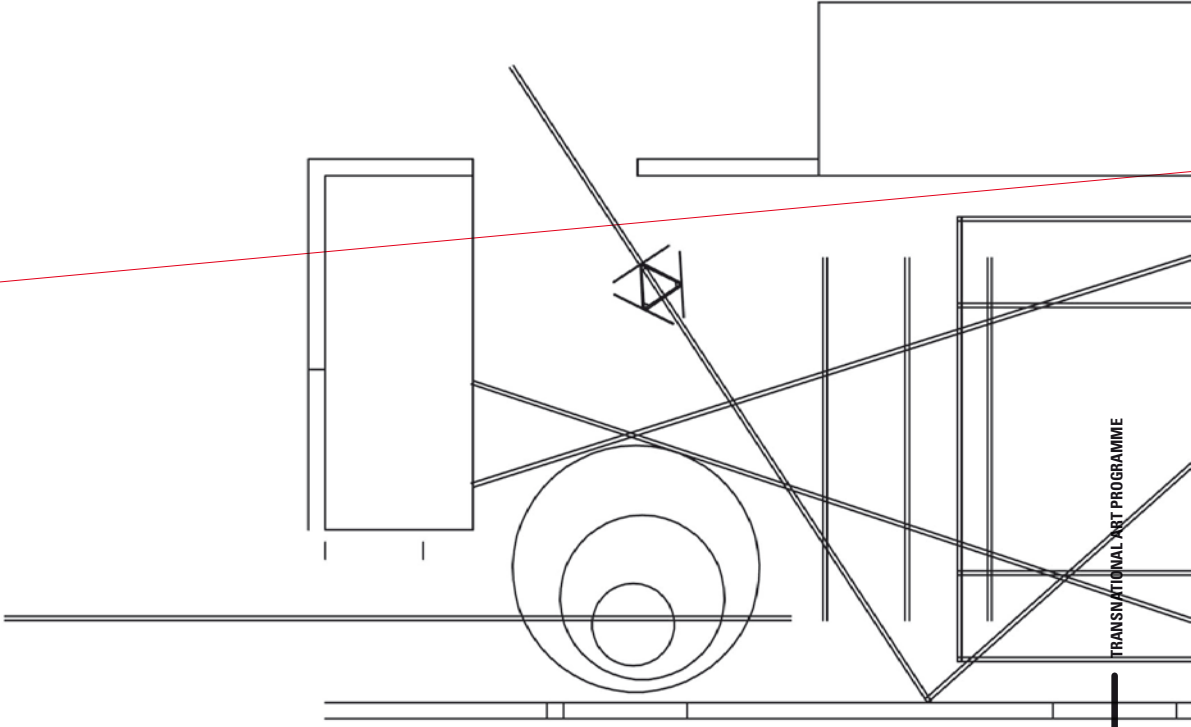


Placard Prisms

these wooden structures are proposed more as place-markers and statement holders. Placed in key positions, each prism radiates opinions and slogans back to the home. At the end of the festival the placards can be removed to go out into the street for protest!

HOME OF THE FESTIVAL



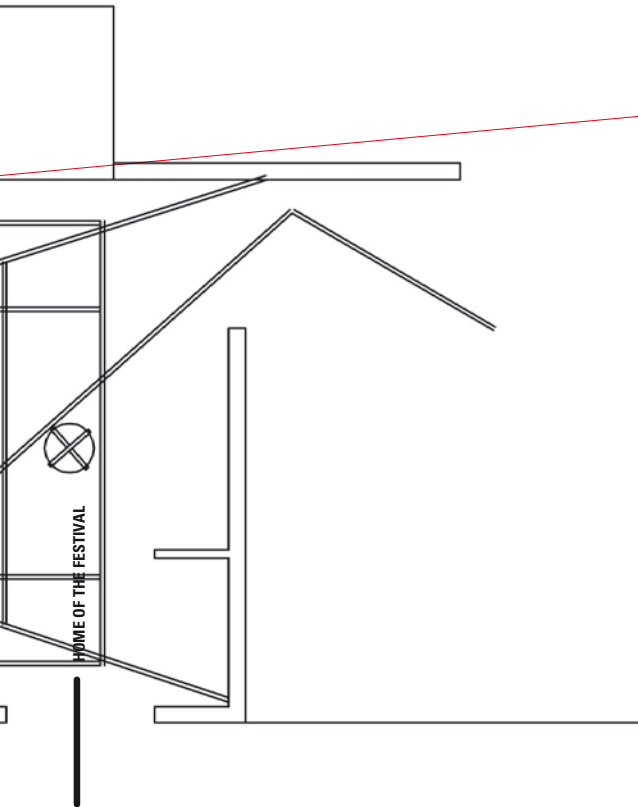


TRANSNATIONAL ART PROGRAMME


Paris



TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL 2011



Hangout Topography

each venue is fitted with circular pieces of carpet, that can go on top of each other, or disperse in the venue.

These provide a warmer plateau to sit on the ground and gather.



SW: A paradox, no doubt a productive paradox, seems to underlie your current setting here in Paris. Whereas all your early work deliberately sets out to make room for contingency, happenstance, the unforeseen, by leaving it up to an indeterminate usership in the street to do what they will with your settings -- I'm obviously thinking primarily of your research on minibars in the streets of Ankara, which you describe as "gaps and niches appropriated by simple use", but I am also thinking of the Paperman project, disrupting official garbage collection by negating its rationale, literally producing new space through use -- in this case you have constructed objects designed to be used in particular ways: placard prisms to be pulled apart in such and such a way to be used in demonstrations, etc. Isn't there a risk here of a rather contrived "spontaneity"? An attempt to channel usership in a particular way -- which is precisely what your earlier work sought to avoid?

CA: "The ground was divided, we jumped" is a continuation of a body of work I had labeled as "setting a setting". For me, "setting a setting" coincides with a moment, a decision to take action and responsibility towards proposing physical surroundings as well as activity programs that would take form of, or reflect on organization of public space. In this sense they propose a departure from the more observational pieces such as the 'minibar' and 'papermen'. Afterall, my role in these projects were not instigating but more of being part of, observing, and later on reflecting on these scenes and practices by making further installations (that included documentation, texts, as well as spatial elements) in the art context. As you rightfully observe, they were about the inherent excess within systems, how structures we come to inhabit can be challenged and even transgressed through the practices of inhabitation. It also involved a certain political agency, an assertion of 'presence' against the dictated means of inhabitation by finding your own means and setting your own rules. Perhaps this can be called a 'counter-spatialization'. The settings on the other hand started off as a means to generate spatial constructs that could act as a tool, so have some pre-decided form of use, but also open itself to 'unpredictable reconfiguration' through its invitation to be performed (or used) as well as its physical presence which always for me included a critique to organization of public space.

The productive paradox you refer to is therefore not in the ways of thinking about 'design', and about the clashes and overlaps between 'function' and 'meaning'; but more in my position and decided role. That shift in position has a chronological aspect too there came a time when I decided it's important to also propose spaces, conditions, situations, with the hope that they too can be challenged, reflected upon, and performed in ways that are beyond my pre-conceptions. Meanwhile keeping the search for ways to critically reflect on organization of public space, and the counter-spatialization it generates.

SW: Talking as we are about your work rather than just experiencing it, one cannot but notice another salient component of your practice: the rather singular conceptual vocabulary you have developed to name the different components and functions of your practice. Statement holders; hangout topographies; you seem to consistently repurpose divergent registers of language to reproduce that sense of dysfunction in the terminology you use to describe the ambitions and workings of your practice. I was most struck by your usage of the Saxon cognate “settings” rather than the more learned Latinate cognate “context”. This of course raises the bigger question of a conceptual crisis in the very language we use to name the features of our world -- the inadequacy and obsolescence of a lexicon inherited from modernity. But more specifically, whereas a “context” can appear (and feel) overdetermining, insurmountable, ontologically stable, a “setting” speaks more of the theatrical side of your work -- a theatre decor with a low coefficient of visibility set in the everyday, apt but far from certain to trigger an event.

