



WORKS WITH CHILDREN

DANIELA BRASIL

LEARNING, CO-CREATING AND
REENCHANTING THE WORLD,
TOGETHER.

AQUATOPIA - THE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH SUBMARINE

Karmeliterplatz, Graz June/ July 2013
Museumsquartier, Wien, August 2013

concept and artistic coordination
Institute for Contemporary Art of the TU Graz & Kinderbüro in cooperation with Zoom Children's Museum, Vienna

www.aquatopia.at

In the summer of 2013, a submarine docked at the Karmeliterplatz, Graz and the Museumsquartier, Vienna, bringing an atmosphere of experimental research and playfulness to the public spaces it occupied. Its extra-disciplinary crew merged artistic and scientific processes in order to observe, record and discuss our daily relation to water and the related plastic waste production. Aquatopia was developed as a cooperative research project with teaching activities taking place throughout the academic year at the TU Graz and in local public schools. Excursions traced the paths of the fresh water supply and the sewage systems of the cities of Graz and Vienna. From the resulting field notes, artistic installations were developed and an illustrated logbook displaying the Grazer and Viennese water cycles was produced. In the meantime, the university became a dockyard: within a participatory and collaborative design process, architecture students built the submarine (11x5x4m) from materials sourced in junkyards. Its outer skin was made from 2000 disposable plastic bottles, collected and prepared in cooperation with local schools and the TU Graz cleaning staff. The interior was furnished with works from 12 international artists. For instance the bridge was designed and activated by New York based artist Catherine Grau, as a space where various diving equipment could be built from recycled materials and used for urban-aquatic explorations.

Participating artists:

Andrea Acosta • Barbara Raic • Boos & Moos • Catherine Grau • Christian Meixner • Claudia del Cid • Elke Preisitz- Mathoi • Eva Ursprung • GDS & Roter Keil • Günther Pedrotti • Helene Thümmel • Luka Lipšinic • Luka Murovec • Nayari Castillo • Richard Frankenberger • Tuuli Sunden-Uusimäki • Ursula Achternkamp

Crew:

Edith Risse, Lola Seibt, Patricia Wess, Thomas Kalcher and others.



