

space&designstrategies_research

overview ss 09



Lead by Univ.Prof. Mag.arch. Elsa Prochazka, the field of study space&designstrategies at the University for Art and Industrial Design in Linz offers students the opportunity to develop cross-disciplinary skills related to architecture, design and digital media.

The research platform

space&designstrategies_research functions as an associated competence centre for practice based research projects and prototypical design development. By studying design methodologies based on complex geometry and new technologies, students will develop a broader understanding for complex design tasks requiring creative strategies for the development of social and political form. At the same time, they are following individual paths of artistic production in the field of fine arts to achieve deeper insights about ruling political and aesthetic phenomena in the overlapping fields of creative practices.

Students are invited to join workshops and public discussion panels: in the year of 2008/09 our_research activities were focused on contemporary strategies of space production within the field of fine arts.

In summer term ss09, the artist

Gabriele Sturm became invited to conduct a three-day workshop. This was followed by a round table discussion including Christian Kobald, writer and co-founder of COCO, a new space for contemporary art in Vienna, and Tatjana Schneider, architect, teacher and researcher at the University of Sheffield UK.

Sandrine von Klot, curator
space&designstrategies_research

//heterotopism

//////////////////////////////////CONTEMPORARY STRATEGIES OF SPACE PRODUCTION////

As we aim for a discussion about contemporary space-related approaches in fine arts, we take in consideration a crucial transition period in art history: referring back to minimalist and post-minimalist sculpture in the late 1960s and 1970s, primary sculptural and phenomenological interest in the actual physical configuration of (exhibition) space becomes evident. Eventually, moving away from the implied representational logic of the so called 'environments', artists allocated greater meaning to how each piece of an artwork becomes dependent on the context that it is viewed in, developing a new format, well known today as 'installation art'.

In her workshop, Gabriele Sturm encourages students to reveal and discover information somehow embedded in generic food packing material such as travel routes, points of origin and sale. At the same time, ones own subjective reading of certain food items give shape to reworked iconographic representations of personal, emotional perception and response. Given the information one may have notated and produced, the final artwork manifests itself as a multi-dimensional installation in space. In this way, spatial diagramming of transport systems throughout Europe may be found right next to associative emblematic iconography. Again, the viewer will be challenged to reassemble pieces of seemingly common knowledge and projection through direct experience within a three-dimensional context of disassociated material.

In this way, content no longer gets transmitted through defined ordering systems; it rather follows strategies of de-illustration, des-illusion, to point at unfulfilled expectations, and the need for individual contribution of persistent re-reading and ceaseless re-processing.



//////////////////////////////////IMPLIED TOPICS

- actual form as material to deliver memory
- direct and tactile compositions of inconsistent material, to activate and have observers participate
- defining objects and installations as self-contained spaces inside other spaces
- to find an object and invent a function
- form is not illustrative
- memory as part of the reminiscence of a location - to create specific locations for memories to reappear, space to protect memories
- how to deliver experiences into abstract and performative settings

//////////GABRIELE STURM

Gabriele Sturm was born in 1968 in Lienz, in east Tyrol in Austria. She first studied psychology in Salzburg and Klagenfurt, received her diploma of psychology in 1995, and practiced as a psychologist until 1998. At the Academy of fine Arts in Vienna she studied `painting and graphic design´ with Markus Prachensky, and received her diploma in 2000.

She continued her studies at the Academy of fine Arts in the field of `text related sculpture´ with Heimo Zobernig until 2002. Since 1997, her work was shown in numerous galleries, such as Galerie Insam /Vienna, Galerie Holzer /Villach, Galerie Prisma /Bozen, Galerie Altnöder / Salzburg, Neue Galerie Graz/Graz, Galerie für Gegenwartskunst/Bremen u.a. She took part in exhibitions at MUSA / Vienna, Kunsthalle Exnergasse /Vienna, Kunstraum / Innsbruck, Künstlerhaus Vienna, ZKM Karlsruhe (2010).

