



Emily Speed // Liverpool // Artist in Residence in Linz Austria 2009 // "INHABITANT"

## URBAN INTERVENTIONS

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PDF Publication: Activity 2, Urban Interventions  
N° 2009-1118/001/001

(2) Interaction with the local artistic community and the population



## "URBAN INTERVENTIONS" - COMMUNICATION AS AN ENGINE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

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An essential part of a modern art education has necessarily to do with communicative processes. Particularly young contemporary art requires appropriate mediation tools to enable low-threshold approaches to art. For this purpose "Urban Interventions" was staged in public with a series of exemplary exhibitions, artist talks and mutual artist residencies. The exchange programs caused positive public attention of a remarkable degree in Linz, whether in the form of immediate contacts at project presentations, of guided school mediations and workshops or public panel discussions. The majority of our resident artists was actively involved in joint projects with other artist initiatives or institutions and realized or participated at performances in public spaces. The experience of "Urban Interventions" could be applied to other collaborating artists of the Salzamt residency. Art mediation programs, international exchange and promotion of international projects have since been part of the profile of the house.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julius Stieber".

Julius Stieber

Cultural Director of the City of Linz



## INTERVIEWS

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Karin Fisslthaler  
Margit Greinöcker  
Tobias Hagleitner  
Stephanie Mold  
Barbara Musil  
Bernd Oppl  
Karo Szmit

## INTERVIEW WITH KARIN FISSLTHALER

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

I went to Estonia for the first time. The city is very diverse in its history and architecture and so are the residents. The unique interplay between old and new provides a lot of space for artistic works. The infrastructure, quality of living and the connection to Finland was very nice. I still plan on traveling to Tallinn, to finish one of my projects that I started in 2010.

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

The artists, as well as the heads of cultural initiatives, were very interested and open towards other artists and provided me a lot of possibilities for presentations. For time reasons, I couldn't take all the opportunities.

**Describe your projects you developed there.**

I developed a few concepts and studies and realised two projects:

- "Dummy" (surveillance camera paper mockup, placed in public space of Tallinn, fine art print, 110 x 160 cm)
- "I don't" (neon letters, 15 x 150 cm)
- Video for the public space (concept development for the "Stalker Festival", Tallinn found footage video material connected to statements of the residents, made for big screens in the public space of Tallinn)

- Video portrait of the "Lasnamae" district, Tallinn (concept development, pre-research) together with Bernd Oppl

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

- Artist Talk with Karin Fisslthaler and Bernd Oppl  
October 10<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the "MÄRZ projektiruum", Tallinn  
Karin Fisslthaler under debate with Rebeka Põldsam
- Presentation Karin Fisslthaler and Bernd Oppl  
"5 Favourite works in Public Space" (Anna Witt, Felix Gonzales Torres, Vadim Fishkin, Valie Export, Gelitin)  
"MÄRZ projektiruum", Tallinn
- Concert Cherry Sunkist  
September 25<sup>th</sup> 2010  
EASTI Creative Space | Tallinn, Estonia

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

Even the residency was very short, I developed a few projects and concepts, which encourage me to react better on a certain situation at a certain place. This kind of artistic progress left a trace and helped me to design new site-specific ideas. Tallinn was a nice, interesting place to stay and I would highly recommend it. The city offers a lot of opportunities for artistic works, dealing with aesthetic, politic, social or subcultural issues.



## INTERVIEW WITH MARGIT GREINÖCKER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Describe your projects you developed there.**

TALLINN SEASIDE©2010 Margit Greinöcker

Paper fish, photography

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



KESKLINN INTERFACE©2010/2011 Margit Greinöcker

Photography and video: Margit Greinöcker

Composition: Erkki-Sven Tüür

Ensemble: NYJD, conductor Olari Elts

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

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

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





CAR DUMP ©Margit Greinöcker

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



## INTERVIEW WITH TOBIAS HAGLEITNER

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

I went to Tallinn for the first time within this artist exchange. I was interested in the narrative and architectural structures of this urban environment and the city's position in between the political systems, two decades after the breakdown of the Soviet republics. That Tallinn was trying to position and reinvent itself as the European Capital of Culture became an interesting topic to me, since my hometown Linz was the European Capital of Culture in 2009. The unusual heterogeneous mix of constructions from different times provided me a broad field for my artistic research. I was able to be part of a lot of exclusive guided tours of major Soviet buildings, like the Linnahall city hall, as well as of suburban prefabricated buildings. I got in touch with the local art scene and took a lot of opportunities to visit exhibitions and events.