view of the Installation at the Karmeliterplatz, Graz



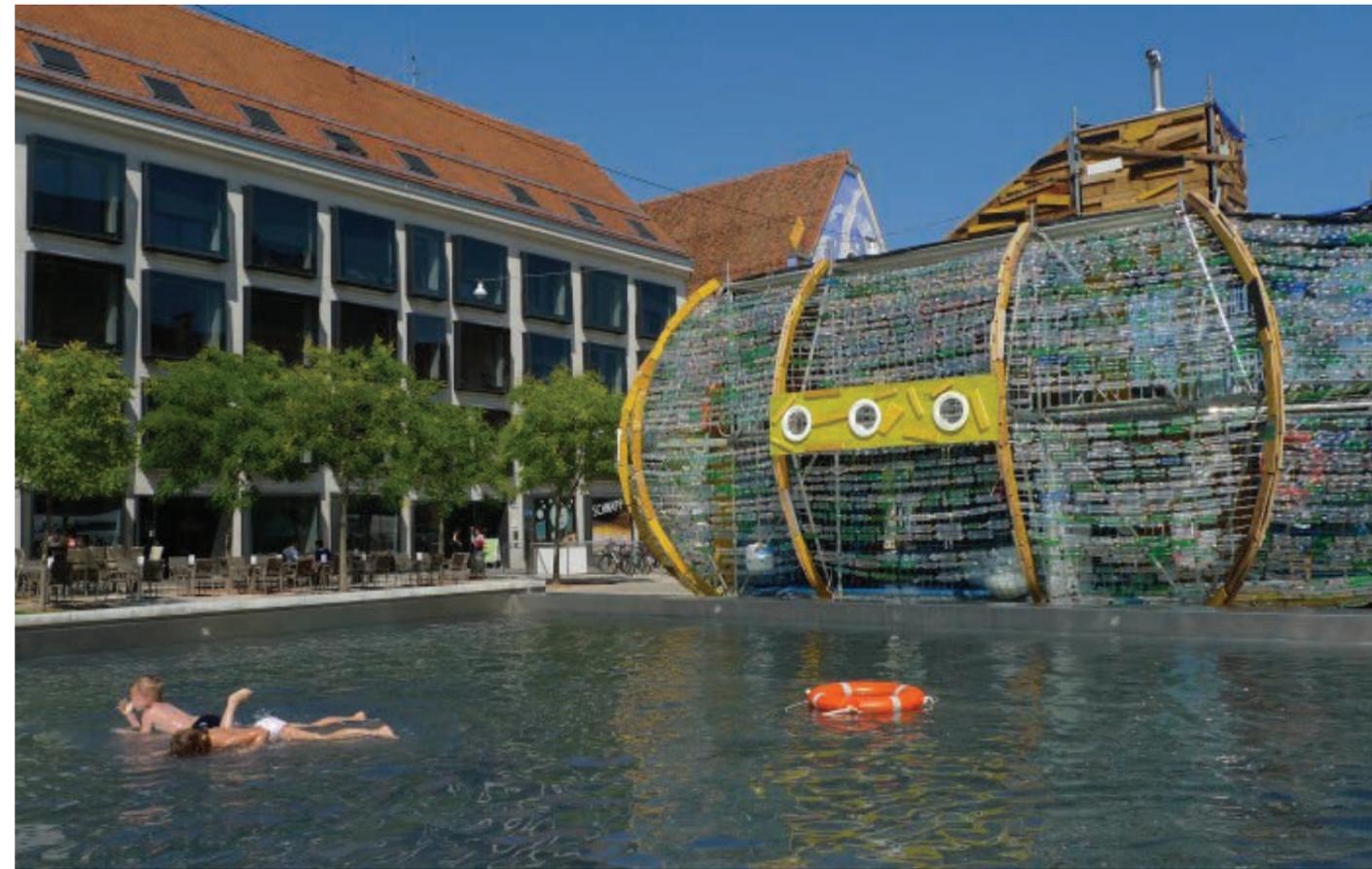
collective design process - IZK TUG



water collection - Helene Thümmel

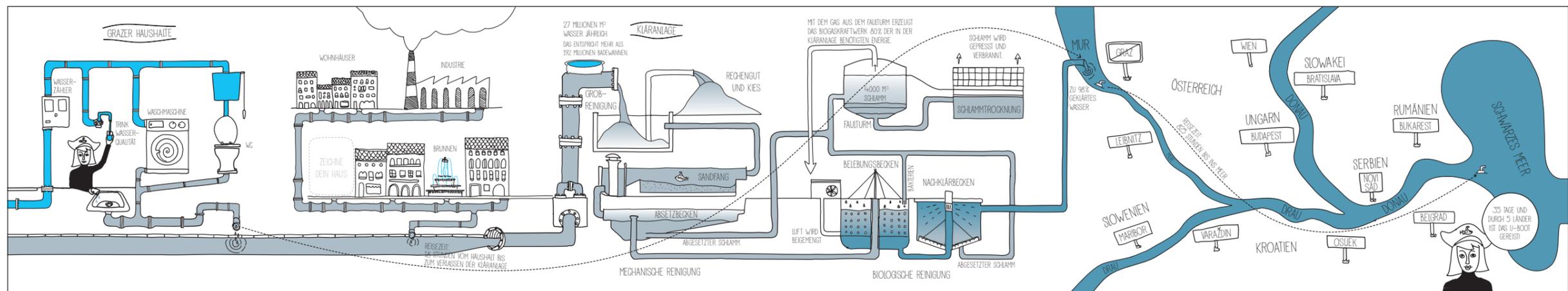


bridge - Catherine Grau



view of the Installation at the Karmeliterplatz, Graz

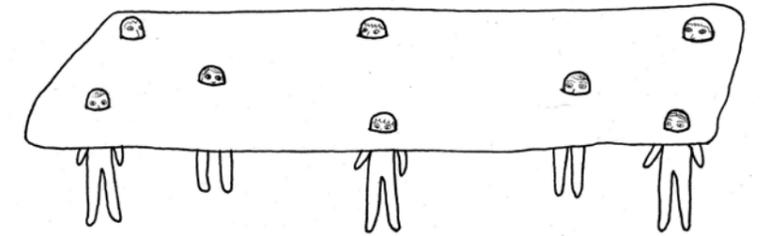
5000 printed Leporellos showing the waterways in the cities of Graz and Vienna. Interdisciplinary collaborative research drawings from Luka Murovec