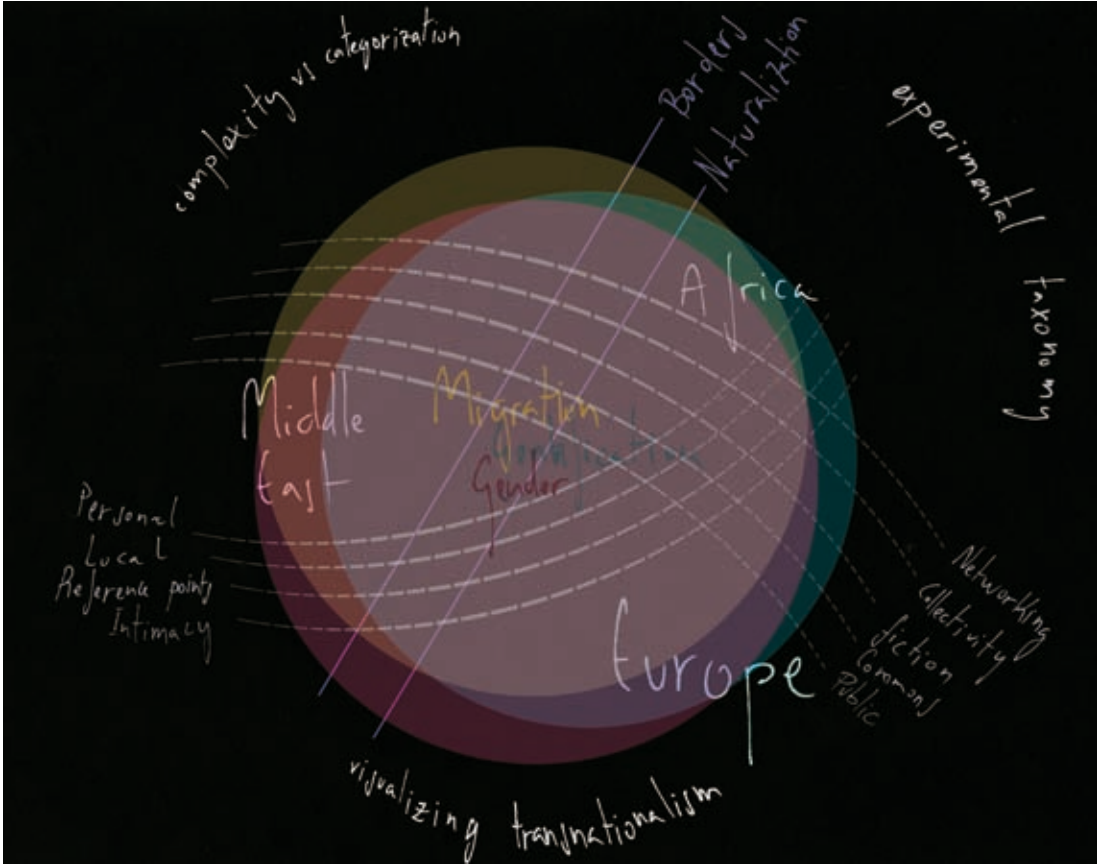
CA: The thinking process for me, is most of the time very verbal. At times the vocabulary can even precede the actuality, or let me say it is always very much embedded in the practice.

The vocabulary is therefore an integral part of the practice, far beyond being a descriptive aspect. “Setting a setting” emerged as such an attempt to underline a proactive position. I invented it while thinking about a practice that could generate spaces of reflection, relation and function, while questioning given contexts, advocating a certain letting go of control and provoking a collective production (of meaning and activity). The best reflection came later on from Kathrin Bohm and Andreas Lang of Public Works, who wrote: “The combination of the verb setting and the noun setting describes the conceptual and formal process behind those projects, which bring together a programmatic intention (verb) and a physical form (noun) to facilitate a public development”. I would add the mechanical and the theatrical connotations within the word “setting” that you are also accurately referring to, into this equation as well.

I have to say there’s also something very important about nomenclature, the naming of things. I usually remind myself something Vito Acconci said, about the moment when the words “conceptual art” were put in written form, how a whole area of activity has generated for many artists and the possibilities that emerged from there onwards.

Excerpt from the public conversation between Can Altay and Stephen Wright (04.05.2011, Espace Jemmapes, Paris)

Visualizing Transnationalism



VISUALIZING TRANSNATIONALISM DIAGRAM
designed by Lorenzo Sandoval

2011

The polis properly speaking is not the city-state in its physical location; It is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting together and speaking together, and its true space lies between the people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be.¹

HANNAH ARENDT

¹Arendt, Hannah, *the Human Condition*, p. 198

The term “transnationalism” is becoming a constitutive part of the European social and cultural fabric. Far from being interpreted only as a political and economic entity, Europe should be reconsidered in accordance with its phenomenal aspects, online networking and media spaces, and its several groups of migrants that every day move according to unexpected dynamics. Transnational fluxes, practices and movements ‘from below’ constitute a cultural stage that needs to be explored and re - interpreted. The potential of common actions and networks has become the “compass” to orient oneself in this wide territory. Gender, education, migration, are few of the many issues through which to look at such multifaceted terrain. How can we map such a complex territory? How make it visible? **VISUALIZING TRANSNATIONALISM** is a collaborative research-based process articulated through

a series of meetings and public workshops in Berlin, London, and Cluj Napoca. The project saw the participation of artists, architects, graphic designers, activists and curators who gathered to tackle and “visualize” the idea of Transnationalism through different mapping strategies. Part of the ongoing research has been presented in the framework of the **TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL** in form of posters and postcards: traditionally used to communicate messages through words and images. The series of posters and other printed items have been distributed in all the cities and document the collective and individual processes that took place in the months prior to the Festival.

VISUALIZING TRANSNATIONALISM
phases and outcomes:

Preparatory workshop with the contributions by **Luchezar Boyadjiev**, **Jacopo Gallico** (Osservatorio Nomade Berlin), **Anna de Manincor** (Zimmerfrei), **Bouchra Khalili**, **Maria Ptqk** and **Nicolas Maleve** (GenderArtNet), **Pablo de Soto** (Hackitectura.net).
Altes Finanzamt Berlin, January 2011

Imagining Commoniversity workshop lead by **Hackitectura.net** (Pablo de Soto and Alejandro González) at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, March 2011

Clu’ na’ poka workshop lead by **GenderArtNet** (Maria Ptqk and Nicolas Maleve) at Cluj Community Centre, Cluj Napoca, April 2011

N.U.T. project by **Jacopo Gallico** (Osservatorio Nomade Berlin) in collaboration with **Roberto dell’Orco**, 2011



IMAGINING COMMONIVERSITY
Poster Back Side,
Workshop by Hackitectura.net

2011



http://common.org



Teaching Transnationalism



100-104

mapping the commons | @jayschTA@home



Imagining Commoniversity

Imagining Commoniversity takes as starting point the assumption of University as a Common to engage with the recent university protests in the UK as well as the European movements experience that emerged in the last years to tackle the Bologna process issue. As a temporary laboratory, the workshop aims to join and collaborate with existing european activist campaigns and actions, connecting to Commoniversity network that met at Universidad Libre de La Rimaia in Barcelona. We release Imagining Commoniversity as an open source design project. Like in free software, this means that all different parts that compose the design project are transparent and documented, and can be remixed and improved. You can find it on n-1. cc, an autonomous and distributed social networking platform used to organize collective thinking, memory and action.

We suggest, as something of a hypothesis, that we view the question of the university through its tensions and contradictions. These contradictions can be broadly categorized through the way in which the university is both a site of the commons, of the circulation of knowledge, and of neoliberal restructuring. Secondly, we think that these tensions can be viewed most productively as not just the tensions between different principles, the pursuit of knowledge versus the training of future employees, but between different practices, practices that ultimately produce different modes of living and thinking; that is, different formations of subjectivity.

JASON READ

University Experience: neoliberalism Against the Commons



*The workshop **Imagining Commoniversity** by **hackitectura.net** took place in the context of the project **Visualizing Transnationalism**, produced by **European Alternatives/Transeuropa Network** with the support of **ECF (European Cultural Foundation)**, **ACE (Acción Cultural Española)** and **Allianz Kulturstiftung** and in partnership with the **Chelsea College of Arts and Design**.*

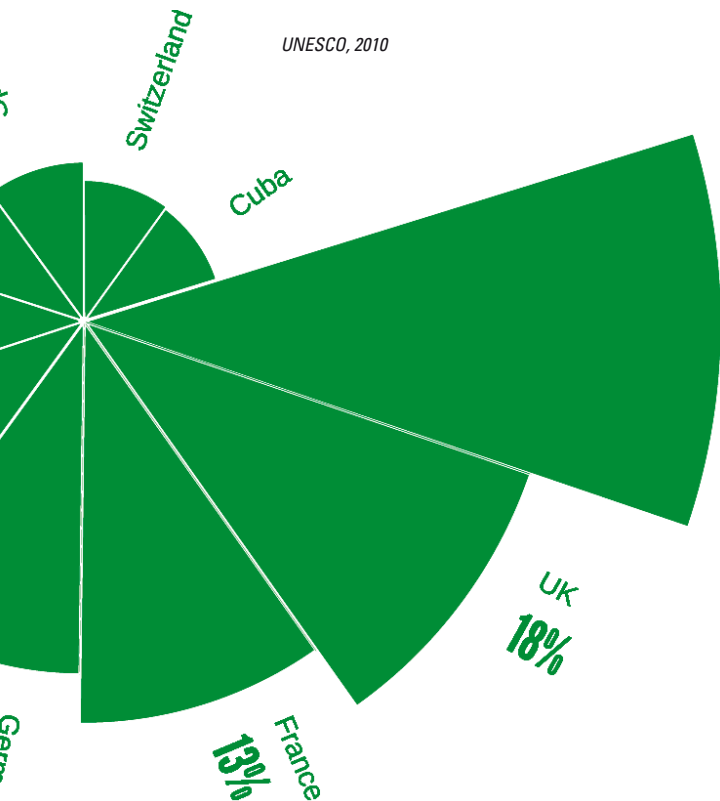
***Visualizing Transnationalism** is a collaborative research-based process articulated through a series of public workshops in **Berlin, London and Cluj Napoca**. The project saw the participation of artists, architects, graphic designers, activists and curators from different European countries, who gathered to tackle and “visualize” the idea of transnationalism by mapping collective actions emerging in contemporary Europe and beyond it.*