//////////PARADIESVOGELFEDER

One feather of a bird of paradise will be send `back´ from Europe to its location of ancestry, following changing trade routes across the sea, all the way from Bremerhaven to New Guinea. Since there is not one direct route, Gabriele Sturm assumes, the feather will be handed over from ship to ship, from one hand to another. The only accompanying instruction requests intermediate messengers to send a brief SMS message any time the feather changes its carrier, to reveal its current location. Possible success of the anticipated journey remains unforeseen.

Paradiesvogelfeder by Gabriele Sturm





////////////////////ROAD TOMATO

Tomatoes are being delivered in crates made of brown or white corrugated cardboard. Cardboard packages show printed iconographic images of standardized tomatoes. The vegetables are being sold while the packages are not recyclable and have to be thrown away the day of delivery, and every season, packages of this kind are being re-designed. A single box `channelled out` of the typical production and waste management represents a unique incident - as the object refers to routes of transport connecting points of origin to points of sale. It also reveals merchandise information about actual weight, classification, trading company, ect. Gabriele Sturm spent several weeks accompanying a truck filled with 20 tons of tomatoes, driving from the south coast of turkey to Vienna Inzersdorf. Meanwhile, she kept sending SMS messages to a website linked to the Neue Galerie Graz for minimal public access. ("life-time action", Neue Galerie Graz, Steirischer Herbst 2007)



road tomato by Gabriele Sturm

/////THE FLIGHT PATH OF A FRUIT FLY

conducted by Gabriele Sturm
june 03-06 2009

//////////OUTLINE

In the workshop students are asked to analyze single fruits as well as corresponding package material. Through this approach they will eventually develop a spatial understanding of actual transport systems certain goods follow until they reach final points of sale. At the same time they will discover their own personal reading and prejudiced thinking of various fruits as they produce individual representations of their study objects. Since most travelling food products can be literally traced along existing routes of traffic, the workshop challenges students to transform exterior urban spaces into interior spaces of perception and analysis by means of complex mapping und iconographic notation.



The flight path of a fruit fly







//workshop



//////////CONFIGURATION 1///

Purchase of selected fruits, collection of associated packing material, research of related information

//////////CONFIGURATION 2///

Visual analysis, research and representation of the product itself and associated information, disclosure of hidden selling and storing strategies, tracing and mapping of products and correlating transport systems

//////////CONFIGURATION 3///

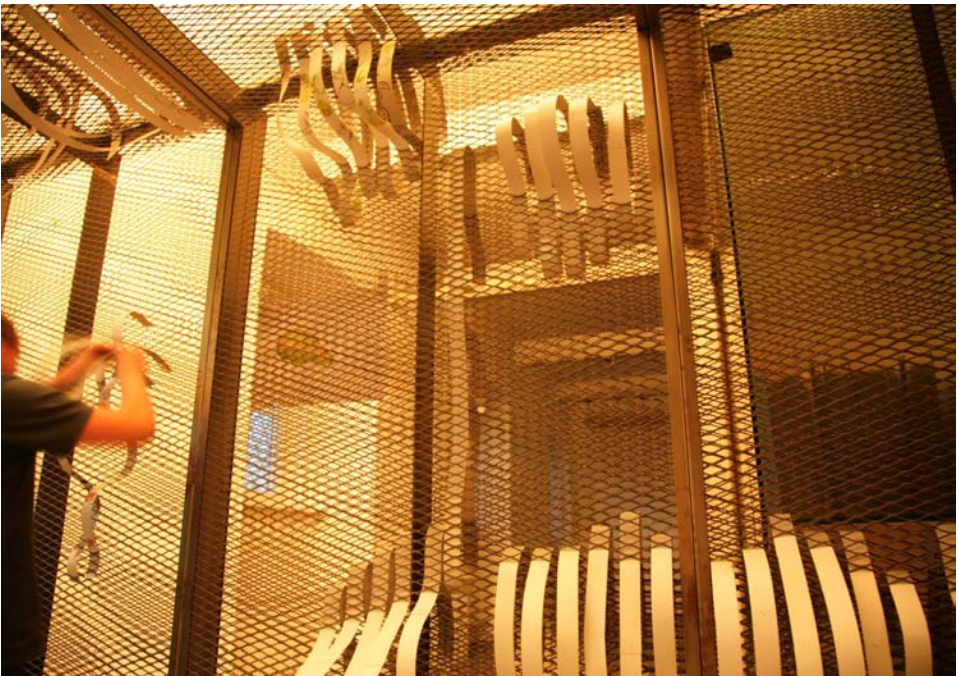
Production of a three-dimensional display system, insertion of multilayered research and mapping information, creation of a collective installation work