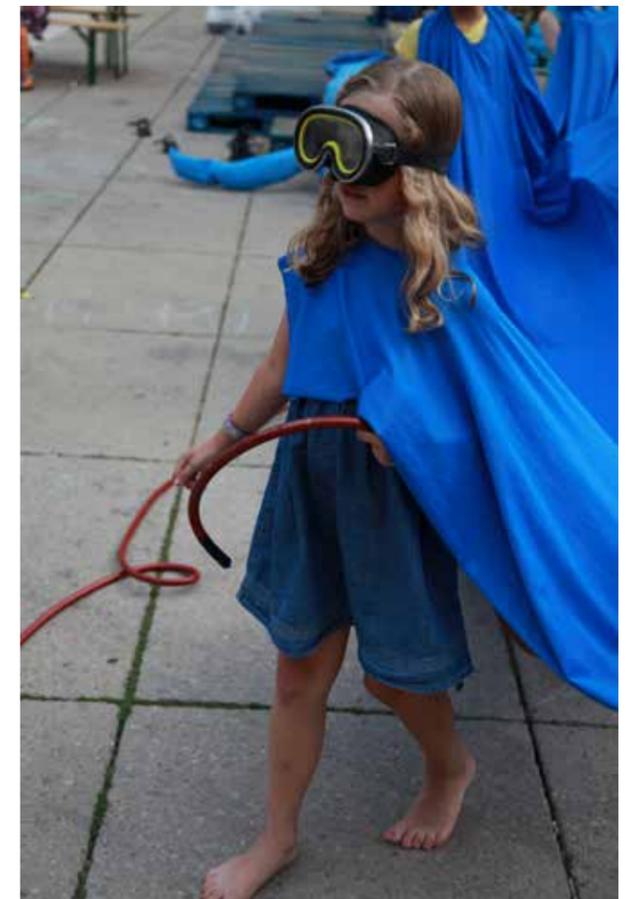


Children from various Grazer schools and students from the TUGraz collected 2000 disposable plastic bottles, worked them out and together they built the submarine's shell.

WASSEROBERFLÄCHE
AUS STOFF



Underwater explorations with artist Catherine Grau. Playful sensorial experiences, garbage collection, pop-up garbage exhibition.



NPEP – NICE PLACES EXPLORATION PROGRAM

with Catherine Grau

Jugendzentrum Frohnleiten, 2013-14

comissioned by < rotor > ; Institut für Kunst im öffentlichen Raum Steiermark;
Steirischen Dach-verband der offenen Jugendarbeit

<http://npep-observatory.tumblr.com>



The theme of the investigation was to appropriate and reclaim 'nice places' for youth to use and be in. Together with the youth center Frohnleiten, we created the Nice Places Exploration Program - NPEP. It consisted of a geodesic observation station and a mobile bathtub explorer, both produced with and installed/parked at the youth center Frohnleiten.

A main concern of NPEP is to utilize and highlight the circumstance of Frohnleiten being home to one of Austria's largest landfills. The constructed sculptures were built from materials sourced in local junkyards. Using raw material waste while referencing the 50's futuristic research of Buckminster Fuller and the experimental principles of Black Mountain College, NPEP took us on a journey through the idyllic landscape of Frohnleiten, seeking to interject "nice places" with an investigation on waste production.

MARS – MULTIGENERATIONAL ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL

initiated in 2017, ongoing

MARS versucht Architekt*innen, Künstler*innen, Schriftsteller*innen wie auch Studierende, Schulkinder, Jugendliche und Senioren miteinander zu verknüpfen. Durch gemeinsames Entwerfen und Bauen experimenteller und gemeinschaftlicher Räume, das Lebensumfeld wird neu übergedacht. Klimatische und demographische Veränderungen sind zentrale Themen. Die architektonische Vermittlung wird transdisziplinär aufgebaut: Literatur, zeitgenössische Kunst und Kulturwissenschaft sind zentrale Zugänge für die methodische Annäherung an die sozialen und ökologischen Themen im Projekt.