***Visualizing Transnationalism** is curated and coordinated by **Emanuele Guidi** in collaboration with **Lorenzo Sandoval**.*

VISUALIZING TRANSNATIONALISM

GLOBAL EDUCATION DIGEST

UNESCO, 2010



Workshop participants (alphabetical order):
Patrick Best, Florina Craciun, David Goldenberg, Sally Hogarth, Stefan Krastev, Eleana Louka, Marta Rodríguez, Elly Taylor, Jonmar VanVlijmen

hackitectura.net represented by **Pablo de Soto** and **Alejandro González**

Excerpt from the text published on the poster **Imagining Commoniversity**

USA
33%

Cluj-Napoca

For a week, a group of people interested in cartography, classification and tagging discussed and worked together in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Some came by plane, other by bus, walking or hitchhiking, living in Cluj, or living abroad.

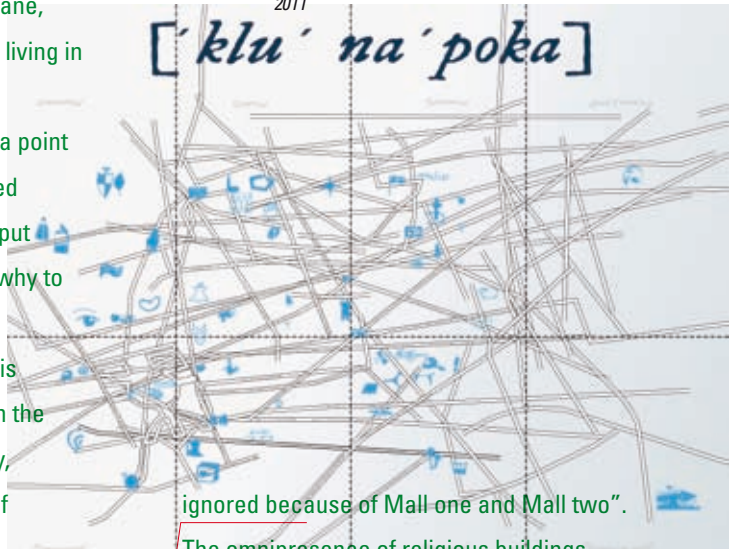
Taking the GenderArtNet project as a point of departure, the conversation circled around how, why, one would, could put the world into categories. How and why to assign places, origins?

A central question of GenderArtNet is how to create relationships between the different, sometimes complementary, sometimes antagonistic, practices of feminism in the realm of art. Rather than assigning labels to top categories, GenderArtNet uses polysemic images that attract constellations of keywords and displaces its classification in a fictional outer space.

Different conversations about Cluj-Napoca and Transylvania took place. Using the polysemy of icons and fictional displacements, the discourses about the city and the nation began to open up to surprising shortcuts, temporal diversions, elastic geometries. Consumerism was seen as a vector for spatial extremities "The mall is at the beginning or at the end of the world?" or a force of obliteration "Mental disease hospital and cancer, cemetery are

CLUJ NAPOCA
Poster Front Side,
Workshop by GenderArtNet

2011



ignored because of Mall one and Mall two".

The omnipresence of religious buildings gathering communities of people seeking to escape the "fear of tomorrow" spiraled through time: through the communist period, through the Middle Age, then through the ground where archeology meets questions of national identity to get back to religion: "are these bones catholic?" Borders were seen as horizons "Every young person is looking at the airport". Historical figures resurrected as European programs were seen side by side with the revival of ancestral practices.

The city of Erasmus students and the region where a nun is crucified.

Time and space compression, the Roissy bus that used to drive tourists to the Eiffel Tower brings Cluj commuters to their next station. The city center as an expelling force, leaving no room for the presence of Romas, city center as a space of cultural translation for the confession taking place at the peripheries. The “triangle of authorship” that connects the city hall, administration and university, where the city is planned and designed. And the bars and the music, and the bars and the exchange of knowledge, and the bars and the flows. And the flows and the encounters in so many languages with those who speak them or refuse to learn them. A map, then.

On the recto. A background. From Openstreetmap, the wikipedia for maps, street shapes were borrowed and displaced at random. Different tastes of randomness, a difficult selection. A grid. Eight regions were identified and labeled inspired by a visit to the Botanical Garden. “Ornamental”, “Geolirical”, “Taxonomical”, “Afraid of tomorrow”, “Fermentational”, “Miraculous”, “Exobotanical”, “The end of the world”.

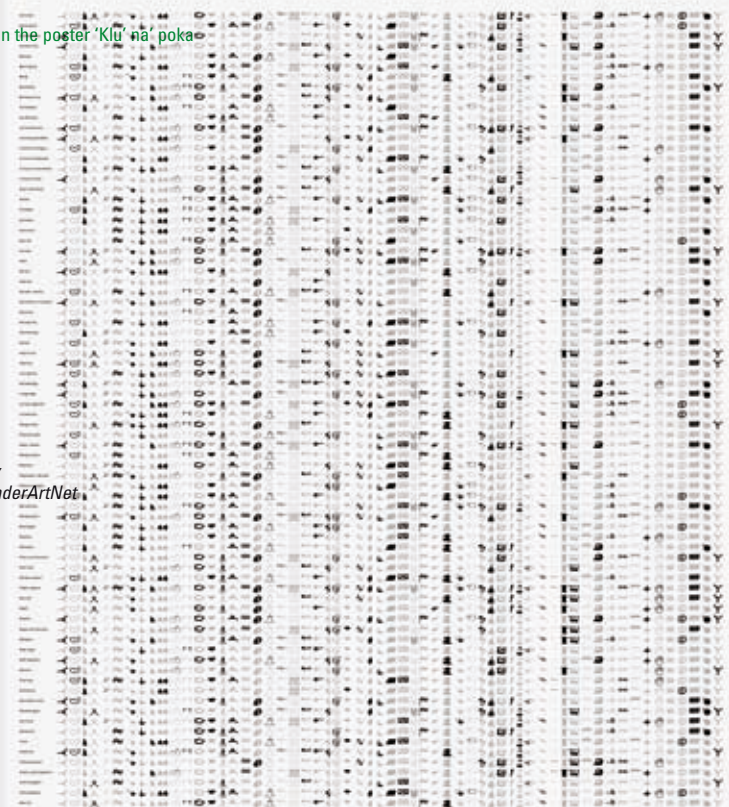
In the tension between the grid labels and the deconstructed street networks, icons and text fragments are looking for affinities, attract and repulse each other.

On the verso. The polysemy of icons looking for an echo in keywords. A periodic table of unstable subjective elements.

The text has been published on the poster ‘Klu’ na’ poka’