// context formations

//////////IN GENERAL

Twice a year we organize a 3-days-workshop intending to provide students with the opportunity to design and built an 1:1 installation in the main space of the Kunstuniversität Linz (Aula). Ideally participating students form an interdisciplinary group which then will be guided by an invited artist throughout the process. Our main concern in organizing these workshops focuses on the implied exclusive opportunity for students to become an immanent part of a creative production process while experiencing refined artistic modes of production in space.



//roundtable

//////////ROUND TABLE SS09

June 06 2009
Hörsaal A, Hauptplatz 8
Kunstuniversität Linz
moderation:Sandrine v. Klot, s&d_research



//////////GUESTS

Christian Kobald/ COCO Vienna

studied Philosophy (University of Vienna), Art History, Cultural and Intellectual History (University of Applied Arts Vienna); projects: Anzengruber Biennale 2009, Café Anzengruber, Vienna (co-organized); Revolver, COCO, Vienna (co-curated with Severin Dünsler) 2008 Screening, Scala, Berlin; clubblumen, Wien; IMAGES, a project by Spike Art Magazin. IMAGES by Head Fueled by OB 2008, Forde, Genf (kuratiert von Daniel Baumann and Kim Seob Boninsegni); 2007 Tbilisi 4. Everyday Is Saturday, Tbilisi (curated by Daniel Baumann); Images, Vienna (co-curated with Rita Vitorelli); Anzengruber Biennale 2007, Café Anzengruber, Vienna (co-organized); The Moon, the Sea, the Mood (with Philipp Mayrhofer), documentary; since 2004 he works for Spike Art Quarterly as editor, in 2009 he became the co-founder of the exhibition space COCO in Vienna

Gabriele Sturm/ artist Vienna

further introduction on p. 4;
chapter "//artist"

Tatjana Schneider/ University of Sheffield UK

She teaches and researches at the School of Architecture, University of Sheffield, England. She studied at the University of Kaiserslautern and Strathclyde University in Glasgow and finished her studies with a Doctorate (PhD). She became co-founding member of G.L.A.S. (Glasgow Letters on Architecture and Space, 2001 – 2007), a cooperative, producing practical as well as theoretical work to manifest their critical view on capitalist modes of production and its impact on our built environment. The group participated in numerous workshops, seminars and lecture series, and released ten numbers of the newsletter 'glass paper' publishing critical texts, graphic representations and polemic works to illustrate alternative design methods opposed to dominant, mainstream methodologies. Since 2007, together with Jeremy Till she is involved in a research project called 'Alternative architectural practice' (financed by the Arts and Humanities Research Council). As an architect, Tatjana Schneider worked for the Office of the already departed architect Otto Steidle in Munich.



opening of Revolver by COCO



//////////////////////////////////////ISSUES

Following Claire Bishop's definition in her book *Installation Art*¹, the identified format has two primary characteristics: first it refuses the traditional painting's single point perspective, which, in turn, disallows the construction of the viewer as a unified subject (de-centered subject). Second, the installation posits a model of spectatorship based on 'experience', in which the viewer as a participant is immersed in an experience that he or she must articulate and assemble for themselves (versus inheriting a world already assembled for them). Various seminal art movements have contributed to the definition, development and revision of the triad art-space-viewer. Based on questions raised in the workshop 'The flight path of a fruit fly', for the discussion we chose to put our focus on the complex triad-relationship of art-space-viewer. Working within the format of 'installation', the viewer inherits a participatory agenda. In consequence, neither the artwork as semantic construct, nor the space as physical envelope may be conceived of as consistent in relation to its inherent significance and referentiality. Referring back to works of the American female artist Ree Morton in the 1970s, we come across a *modus operandi* called 'bricolage'.