Die Workshops sind zeitlich auf die Schritte des kreativen Prozesses abgestimmt, z.B. Recherche, Mapping, Entwurf, Prototyping und Umsetzung. Dieser Prozess wird in der Forschungs- und Entwurfsphase durch künstlerische Methoden der Fantasie/ radikalen Imagination initiiert und durch sprachliche Formen des Storytellings mit eingeladenen Gästen begleitet. Reale und fiktive Geschichten aus verschiedenen Kulturen und Geographien sind der Ausgangspunkt für die Teilnehmer*innen, um ihren Ideen eine weitere Perspektive zu ermöglichen.

Im Entwurfs- und Bauprozess steht eine experimentelle "Learning-by-doing-Atmosphäre" im Vordergrund. Aktionsforschung und kreative Partizipation spielen dabei eine wesentliche Rolle. MARS versucht, durch künstlerische Praxis und Vermittlung einen Raum für Gesellschaftskritik zu schaffen, in dem verschiedene Formen des Miteinanders aktiv und spielerisch erprobt werden.



MARS – MULTIGENERATIONAL ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL

MISSION 1: (UN)LEARNING SPACES , 2017-18

a cooperation between:
Children from the SchülerInnenhort Kronesgasse
Architecture Students from the Institut für Zeitgenössische Kunst /TU Graz
Studio Magic



MARS – MULTIGENERATIONAL ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL

MISSION 2: SPACESHIP EARTH, 2019

eine Kooperation zwischen:
Children from the 2nd year VS Waltendorf, Graz
Studio Magic
Neuberg College



IM REGENWALD MURAUER WERKTAGE

Kinderatelier im Tipi
Murau, Sommer 2019



EINLADUNGSTEXT FÜR DIE KINDER:

“Gemeinsam werden wir den Wald erforschen und Fundstücke sammeln. Aus Federn, Blättern oder Ästen entstehen dann magische Amulette, Schmuck und kleine Skulpturen. In unserem imaginären Regenwald gründen wir einen IndianerInnen-Stamm, wo wir kleine Strohhäuser bauen und unser eigenes Totem gestalten. Dieses wird mit selbstgemachter Naturfarbe bemalt - so wie auch unsere Körper.”



How to approach a critical and political education through the arts? How to understand different cultures that have been invisibilized through Eurocentric history?



In this Summercamp I had the opportunity to invite the children to participate in an immersive and imaginative learning experience that values the amazonian indigenous cultures. To deconstruct the stereotyped image of the “american indians” mostly populated by Winitou and Yakari, I have introduced the diversity of indigenous cultures in the Amazon through story-telling, music, books, objects and drawings. By telling other his/her-stories, new understandings and relations towards indigenous worldviews and realities emerged.

The pedagogic approach is based on a re-enchantment of the daily objects, whispering the magic of nature into the doing of artefacts and embodiment of experiences. How to bring poetry to the gaze? How to activate all the senses, legitimating feeling as part of artistic creation, as well as central to being? The pedagogic materials are brought as inspirations to nurture and open up creativity; not as models to be reproduced, but ideas and references to be reinterpreted, embodied, experienced; so the activities flow out of children’s interest and curiosity. Artistic materials and tools are free to be used as the children’s creative ideas emerge and grow in various directions.



Recording of the expedition throughout "Murakuru"

Zum Strand der
Magischensteine



Nun sind auf Entdeckungs-
reise durch Murau.
Wir haben den Fluss bewundert
und die Kraft des Abassens
gesehen. Die Steine haben
unterschiedliche Qualitäten
und Farben und deswegen
verschiedene magische
Kräfte



HOUSING AND DAILY PRACTICES



materials collected during a walk in the forest

TOTEM, KOPFSCHMUCK, BODY PAINTING...