CLUJ NAPOCA
Poster Back Side,
Workshop by GenderArtNet

2011



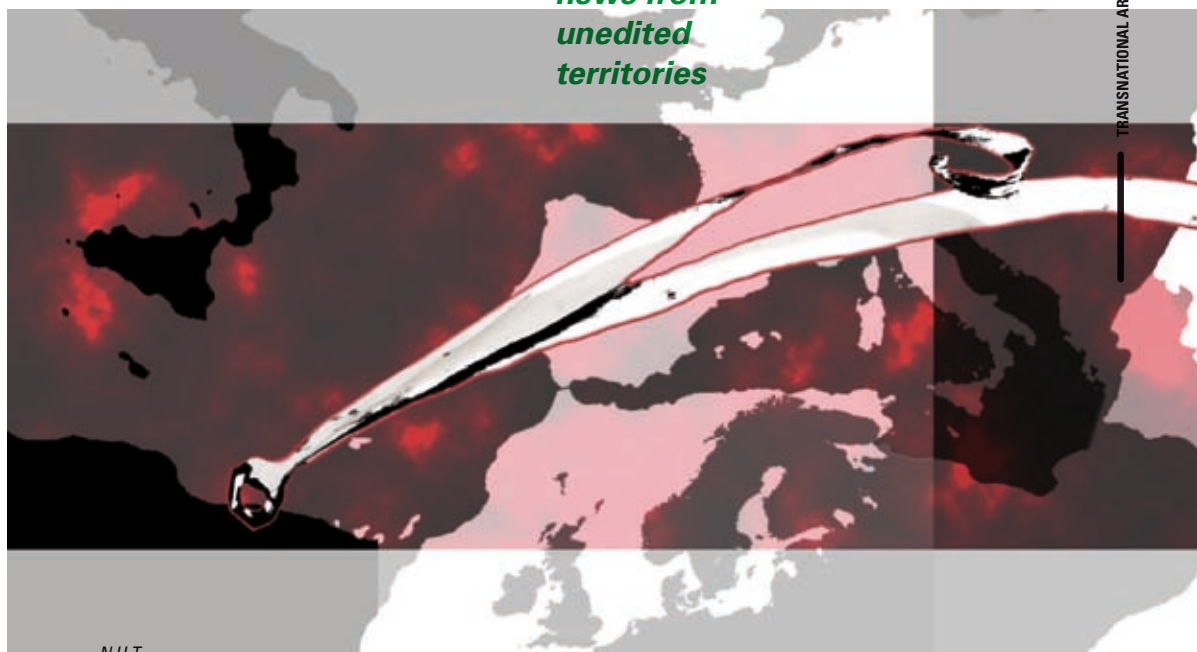
N. U. T.

*navigation in
uncertain
terrains*

*networking
upcoming
transnationalism*

*negotiating
urban
tensions*

*news from
unedited
territories*



N.U.T.

Postcard Front Side,

Jacopo Gallico with Roberto dell'Orco

2011

Through the state of exception, the sovereign “creates and guarantees the situation” that the law needs for its own validity. But what is this “situation,” what is its structure, such that it consists in nothing other than the suspension of the rule?

¹Agamben, Giorgio, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life, (Stanford: Stanford University Press) 1998, 18

What is this situation?

Europe is becoming more and more an archipelago where ‘states of exceptions’ emerge and proliferate, modifying the normal equilibriums and subtracting space from the fulfilment of a state of law.

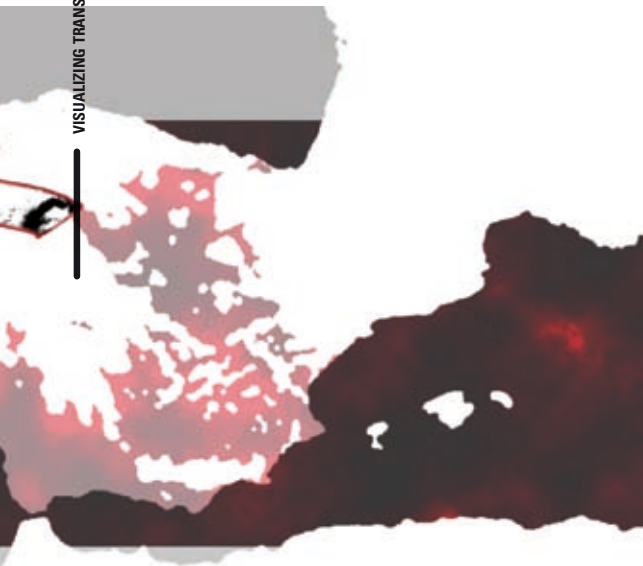
A permanent condition of crisis allows for the re-negotiation of rules that have been established after years of struggles; a scenario where a denied right is not perceived any more as an extra-ordinary event.

This circumstance of emergency is turning into an enduring status that demands the invention of new means to orient ourselves in a polis where the once established language of the state of law is constantly altered by new exceptions.

In the film *Stalker* by Andrei Tarkowski a nut is launched in the ‘Zone’ as compass to orient oneself. This postcard is intended to act as the Stalker’s nut; a tool to look for coordinates within the wide territory of Europe to explore and share potential similar urgencies that emerge locally.

We ask the Transeuropa audience to use this postcard to tell and denounce what you perceive as ‘zones’ where denied rights became ordinary everyday conditions; a mapping exercise through an open call, to spot and connect those situations where the ‘suspension of the rule’ is turning into the new norm. Thanks for your contribution.

Text published on the back of the postcard.



Love is love: LGBTQ rights in Lublin and Cluj-Napoca

Gender and queer culture was an important aspect developed in TRANSEUROPA through exhibitions, performances, and theatrical pieces. This theme was a particular focus in Lublin (Poland) and Cluj-Napoca (Romania), where the issue of LGBTQ rights is still a controversial and unsettled one.



LOVE IS LOVE



The theme of LGBTQ rights is vital to this city where the political class has turned religion into an ideology. Feminism and homosexuality were examined in the exhibitions mounted especially for Transeuropa: *Love Is Love, The Body, The City of Love and The Madonnas*. Curated by Pawel Leszkowicz at Labirynt Gallery, *Love Is Love. Art as LGBTQ Activism: from Britain to Belarus* surveyed performative campaigns for lesbian and gay visibility across Europe; through the video art of Igor Grubic (Croatia) and Bergamot (Belarus), it showed the burning issues of anti-gay violence in Belgrade, Zagreb and Minsk. In the context of this exhibition, together with invited panelists, we participated in lively debates over *Art as Performing Human Rights and Art as Gender and LGBTQ Activism*.



A sexual panorama of Lublin - *The City of Love* by **Piotr Nazaruk** - sparked a discussion over artistic freedom. Curated by Magda Linkowska at Labirynt Gallery, *The Madonnas* presented feminist paintings by **Katarzyna Holda**; critic Iza Kowalczyk called them "courageous works which break conventions". Finally, the performances by Szymon Pietrasiewicz and Piotr Salata problematised the political issues of this region of Europe. Salata protested in front of a "Catholic centre for curing homosexuality".



TRANSNATIONAL ART PROGRAMME

TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL 2011

LOVE IS LOVE



KAMPANJA ZA PROMICANJE PR



**Cluj-
Napoca**

Organised in the Home of the Festival in Cluj Napoca (Tranzit House), the exhibition *Pulse, within the Veil* was inspired by Pawel Leszczowicz's *Ars Homo Erotica* (National Gallery, Warsaw) and curated by **Georgiana But**. The concept standing at the basis of the exhibition is tolerance towards same sex couples. It is not a new idea, it's more to inform the public that love between same sex couples can be as beautiful, as intense, as warm as the heterosexual one; that nascent homosexuality or bisexual curiosity are natural, intriguing; that it is not a disease (as so many still believe), but an unarguable personal option. The artists - **Alex Mirutziu, Izabella Gustowska, Cristina Chiril, Doru Butz** and **Anastasiia Mikhno** - presented works that, at first sight, don't appear to be pro gay manifestos. The subtlety of the ideas proposed was impressive.

Alex Mirutziu's work, *Tears are precious*, is a single screen short movie that catches the journey of one tear from the fountain (eye) towards valley (cheek). Poignant and trenchant, the video is a manifesto against social intolerance and the discrimination of pure, human emotions that can exist between man and man and between woman and woman. **Izabella Gustowska's** video-installation *Love (Rose)* summarises lesbian eroticism portraying the woman as universal muse, in an erudite parade of images from famous paintings, captured in the structure

of a red crystal. Red as aesthetics of intimacy, of sexual pulse.

Cristina Chirila brought us two photographic series - *Ms & Ms Smith and Growing up*, - and one installation, *Playground Love*, concentrating on exploring the diverse steps in the development of a child with a different sexual orientation. **Anastasiia Mikho** made an *Analysis of beauty* of the androgyny. The photographs tell the story of corporality, beauty and warmth, through portraits of a transgender couple.

There is no cabaret-like trans-sexual, just sensual, natural, angelical people.

Doru Butz created a series that combines photography and digital art, enhancing shadows and tones of layered sexuality. "I feel that intimacy in a couple is similar to a satin veil that covers our sexuality."

The images are fulgurate, implied, suggested, dimmed, uncanny. They speak about the memory of a recollection, of the strange taste of a love just lived, about the option of being present within yourself.

Pulse within the veil was courageous and subtle, and hopefully, effective!

BOGDAN BRETOIU

FlipFlop.ro

On-board programme for the modern traveller

A film and video programme for **TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL 2011**

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Curator's notes by

Martina Angelotti & Elvira Vannini

Brad Butler & Karen Mirza

Tobias Hering

Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung

Joanne Richardson

“TRANSEUROPA” is an embracing evocation, implying the freedom to roam, visit and stay.

“Transnationality” adds another image: crossing borders and defying obstacles. Embracing and crossing qualify forms of mobility fuelled by desire, curiosity, often want and despair, sometimes empathy or solidarity.