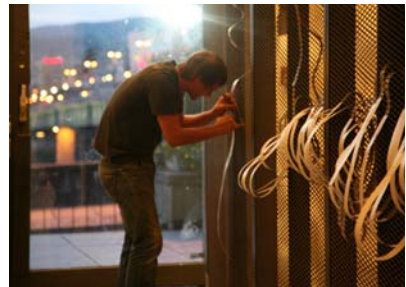
As ethnic scientist, Claude Lévi-Strauss first introduced this terminology aiming for alternative ways to leave confining grounds of the familiar. He implied a procedural method for putting things in a new context which would not correlate with its original normative setting. Ree Morton successfully managed to re-contextualize most of her installation pieces as in most cases they happened to be found objects - taken either from her own domestic 'motherly' circumstances, or from urban junk places. Her installation work succeeded in producing surprisingly fresh, renewed semantic overlays without losing aspects of material presence and physical seductiveness. Material of all different sorts became re-engaged as media to pass on foreign background stories without having to deny its own sense of origin and physicality. What necessary conditions do we have to consider today, if we follow the interest of a creative process which seeks to initiate means of information re-processing and self-organization? Since installation art addresses space of some sort - do we still follow the saying of philosopher Martin Heidegger, who distinguished between space and place, as places will not subordinate themselves to functionalized urban spaces...?

¹ *Installation Art*, Claire Bishop, Routledge, New York, 2005

// // round table quotes

CK: I would like to refer to an article written by Craig Owens, an American critic, who was interested in the complex matrix of power relations that determine dominant conceptions of artistic value. In his imaginary interview titled 'The indignity of speaking for others', he refers to a statement by Gilles Deleuze in a 1972 interview with Michel Foucault claiming that power is no longer exercised through control of the means of production but through control of the means of representation. Since the beginning of the 20th century, new proposals for the transformation of art into an arena of social and political action have identified art as a productive activity, opposing it to a traditional view of art as representation.

SK: There seems to be an overall revision regarding the triad 'art-space-viewer', starting in the 70s. And this revision included a new type of artist, taking full responsibility for how his/ her artwork was actually presented in the exhibition space.



SK: Having finished the workshop, how do you see the creative process now: following the given work phases including research, the processing of information, and finally the construction of the installation as a collective work – were you able to translate and convey information into another format without losing too much of it? Or do you think the translation process allowed for information to get partially lost or become transformed, in order to establish something reaching beyond what information originally conveyed?

CK: I am fascinated with the exhibition space as such, the exhibition space a social realm, less as actual physical space. I don't think one could possibly ever rely on physical space.

TS: Me and Jeremy Till, for a few years we have been concentrating on the term of 'spatial agency', we understand architecture as an extended, creative field of social operations. We believe architects should not just primarily locate their competence within a broad range of smart responses to given competition briefs, but rather become initiatives in the context of urban requests and needs. One example I usually like to refer to is the american studio of Samuel Mockbee and their corresponding projects mainly in the 1970s.



devil-chaser
by Ree Morton, 1978

to each concrete man
by Ree Morton, 1978

CK: Using cheap materials, keeping the construction of things visible, all of this stands for a way of thinking which depends on a high-culture rhetoric, favoured by people who believe to have a better understanding and judgement for what is wrong and right than others. In COCO we intend to provide space for exhibitions perceived on a daily basis, hopefully without having to deal with hidden aspects of social difference between artist and viewer.

GS: To me the crucial question while working with students of s&d deals with finding the right kind of balance between content and form. Christian mentioned that installation art as a traditional format developed nearly forty years ago, now has adapted to what we know as display, emphasizing coherent strategies of presentation. To me there is a danger involved, especially if we tend to confuse personal, artistic 'agency' with strategies of formal expertise.

//////////////////WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Florian Aistleitner
Ulli Asamer
Miha Cojhter
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Laura Krok
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Thomas Huemer
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Marta Stolarska

//////////////////ASSISTANCE&SUPPORT

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