CRITICAL CARTOGRAPHIES

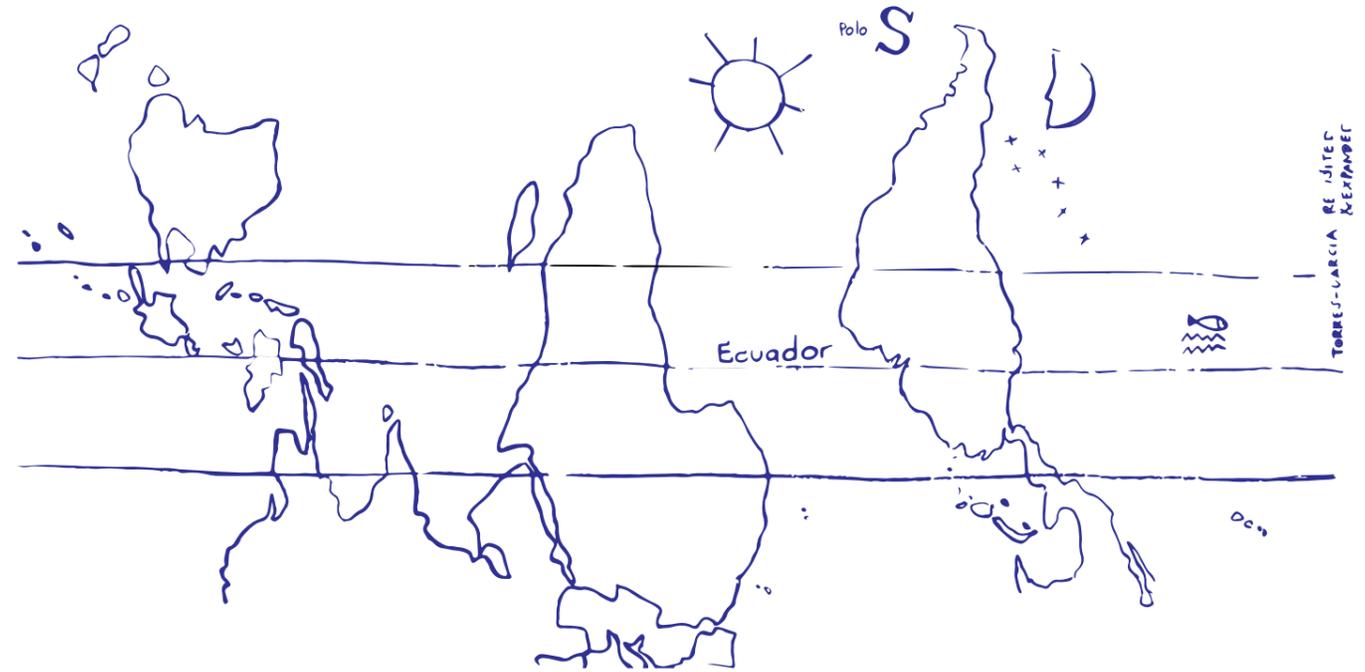
ESCUELITA DEL SUR

tracing paper, globe models, self-made stamps, silk screen.
various workshops in the Waltendorfer Volkshule, 2018
Neuberg College - Summer School, 2019; Afroasiatisches
Institut Graz, 2019.