There are many films to prove this, if proof is what we need. As digital commodities, films and videos are on the privileged side of mobility: they travel more easily than the people we see in them, and faster than those who made them. Films and videos lend themselves to be stand-ins and representatives for those who are not there. An embedded risk in this representation is that it easily becomes a form of substitution: by substituting the absentee, films and videos sometimes delude us about the politics of absence/presence.

Invited by Emanuele Guidi to co-curate this programme, my initial impulse was to stay put; to forward and share the invitation rather than a ready selection. In Transeuropa’s 2010 edition, the site-specific application of Oliver Ressler’s multi-voiced *What is Democracy?* was apparently following a similar impulse: to disseminate questions rather than distribute answers. The invitation to the co-curators was meant to let the critical interests of Transeuropa inform work and research already in progress. It was an attempt to blend curating with curiosity, to endure and reflect on distance, and to exercise hospitality for those whom we haven’t met yet.

On-board programme for the modern traveller was co-curated by Elvira Vannini & Martina Angelotti, Brad Butler & Karen Mirza, Bonaventure Ndikung, Joanne Richardson, and myself, and all of us also contributed to this reader. The entire process was initiated and supported by Emanuele Guidi who is the curator and coordinator of Transeuropa’s diverse artistic programme.

The film and video selection was prone to be eclectic. It will be spread across the festival venues, with parts of it occasionally travelling with the curators. There will not be any *one* occasion on which the whole programme can be seen in its entirety. This reader is therefore meant to embrace what happens apart, and to eventually cross the distances which reason, budget, and physics forced us to keep; it shall communicate our reflections between the local segments and debates of the programme, and make our choice of videos available for a critical cross-reading.

TOBIAS HERING

Cluj Napoca (May 4 – 5) and London (May 9)

Trans-political narratives

curated by **JOANNE RICHARDSON**

The programme presented in Cluj Napoca features the videos **Great Expectations** by Renata Poljak (2005), **Monolith** by Christina Norman (2007) and two of Richardson's own works, **Letter from Moldova** (2009), and **Red Tours** (2010, with David Rych).

In attendance The artist group h.arta.

www.hartagroup.ro

“Counter-documentary and making art politically”:

In London Joanne Richardson presents and discusses **Red Tours** at no.w.here, together with Brad Butler, Karen Mirza and Tobias Hering.

www.no-w-here.org.uk



RED TOURS

by J. Richardson and D. Rych

2010

"From age to age, as its shape slowly unraveled, Eastern Europe was already the land of enigmas. Red was already the color of hell, of sinful passions, and the blood of sacrifice. Frightened by their dark instincts and unspeakable desires, the West continues to project their own demons onto the East, as a way to exorcise them." (*Red Tours*, Joanne Richardson & David Rych)

In 1953, Alain Resnais and Chris Marker's film, *Les Statues Meurent Aussi* (*Statues also die*), condemned the transformation of African statues and cult objects into museum artifacts as a result of French colonialism. By citing the earlier film, *Red Tours* (2010) suggests a hidden link between the logic of colonization and what happened in Eastern Europe after 1989.

For the artistic program of the Transeuropa Festival in Cluj, I have chosen four videos as a frame for questioning the dominant narratives about "1989" - as the marker of an inevitable transition towards democracy and the free market, as the withering away of physical and ideological borders, and as the birth of a new Transeuropean territory and subjectivity. What are the political implications of these narratives of the "trans"? And what is left out from this happy ending of history?

Red Tours is a trip through the amusement park of history, with passengers guided from one location to another, plunged into prefabricated roles and scripts, without the possibility of stepping outside. The travel serves as an allegory for how history has been transformed into a trinket or souvenir that is consumed without analysis or reflection. In this story, the natives have become willing collaborators in their own colonization. The immediate past they have lived is no longer decipherable. It remains a shadow, a ghost that haunts the present from a horizon that is constantly receding.

"I went to revisit the site of the Lenin statue that we once saw together in Berlin. Do you remember the postcard of the 20 meter monstrosity that you bought for me? A few months after our journey, Lenin was cut into 125 pieces and buried in Köpenick forest. It now strikes me as a powerful allegory not only of the burial of the body of communism, which had to be dismembered so that it could never be resurrected again, but also of the death of an idea. The meaning of communism and of the concepts it once invoked has been completely emptied; hidden in a forest beneath several tons of sand, today it becomes impossible even to think it." (*Red Tours*, Joanne Richardson & David Rych)

The videos in the program highlight the conflicting status of collective memory, tourism and commodification. Christina Norman's *Monolith* shows that history is sometimes indecipherable precisely because it's still too close - the presence of the statue of a Russian soldier in Estonia divides society into nationalist wars. The resurrection of nationalist ideologies alongside the commodification of the Croatian seaside into a tourist paradise are the two sides of transition in Renata Poljak's *Great Expectations*. In these seemingly incompatible worlds, we see a swing between two ideologies of the right - a promise of future prosperity and consumption without restraints, and a return to the tradition of blood and soil.

The common thread of the video program is the image of travel as a stand-in for the process of transition. However, the fourth video in the series, *Letter from Moldova*, also points to the possibility of another meaning. As a metaphor of transformation, becoming and the encounter with the other, travel still holds out a promise of hope, like fragments of a forgotten world buried beneath the sands of time.

"I am writing you this letter from a distant land. She lies somewhere between the Middle Ages and the 21st century, between nostalgia for a failed revolution and an imaginary hope called Europe ... Was it our compulsion for traveling that first brought us together? Why have we always chosen strange destinations that no sane tourist would ever visit, places at the crossroads of turmoil and transformation? Perhaps it was the threshold of the indeterminate that attracted us, the promise of a different becoming, even though its moment has now been lost. But in its failure, we can still imagine remembering a future that never was." (*Letter from Moldova*, Joanne Richardson)

London (May 8)

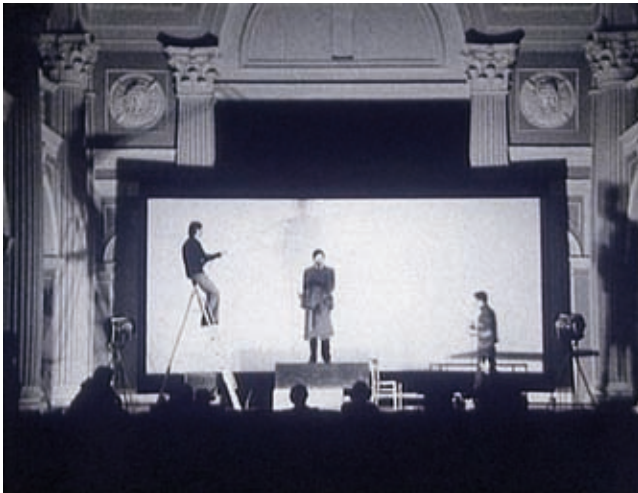
Kino Beleške

Kino Beleške / Film Notes

direction/production: Lutz Becker, SKZ Belgrade, 1975, 45'

Presented by **KAREN MIRZA** and **BRAD BUTLER**.

In attendance: Lutz Becker.



KINO BELEŠKE / FILM NOTES

direction/production: Lutz Becker, SKZ Belgrade

1975

We first encountered *Kino Beleške* whilst participating in the Chto Delat? 48 hour communal life seminar, *What struggles do we have in common*, at ICA, London. For two days around forty of us exchanged ideas on art and politics as a deadline loomed for us to turn this discourse into a performance for an audience. This was in September 2010 predating the current UK student mobilisation that we hoped was around the corner, but at that time this performance was useful as two important events occurred. One was the prolonged discussion with Chto Delat? over their proposal to split our performed groups into a didactic "Artist vs. Activist" debate. Chto Delat? argued that this split was a provocation within the performance to exaggerate our roles and relations. But we could not see ourselves in this, and our rebellion over this form was because we were being asked to perform something other than ourselves.

As it happened, on reflection, we were also in the process of forming new critical lines and boundaries as the Precarious Workers Brigade would later also write: *"The political art collective Chto Delat? came to London as part of the ICA's 'Season of Dissent.' They invited artists and activists to spend forty-eight hours in residence, working on a learning play about the very subject of how to intervene in the landscape of instrumentalized political art. Some members of London's critical arts community refused to attend in protest against the ICA's mass layoffs, mismanagement, and interpellation of critical artists into seemingly disingenuous (and uncompensated) attempts at institutional rebuilding in recent years. For those who did take part, the play and process asked us to perform this division, to place ourselves on the side of 'Art' or 'Activism.' Though many felt this to be a reductive polarity, it was prescient in retrospect, as it demanded that we choose which political subject we imagined ourselves to be, what we were willing to risk, and what we desired. This made it a dress rehearsal for what was about to come: moments in which we would have to choose between going to work or going to the demonstration, between getting good grades or learning to collaborate, between supporting student demonstrators in the face of police attack or succumbing to vilifying media campaigns and university administrators who threatened punitive actions. However, this rehearsal was small in comparison to the wave of art school and gallery occupations that took place in the weeks that followed"*.