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

Our similarity, being the European Capital of Culture, provided me, due to the support of the Capital of Culture 2011 office, a network of contacts for an easy start. Hence the first steps in the local scene were made and information and tips were easy to be found. Some of the former contacts became friends. Last year we played a concert with my music performance project in Tallinn. I

also met the Estonian artists who came to Linz for a residency or to visit the "Ars Electronica Festival".

**Describe your projects you developed there.**

Soon, I was really interested in a big estate in the northwestern part of the centre, the prefabricated buildings Öismäe. It is a planned community for 40.000 people, with quite high architectural standards and a concept of a garden town like Ebenezer Howards. I used my analogue camera to take pictures of the negative "Soviet-Icon", the washed concrete slabs, which are characterising the facades and the atmosphere. I created a so called "Simuakrum-Object" of an Estonian prefabricated building by using an animation. The video "majapanel" opens a new perception on a stereotypical building material, distracts the old typology and builds a new visual narrative. Because of my contacts to the Estonian composers association it was possible to use a piece of music, from the Estonian musician Tauno Aints, for my work. This has been an important extension that provides a very special, local atmosphere.

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

The video has been shown twice within the European Capital of Culture 2011: At a film and music event in an arthouse cinema in Tallinn and at the premier of a commissioned piece of Tauno Aints at the "Schauplatz der Fotogafien", in Öismäe. My acquaintances in Tallinn reacted positively, they told me about successful events.



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

The residency took an important part in my personal and artistic development. Besides the projects I realised I had time to think about other topics like cities, narrativity and society. Both provide a basis for my work since then and helped me to get a scholarship within an artistic-scientific PhD program, at the "The University of Art and Design Linz". Especially for artist from medium sized cities, like Linz, a residency means the confrontation and exchange with other scenes and artists, an essential bordering of the mind. The residency provides space for progression and development, which, in the end, is also positive for the city.



## INTERVIEW WITH STEPHANIE MOLD

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

I already spent time in Istanbul during my Erasmus exchange and an internship, therefore I knew the city a little bit. Istanbul is always changing, it is always on the move. With every visit the city shows another facet of itself. The fascinating aspect of Istanbul is its diversity of the different districts. The social differences are enormous. I found this very exciting, considering my artistic work. After taking part in the URBAN INTERVENTIONS I went to Istanbul twice, to stay in touch with the people I met.

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

I was under the impression that the art scene in Istanbul was elitist and not very easy going. A few curators had the scene firmly under control. Foreigners mainly led Offspaces, which were more experimental. They also tried to collaborate and interact with the citizens of Istanbul.

**Describe your projects you developed there.**

One of my projects was the video "Alterity Maybe".

In the video "Alterity Maybe" I sing with Coskun, a street artist, who is sitting on the doorsteps in front of the granite building

that is housing my studio. The connection between us is, that we are going to see the same place for our artistic work. Whereby he is in front of the entrance door and I am inside. Everyone seems to have its assigned position.

In "Alterity Maybe" I sing a duet with Coskun in my studio. In allusion of the Turkish tradition "Atisma" (a kind of song battle, where two singers are having a dialogue and try to outdo one another) we sing together, share one melody, but everyone stays in its own perspective, we don't answer each other, because we sing in different languages. Our relationship seems fragile and unsecure.

The Turkish filmmaker Zeynep Arslanpay filmed and cut the movie.

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

I showed the video "Alterity Maybe" in the "Galerie 5020" in Istanbul within a solo exhibition. Especially foreigners living in Istanbul liked it a lot, because it was dealing with the feeling of being the stranger.

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

For the first time I had enough time and budget, to produce a professional video and hold a solo exhibition. Furthermore I could establish valuable contacts.



## INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA MUSIL

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

I have been to Istanbul one year before my residency, in fall 2008, to visit the media art festival "aber08". Back then, I thought it would be nice to work and live in this city for a longer period of time. So it was really wonderful to have this opportunity. I went to Istanbul twice since then, but only passing through.

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

The connection and information about current events mainly happened via the "platform garanti". I was always informed what was going on, since the exchange with studio colleagues worked very well. I found it very important to be in touch with my Turkish colleagues, since they knew a lot about local working conditions and current developments in Turkey. It was gratifying that I met two of my colleagues again, when I went on residency to Paris. There I also had a presentation together with Yasemin Özcan. We think about further collaboration, together with two Austrian artists. The exchange happened mainly for professional causes.