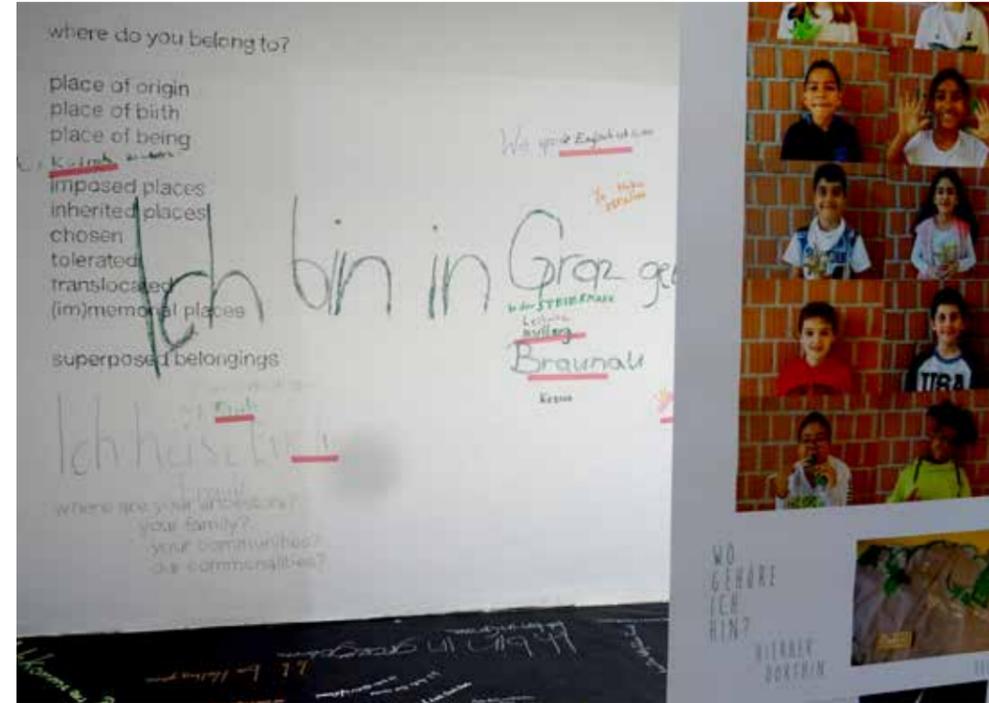
This project focus on the deconstruction of eurocentric
worldviews, questioning the hegemony of the Mercator
Projection, and shifting the focus to other cartographic
world representations, such as

- Dymaxion map, Buckminster Fuller
- Gall-Peters projection
- Torres Garcia/ Inverted Map of South America, 1936
- Iconoclastas/ Who owns the land?

This investigation is going to be published in 2021 in a
participatory book made with children and commissioned
by Alessandra Pomarico and the Ecovercities Alliance.



SENTIMENTAL CARTOGRAPHIES INVESTIGATING BELONGING



STEIRER*INNEN DER TRIESTER SCHULE
Comissioned by the 1st Steirischer Learning Festival
Exhibition In Schaumbad, 2019

Children with 27 different nationalities are currently enrolled in the Trister Elementary School. Many of them were born in Styria, Austria and have never been to the homeland of their parents. Belonging is poetic as much as political. It can be inherited, it can be imposed. It requires acceptance.

In the framework of the 1st Steirischer Learning Festival, I conducted a workshop which investigated the children's notions of belonging – through artistic dialogical formats. Engaging in textual, sensorial and corporeal conversations about identities and origins, sense of connection and place, (un)known languages, cultures and geographies intertwined in an invisible, affective cartography.

For the exhibition in Schaumbad, participants were invited to co-create the space. Their portraits and traces of the conversations are displayed – amplifying the question of belonging beyond the categories of nationality and fixed cultural identities.

MURAU – FAMILIENFREUNDLICHE STADT
Study for StadtMurau, developed together with IDEUM, 2019

6 Workshops held in the local primary school.
> mapping how children feel and use the city
> using artistic imagination activities to incite the children to express their visions about child-friendly spaces



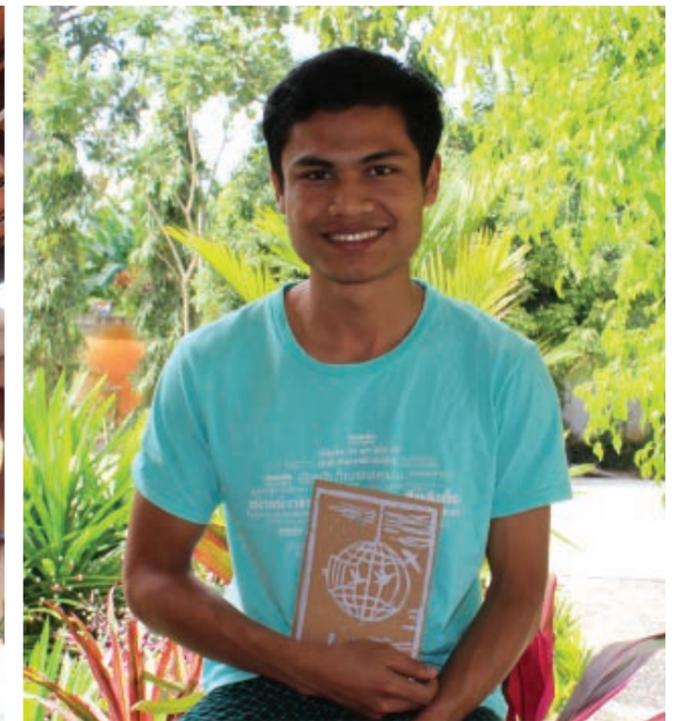
EMPOWERMENT PRINT BAR

various places since 2017
co-production Daily Rhythms Collective/ Afro-asiatisches Institut
co-funded by Stadt Graz Kultur