(www.e-flux.com/journal/view/225)

The second significant event for us was the unexpected encounter with *Kino Beleške*. Unprogrammed and unsolicited a member of the group - Jelena Vesic of the Prelom Collective, which has been fostering the re-discovery of that film - had brought a dvd copy with her; during our overnight stay in the gallery space, the group agreed that the film be screened in the early hours. From the first frames we were struck by the prescience of the work. Its first announcement was spoken straight down the lens setting out its co-operative construction: A proclamation that "I dedicate my cinema time to" was followed by images and a list of the participants who made this collaborative film. And then another statement to camera: *"I would say that we are in Yugoslavia, that we are at the Students' Cultural Centre in Belgrade, that we live under self-management or are trying to build it with others somehow. We've been together here, at the Students' Cultural Centre for about five years. There are people with us who don't belong to our inner circle, such as Lutz Becker and several other people from various parts of the world which is not accidental. The*

circumstances are not accidental either; therefore, there is certainly something that connects us, some common thread, some idea or some ideal on account of which we're here, it is not just due to a set of circumstances. However our considerable individual differences will also be visible which is very good also, therefore, we don't function as a group, an exclusive group, with a programme, and so on, there are other things behind all this work of ours".

So it is that a work can find you at the right time. *Kino Beleške* was not only an example of a genre we were already researching for our own new work "Direct Speech Acts" but it also spoke to the issues being raised in the reading group we had set up within *The Museum of non Participation* of the book by Peter Weiss, called 'The Aesthetics of Resistance'. In this book students seek ways to express their hatred for the Nazi regime. They meet in museums and galleries, and in their discussions they explore the affinity between political resistance and art. Weiss suggests that meaning lies in embracing resistance, no matter how intense the oppression, and that we must look to art for new models of political action and social understanding.

These issues also resonate through *Kino Beleške*. As Lutz Becker sets out in his press release for the film: *"The film includes verbal statements and performative gestures of the numerous protagonists of the New artistic practice in former Yugoslavia, referring to the role of art in society and re-thinking the concepts of 'form', 'autonomy', 'economy', 'politicality' and 'institutionalization' of contemporary art. Its making was a collective collaboration of all participants. I was assisted by the artist-filmmaker, Zoran Popovic. The form of the film was determined by specific ideas and demands of the participants. For most of them it was important at this moment in the political evolution of Yugoslavia to verbalise ideas and ideological positions concerned with 'art in society'. Dunja Blazevic, the director of the SKC, spoke about contemporary art praxis and related it to the principle of Socialist self-management, which in the opinion of many contained the potential to fundamentally change the cultural value of art and the artist's role in society. - The art critic Jesa Denegri, promoter of 'New Art' in Belgrade, gave a sceptical view of the notion of art as social action. He was critical of those who thought that changes in art could be made through changes of the internal structure of art language, or worse, a return to the artistic values of the past. - Goran Djordjevic standing silently in front of the camera presented some of his subversive aphorisms as voice over. Aware of the anomalies of Modernism and the fragility of artistic freedom he asked: Was intellectual peace only a truce? - The predominant view of the artists appearing in the film was that self-regarding art criticism had to move on to a more engaged criticism on art as cultural institution. Over shots of snow-covered Belgrade Marina Abramovich read the programme listing of TV Belgrade for 29 November '75, the Day of the Yugoslav Republic. The drabness of this programme reflected the ideological stagnation and poverty of the official cultural effort. Its inclusion illustrated eloquently the cultural alienation and parallel existence in which the SKZ group of artists lived and worked."*

This film, lost for many years, has now reappeared at this time, perhaps as no accident either.
by Brad Butler & Karen Mirza

Sofia (May 10) and Bologna (May 12)

Clashing tales. The local aspect of the struggle

Curated by MARTINA ANGELOTTI and ELVIRA VANNINI

The video programme features **Lexico Familiar** by Marcelo Expósito, **Les sentiers de l'utopie** by Isabelle Fremeaux and John Jordan, and **The Language of Things** by Angela Melitopoulos.

In attendance in Bologna: Marcelo Expósito.

PATHS THROUGH UTOPIA

by John Jordan and Isabelle Fremeaux

2011



"In our time the axes have shifted so that, if we remain within the same Euro-American framework, revolutionary thinking might be said to draw on French philosophy, U.S. economics, and Italian politics. This is not to say that Italian revolutionary movements have met only with great successes in recent decades; in fact, their defeats have been almost as spectacular as those suffered by the French proletariat in the nineteenth century. I take Italian revolutionary politics as model, rather, because it has constituted a kind of laboratory for experimentation in new forms of political thinking that help us conceive a revolutionary practice in our times."

This is how Michael Hardt began his introduction to "Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics" in collaboration with Paolo Virno in 1996. They described the particular Italian political experience of the Seventies, Laboratory Italy; a model for experimenting with new forms of thought and revolutionary practice. Althusser loved to remember Lenin in his conviction that without revolutionary theory there couldn't be revolutionary practice. The relationship between theory, practice and language remains an open conundrum, a laboratory for testing the effects of new ideas, strategies and organisations. According to these authors, revolution can't be anything but this continually open process of experimentation. Considering this, can contemporary artistic practices produce discontinuity, rupture and activate new interpretive tools for society?

The crux of the matter is in finding organizational models and political action that can be adequate to the current changes. What are the methods for subjectification and the dominant and deep-rooted cultural and artistic forms of our time? Probably, as the phenomena of re-enactment teach us, the cyclic morphology of change acts as such that, in certain epochs, forms and ideas that are new and emerging tend to impose themselves over others. Our contemporary times are characterized by a weakening of ties between practice and theory, intellectuals and workers, social life and work life, art and society. Instead we sustain that Italian political philosophy and its theoretical diaspora (which, in recent years is reawakening great interest from Anglo-American academics), derived from the movements of the Sixties and Seventies and referred to under the umbrella “the Italian anomaly”, is far more paradigmatic. This helps even in understanding the transformations that occur in contemporary society, for instance, the tensions between conflicts and insubordination, desires, needs and underground resistance.

Post-operaismo, far more than certain curatorial and artistic practices, today constitutes an intellectual experience that is more promising than the phenomenologies of art and has managed to create techniques and *savoir-faire* in the field of research and transnational action. According to Christian Marazzi, radical Italian thought has had the ability to imagine a political dimension beyond the nation-state, it knew how to change productive models and Fordist culture with its complete critique, moving ever closer to “movements” on the grounds of social unrest.

But the trust in the generations born in the Eighties and the Nineties and in their ability to bring a wind of change isn't entirely groundless, although the political system can often be indifferent, or repressive and play an active role in the media criminalization. At the same time the current situation in Italian artistic institutions has fuelled, by means of alternative types of cultural production, a reopening of the debate on artistic processes. Today more than ever the need for antagonism manifests itself in a reflexive modality, diagnostic of many contexts. Art, as free and rebellious as ever, develops a revolt that is difficult to digest and still doesn't manage to fully reach certain theoretic paradigms. Only openness to discussion and intellectual engagement can upset the illusion of autonomy in the artistic sphere and transform artistic and curatorial practices into forces acting within the wider social context of political communication. So it's necessary to start from forms of self-organisation to a speculative yet profound analysis, to developing different processes of cultural production that render effective the various vestiges of dissent which produce counter-information. It is precisely for this reason, looking at Europe and its uncontrollable processes of transformation and development, we can try to trace the route of art and criticism that takes political, social and civil vision, with its many connotations, as its point of departure.

In recent years in Europe, the concept of migration has undergone different developments tied to the idea of self-organisation, the re-appropriation of public spaces, how people imagine the relationship between institution and society, the struggle for civil rights, eventually becoming the inspiration for generating new models of integration and subversion, amongst which cultural processes or criticism of the opposition. John Jordan and Isabell Fremeaux follow the paths

to utopia in a road movie that explore a post-capitalist Europe. Filmed over seven months of travel in 2008 in which they visited ten different realities of utopian experimentation, the film “Les Sentiers de l'utopie” is part of a project that also involves a book to be published in France under the publisher Zones. Beginning with the action of an illegally-organised Climate Camp at the airport of Heathrow, the voyage takes us to a little French village that has been squatted by punks, then to Serbia and a number of occupied or union-run farms and further to a commune that lives by the tenets free love in an old Stasi base. This journey brings us in a sort of parallel universe where money no longer has any value and private property has been abolished. These are the fractures and cracks, perceived or real, that autonomously oppose the traditional narrative flow of contemporary society. The concept of Utopia belongs to our memory. Utopia constantly presupposes an “outside”, a space in which to reform every aspect, thing and tension towards an ideal organisational model. But what are our feasible alternatives to Utopia? Paolo Virno recently wrote: “It is no longer the ideal that makes Utopia unattainable per se; we now live in a time in which we might come face-to-face with the absolute reality and tangibility of this ideal.”