**Describe your projects you developed there.**

I continued working on a video project. It is about travelling and its main factor, the weather. I recorded some time-lapse videos, as well as I showed an intermediary stage video at my studio



presentation. A small project, which recorded my daily life in Istanbul, originated, more or less, randomly. I collected water bottles, with their typical labels, on a daily base which became the origin of a collage. Besides I worked on an art in architecture project in Salzburg (the project won the first price and was realised).

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

I organised an Artist Talk afternoon, together with my colleagues. Everyone presented some chosen works. At the end of my residency we had an open studio. A lot of interested people from Istanbul, but also international guests, came and discussed our works.

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

It was really important to have the opportunity to work in an interesting and intent environment. It was positive that 8 to 10 other artists (from Turkey and other countries) were working in the studio building at the same time. The exchange and discussions about works or exhibitions was my highlight in this situation. We benefited a lot from each other and some of us are still in touch. The hosting institution was - probably because of some structural problems - not always supporting the artists. Luckily we could organise ourselves very well, due to the constellation in the studio.



## INTERVIEW WITH BERND OPPL

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

I visited Tallinn for the first time within my residence. My experiences were totally positive and I found it very interesting. Sadly, I did not yet visit the city again, but I am planning on it in the context of an art project.

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

During my stay I got to know a lot of artist and curators and I am still in touch with some of them. It was a really inspiring and positive experience to get to know the local art scene in Tallinn.

**Describe your projects you developed there.**

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

I focused on the local architecture. I found the contradictory architectural styles, which connect the city, interesting for my work. The solitary plants, the medieval city centre and the characteristic Soviet architecture. I was especially interested in the Linnahall civic hall. It still defines the city centre, but lies idle as a ruin in the middle of the city. During my stay, I realised a subjective architectural portrait and made a video. Besides I realised a video portrait, together with Karin Fisslthaler, about the district Lasnamae, Tallinn.

I could present my work, within an Artist Talk, together with Karin Fisslthaler, on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2010, at the "MÄRZ Projektorium", Tallinn.

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

I found it very interesting to deal with the city and its architecture as well as to get to know the local art scene. I think it was a positive experience for my artistic work.



## INTERVIEW WITH KARO SZMIT

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I went to the capital of Estonia, Tallinn, within the URBAN INTERVENTIONS project, in 2009, for five months. This time has been extremely productive and inspiring to me. My host, associate of the cooperation partner the European Capital of Culture 2011, introduced me to people that had a great network within the art institutions of Tallinn.

My first artistic input was an invitation to take part of the "Plektrum Festival", a festival for media and develop an artistic project for the public space. The media-art-lab, where my studio was located, has been the co-host of the festival. The media-art-lab again was situated in the "Kulturfabrik Polymer" building, which is a studio house for art institutions.

The head of the media-art-lab, Piibe Piirma, was my main contact in Tallinn. She invited me to a collective exhibition, curated by her, which I produce a new work for. I met Piibe again while she had her residency in the "Atelierhaus Salzamt" in Linz. I also met Marge Paas, head of the "Plektrum Festival" that is connected to the "Ars Electronica" festival, again in Linz.

I got to know the artist Ernes Truely through the local artist platform "Art Container" which was also located in the "Kulturfabrik Polymer". He made it possible, that I could take part of the art event "Global Container", which is held on a regular basis. Therefore I developed a performance. Since "Art Container" is hosting international artists in residence as well, and I was working in the same building, I was involved in its activities. As a guest lecturer at the Academy of Arts Tallinn, Ernest Truely invited me to show my work in front of his students.

I was very close to the former head of the "Kulturfabrik Polymer", Martin Rünk and his assistant, a French diplomat. I visited a language course, at the Academy of Arts, together with her. Everyone I met during my residency gave me a warm welcome and supported me very well.

It was a very positive experience to meet the founder of Skype, because of my project for the "Plektrum Festival" dealing with the communication tool, and he guided me through the office in Tallinn.

A short while ago, a year after my residency, a London based doctorand from Estonia contacted me, after he found one of my Tallinn oriented works on the Internet. He was researching an urban phenomenon that I also used for my work, and he will deal with it within his dissertation.

I can say, without overstatement, that the time I spent in Tallinn was a highlight in my present artistic career. Framed with maximum of inspiring and lasting connections and a lot of artistic output. I am not yet finished with all the collected material and ideas, and I am planning on another residency.