Post-workerism has assumed and considered the language of “means of production” at the centre of contemporary labour. The form of the language, in its essence, is the subject on which “The Language of Things” by Angela Melitopoulos concentrates. It took life from the 1916 essay *On language in general and on the language of man* by Walter Benjamin. The video represents an attempt to translate his theory on language into a montage that uses pictures of a high-tech playground in Tokyo and its artificial environment: merry-go-rounds, sophisticated simulations of anomalous waves, looks and eyes of Japanese people, addicted to the hyper-technological tension of entertainment. What comes to the eye is the convulsive composition of images, at times dream-like, on which run fragments of reconnectable thoughts which Benjamin himself defines as “the magic of language”, alluding to its infinity that is conditioned only by immediacy. It is its linguistic essence, not its verbal content, that draws the limits of language.

It is for this reason that language becomes inescapable in the elaboration of content that gives the form its fulfilment. Marcelo Exposito's film, “Lexico Familiar”, is an attempt at completing several pieces of the “family lexicon”, to form the language of new movements. The thought takes shape directly from experience, from concrete expressions of the struggles that occurred in various ways and societies, starting with the Zapatista movement of EZLN. The definitions that John Holloway expresses, with extreme eloquence, in his interview are the attempt at translating philosophical aesthetics and political theory into a dimension that is far from abstraction, but concentrates on participation, in full conscience of the meaning and terminology tied to the concept of struggle, making sense of it through struggle itself. The scream as Holloway suggests, is the reaction against that which we are living, the discord is the plurality of screams and the us presupposes the necessity of re-thinking the individual in terms of social community.

Translated by Nausikaa Angelotti and Jonathan King

Paris (May 11) and Berlin (May 14)

The body as grammar in the language of transnationality

Curated by **BONAVENTURE NDIKUNG**

The programme features the videos **Renate** (2005) by Antje Engelmann, **The Phantom Desire** (2009) by Sergio Roger, **Territory of Intimacy – Tanscaucasian Identification** (2009) by Verena Kyselka, **Arcadia, downtown** (2009) by Yaron Lapid, **L'Esprit de Madjid** by Ines Johnson-Spain (2009) and **Pandore** (2010) by Virgil Vernier.

n attendance in Berlin: Antje Engelmann, Verena Kyselka and Sergio Roger.



ARCADIA, DOWNTOWN
by Yaron Lapid

2009

Many threads

A conversation between **BONAVENTURE NDIKUNG** and **TOBIAS HERING** about the video programme "The Body as Grammar in the Language of Transnationality".

BN: In Territory of intimacy we can see what it means to be Armenian, elsewhere. Verena Kyselka interviews Armenians who faced ethnic discrimination in Azerbaijan and were forced to go „home“ to Armenia. Anyone who has had such an experience can relate to this. For me however, the epicentre of the video are not the exile stories or the deliberations on where or what home is.

TH: What is the epicentre then?

BN: The body. My interest lies in the expressions of the body and the gesticulations, as well as the feelings these expressions incite in me. What does the body tell, how can the body express these stories? People talk about displacement, loss of their homes, the ordeals of becoming a refugee. Even if you don't understand a word of what is being said, you can read and understand a lot from people's gestures and facial expressions. I can identify with it. I can see the loss, and I can see their life in exile. This is why for me it is also a film which shows "the body as grammar in the language of transnationality", as I have titled this programme. These are Armenians, but I am sure that a Rwandan, for example, would immediately recognize something in the expression of their bodies. This is something that goes through and beyond nations, which is larger than the concept of nations. It is local, and at the same time global.

TH: How close are for you the links between body language and identification?

BN: It is possible to identify with someone through the expression of his body. I might even understand him better by his body language, than from his words, as body language doesn't lie. Hate, for example, is something you see in faces more directly than you get from words. It is something that cannot be concealed. Equally when you love someone or when you are afraid, it is your body that gives you away no matter how much you avoid admitting your feelings through words. This is something that is communicated and understood anywhere. The despair you see in this man coiling up on the ground in Yaron Lapid's Arcadia is another, drastic example. No matter how hard he struggles, he cannot stand upright. His body tells it. This pain and this helplessness betrayed by his body can be understood irrespective of one's nationality or language.

TH: This is interesting, the notion of the "indiscretion" of the body, of the body giving away what we are trying hard to conceal. Where do you see the political context of these issues: concealment, indiscretion, betrayal?

BN: We could ponder on the political implications of these gestures. But the political challenge I see precedes them. It lies in the idea to take the body as an allegory for nation. I know this is a bit crude and hyperbolic, but at bottom nations are bodies. Germany as a body. The naked man in Arcadia, or the prostitute who approaches him and who is concerned about him... I don't want to impose interpretations, but the allegorical is virulent here.

TH: We should however be wary with this notion of the "nation body". It comprises and homogenizes a lot. In Germany we have a particularly disastrous tradition of such ideas. It is a quick step from the idea of the nation as one body to notions of hygiene and body-shaping, and from there to the politics of cleansing. As soon as the notion of the nation as body is taken ontologically any heterogeneous element is considered a dysfunction.

BN: Concerning the issue of Germany's history, you are quite right. But the problem is to consider a body to be homogenous. This is in no way my concept of

the body, nor of the nation. The body is clearly an entity or structure that comprises many heterogeneous parts – seen both from a physical and a metaphysical perspective. And I dare to say that appalling concepts like “ethnic cleansing” and the like will cease to reoccur only when the concept of the body as plurality in singularity is understood. The allegorical is meant as a tacit suggestion for a second look.

TH: When we first talked about this approach to the topic, I had just recently seen Virgil Vernier’s *Pandore* and I immediately recalled the joy it gave me to watch this film as an allegory, constantly on two levels: as a documentation of the entrance policies of an up-class club, and as an allegory for “something else”. I think this joy has something to do with “sharing a secret”. Is that something the “second look” does for you, to reveal a secret behind the visible performance of the bodies?

BN: To reveal the hidden, non-evident and non-obvious. What is special about *Pandore* is for me how this video also stands as an emblematic illustration of power. Who has power, how and in what way is it exercised? From a socio-political perspective the video fits quite aptly to the situation of the thousands of Tunisian refugees trying to get through Italy into France. Who is allowed to come in and for what reasons? They both seem to carry the same arbitrariness. Let me say however that it would be a pity, if people came with the straightforward idea that these videos are all “about transnationality”. Of course, they might have this in mind, as they have read or heard about the festival. What I find problematic however is the idea of “representation” which people might connect to a film programme. I don’t want to represent. I don’t want to represent or explain “transnationality”.

TH: No, that’s not what we want.

BN: In a way it is what the programme is about, but it’s about a lot of other things, too.

TH: At bottom, I think we don’t even need this term, “transnationality”. We both had initial hesitations about the term, and you made them explicit in your curatorial proposal by asking back: What does “transnationality” mean in the first place? I think we should try to “forget” the term, forget what we have thought it meant. After all, it is now used for anything from big companies flagging their economic claims, to describing subversive networks. Expanding the term this far reduces it to a mere technical meaning.

BN: I think we should simply start discussing from what the videos put in front of us. How did you see *Territory of intimacy* according to our suggestion of the body as grammar?

TH: Well, I watched it with this notion already in my head. I wish I could actively forget, but that is not so easy. I have seen how the bodies express different emotions towards what is being told; at times the body language seems to contradict what the words are expressing. But it will be interesting to discuss these questions with Verena Kyselka, because on an obvious level it is a very textual film. She groups the statements in chapters and through her editing relates people’s accounts to a more or less chronological narrative.

BN: We must assume that the level we are looking at was not on her mind when she filmed and edited. But isn’t this the challenge of curating, to discover that which was not intended but is there nevertheless? In each work, each film, there is supposed to be a leitmotif, or a “red thread”. In reality I think that in each work there are many threads. People read a book or go to an exhibition with the

desire to find and see the red thread. That’s not how I see it. I believe there are many red threads, or that there is a blue thread next to the red thread, which is just as legitimate. What’s the use of saying, ‘I haven’t recognized the red thread, so this is not convincing’? You might even be colour-blind, or red-blind! What I am interested in as a curator is to find these different colours, the green thread, the yellow thread, the red thread. In Verena Kyselka’s film the people talk about exile, about displacement, how they cope with their loss. This is one level, one thread; but why not go a bit deeper into it and discover another thread? For me, one thread is the expressiveness of their bodies.

TH: I even think that these threads coincide or get entangled when the body becomes a subject of the verbal discourse. For example here, in many of these people’s stories there is a point when they realized that they had become recognizable as Armenians; or they were made to believe that they were recognizable. Up to a certain point in their lives, it hadn’t been an issue whether they were recognizable or not. Suddenly however they were discriminated against, and they started to feel the racist gaze of the others which singled them out as “Armenians”. Yes, but the way they talk about it makes this change of perception visible again. One can see that when they talk about this discrimination they talk from a body which reflects on its own recognizability. Or should we put it the other way around and say: when they talk about discrimination it again stirs the gaze of the observer, the spectator who might find himself checking whether they are actually recognizable or not?

BN: In *L’Esprit de Madjid* we are challenged in a similar way. What do we see in Madjid’s body language and how do we contextualize it? Obviously he is talking about being a homosexual, having a hybrid sexual identity in a society that does not approve of these concepts at all. The body tells it in so many ways, even though none of these terms (homosexual, transgender etc.) are ever used. But I wouldn’t show this video in a context of “gender” or “homosexuality”. Being homosexual he talks about something absolutely universal: to have your daily life like everybody else, to make your living cutting people’s hair, and to also have this something “special” which you have to accommodate and find your way with, because society doesn’t accept it and suppresses it with violence. By coding his speciality as a spiritual peculiarity Madjid reintegrates it; this even gives him a possibility to live his “specialty” in public. What he is doing, we can find in any society and it is not restricted to homosexuality. Homosexuality is the most obvious part here, but again I am more interested in that which is not so obvious, but nevertheless there.

TH: So you are saying: being homosexual, or being “different” in so many ways, is a universal experience. To show this film in a specific “gender” context would merely state this and not say much more. But if I get you right, you are proposing to look at how this universal experience bends back into the personal story and how it gathers additional meaning. And then we see additional facets that might not have anything to do with questions of gender.

BN: One way or the other we are touching on gender. But there are things that go without saying. If you keep repeating them you’re running the risk to produce nothing but tautologies. I have a feeling that too many things are being said too many times. Of course we are addressing gender, even if we are putting another focus; it is there, we won’t lose it. But we don’t stick a label on it, “Gender”, because in this story, as in most stories there is not only one thread but many.

Paris (May 13) and Berlin (May 15)

Ceux de Primo Levi

direction: **ANNE BARBÉ**, France 2010, 62'

In attendance: Sibel Agrali, director of the care centre of the Primo Levi association (in Paris),
Dorothee Bruch from Xenion, support for political refugees (in Berlin).

www.primolevi.org

www.xenion.org



CEAUX DE PRIMO LEVI

by Anne Barbé

2010

The Pain of Others

Notes on the film *Ceux de Primo Levi* by Anne Barbé
by TOBIAS HERING

I first saw *Ceux de Primo Levi* in a cinema in Marseille, at the FID 2010; in a city which in the 1940's had been a last refuge for hundreds of thousands running from Nazi terror, attempting to escape the horrors that millions of others were suffering, Primo Levi among them. At that period Marseille had been a dead-end-street for the majority of those refugees. Many were betrayed, many were seized, some travelled on to Lisbon, many were snatched on the way, committed suicide, disappeared, few embarked from Marseille, many left without trace, many disappeared or vanished. And the rest, all the others, what happened to them? Where is Marseille?

About half-way through *Ceux de Primo Levi*, Beatrice Patsalide, psychologist, says that even after 15 years of working with victims of torture, each new account of the horrors afflicted on someone by somebody else comes as a shock. There is no routine in being a listener, in becoming a witness. *"There is no limit to the imagination of horror. What men and women invent to torture the other has no limits. This touches on the notion of the unimaginable: it hasn't been imagined before, it's a new invention. It exists."* Some of their colleagues speak about routines, the enormous difficulty *"to not be crude"* vis-à-vis those incessant tales of extreme violence; not every witnessing has the same effects. Here, too, it seems there are no limits to imagination, or despair.

Listening to Beatrice Patsalide it occurred to me that *Ceux de Primo Levi* is also a film about cinema and about watching films. A certain cinema, a certain type of films; the kind of films that we cannot shrug off because they touch on the notion of the unimaginable. Films that make us witnesses to the pain of others. Films that touch on something that wasn't imagined before, that now exists, that shouldn't exist. But how does it exist for us, and what do we do with it? These are the questions that those working at "Association Primo Levi" are reflecting on in this film. I cannot help but feel that they are questions that concern all of us, confidants to each other's stories, and witnesses to some people's unimaginable pain. Contemporaries currently of regimes tumbling and dictators resigning, and at the same time more than ever *"alerted to the insidious signs, increasing daily, of an authority that in a 'subtler' way makes use of the same mechanisms as these dictatorships"*, as psychologist Eric Sandlarz puts it in the film. Meanwhile, authority has lost some of its subtlety along the way. For some of us then, the question is: how not to be crude vis-à-vis a cynical and uncaring authority that rejects the life of others in the name of our own comfort or safety.

The title for the evening, *The Pain of Others*, was given with respect to Susan Sontag's essay, *Regarding the pain of others*, on the common predicament of looking at depictions, from raw to artistic, of other people's pain and misery. Sontag offers neither final, nor easy answers how to deal with the complexities of this predicament, let alone the economical and political circumstances preceding it. So there is nothing to quote or copy-paste from her, but it I think it is good to remember that seeing starts from where one opens one's own eyes.

Berlin (May 15)

Willkommen zuhause (Welcome home)

direction/production: **ELIZA PETKOVA** and **HANNES MARGET**, Germany/Kosovo 2011, 69'

In attendance: Eliza Petkova and members of the Berlin-based Roma initiative Amaro Drom.

www.willkommenzuhause.blogspot.de

www.amarodrom.de



WILLKOMMEN ZUHAUSE
by Eliza Petkova

2011

No secrets

Notes on *Willkommen zuhause (Welcome home)*

by Eliza Petkova and Hannes Marget

by **TOBIAS HERING**

Willkommen zuhause (Welcome home) is the sarcastic title to a film with little sarcasm and no trace of cynicism. "Home" here is not a direction of travel, but a directive from German state authorities.

And a "welcome" is nowhere to be heard or found. In April 2010 Germany signed a "retransfer" treaty with the recently founded state of Kosovo in which both countries agree to collaborate on forcefully deporting people of Kosovar nationality from Germany back to Kosovo. In practice (and by intention) the largest group affected are Roma, thousands of whom have since then (and already before) been "repatriated" against their will. During the Balkan wars they had fled to Germany and other EU countries. That's almost twenty years ago, depending on how long it took the war to destroy their homes. Since then most of them have settled, have had children, went to school, have worked, paid taxes, some married, some died, some have moved elsewhere. That they haven't become German citizens is not their fault, but due to the definitions of the German laws of citizenship. The same laws that define "home" for them.

Without much ado Eliza Petkova and Hannes Marget decided to travel to Kosovo and visit Roma families who had been deported from Germany. To see what home was like and how welcoming it was. The film's language is German, not because it is the common language between those behind and those in front of the camera, but because it is the family language, the home language. There is little ornament in this film, there is little subtleties; everything speaks for itself, even the silences; things are plain for those who care to look; there are no secrets, and no need to be secretive.

The filmmakers have worked on this film for one and a half years. They made it with minimal means, petty money. They made it out of a concern and a need to act and connect. Had they waited for the issue to reach the mainstream media, somebody might have invested in them. But they didn't want to wait, it didn't occur to them. What occurred to them was that while waiting for a film budget to materialize, Roma families are being deported to a phantom home on a weekly basis.

The film has had a growing number of screenings and audiences. It had a small cinema release in Berlin in late April and was shown at independent events and festivals elsewhere. Just a few days ago, Eliza wrote in an email: „Today we had a ‚press conference‘ at the Berlin senate department for integration. The senator had organized it and the film was screened on the occasion. Not one journalist showed up. We were five in this big conference room, with the senator, her consultant, and a woman responsible for public relations. Only the public was missing.“

Eliza Petkova and Hannes Marget are currently negotiating to sell the film to a German TV station. This is now over two years after starting to work on it. One year after the inception of the "retransfer" treaty. Fifteen or twenty years after most of those who we see and hear in the film have decided to make a new home elsewhere. For them everywhere is made into elsewhere, and it goes by the name of EUROPE.



TRANSEUROPA is at once a cultural festival and a political event.

It is the first transnational Festival happening in 12 cities simultaneously promoting democracy, equality and culture beyond the nation.

If you are not free, I am not either!
Roma rights are human rights!
Europe must become a utopia!
If we jump we will fly!
Migration is the human condition.
Frontiers are the limits of our imagination!
If Europe is a fortress, we are all in prison
Free movement, free spirit!
'Je t'aime' 'I feel the same'
Hospitality obligatory here!

*Slogans produced by the audience
interacting with the Home of the Festival
in London, Paris, Cluj-Napoca and Bologna*

Edinburgh



Cardiff



London



Amsterdam



Berlin



Paris



Lublin



Prague



Bratislava



Cluj-Napoca



Bologna



Sofia