The Empowerment Print Bar is a participatory art project that promotes discussions and visualizations around the topics of equality and emancipation into the following steps:

- 1- People's visions, ideas and stories are collected, debated and translated into visual messages.
- 2- Visual messages are prepared for analogue printmaking techniques – stamps, linocuts and silk-screen.
- 3- Public printing activities amplify the discussion and invite passers-by to participate in the making/ printing of upcycled objects, cards and notebooks.
- 4 - Gift culture is practiced while disseminating the messages through self-made gifts.



In the context of my research “Emancipatory learning: new schools and artistic practices for social change”- a field trip to Thailand was undertaken in December 2017, workshop sessions were developed with grassroots leaders from the Earth Rights Foundation in Chiang Mai and members from 3C Cycling Canal Community Project in Bangmod, Bangkok.

SAMOVAR CAFÉ

various places since november 2015
co-production <rotor>/ Daily Rhythms Collective



The Samovar Café is a pop-up activity café that unifies coffeehouses and teahouses traditions across the world to create a cultural conjunction. Here people from different cultures meet in a safe, neutral space, talk about anything and everything, produce works jointly, or simply sit in companionship. The Samovar Café seeks to create a comfortable atmosphere for all the participants by making a secure multigenerational and multicultural dialogical space for social learning and knowledge exchange, where prejudices can be deconstructed and worldviews can be amplified.

Traditionally, the samovar is a time-honoured symbol and focus of hospitality. The first action when guests arrive is to turn on the samovar as a gesture of welcome. Fresh hot tea is poured as a sign of warmth and friendship. In the Samovar Café people come together, talk and get to know each other in an intimate, pressure-free environment: foreigners and locals – whether they are asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants from around the world, newcomers or long-term city people – break down barriers and create new friendships. Foreign and local cultures are simultaneously exposed, valued and eventually transmitted: through the proposed activities and through people's gestures.



EM TRÂNSITO: MOBILITY AND URBAN LIFE

Urban Art Festival Lisboa, 2002-4
 general concept and coordination with Marta Galvão Lucas
 Goethe Institut Lissabon



Brasil, Galvão Lucas (eds.)
Em trânsito: mobility and urban life
 Goethe-Institut: Lisboa, 2005.
 English and Portuguese. 392pp.

Two transdisciplinary projects focusing on art in public spaces started from an initial impulse from a small group of people – motivated by political positions and visionary ideals – and grew with a snowball-effect, involving various actors including artists, architects, universities, schools, municipalities and local communities. The public events were developed under the guiding metaphors of Nothingness and Transitoriness (see next page, Lisbon Capital of Nothing)

Em Trânsito was developed from 2002 and concluded with a catalogue presentation in 2004. Among various activities, including working groups, debates and urban interventions, various workshops dedicated to local schools were designed to sensitize participants to urban design through mobility restrictions. This was developed with the support of the Association for the Blinds and Weak-sighted and the National Cooperative for the Aid of Disabled People. After experiencing the city as people with reduced mobility do, students and school children marked the obstacles found, and acknowledged correct design of pavements. This informed the development of a Pedibus line, incorporated as a school activity for the year 2004/5. The route was altered, the urban design was adapted and the traffic signage was designed by our team after children's mental maps and drawings. They were installed to mark the "bus stops" throughout the neighborhood.



EXTRACTS FROM PRINTED MATERIAL

"A Book for Ballerinas, Tightrope walkers, trapezists and all the children" was developed by Em trânsito team. 1000 exemplars were published with the support of the Portuguese Design Center, and distributed to workshops' participants as an accessibility manual. It portrayed a critic on both City Hall administration that allows two signs to be installed in a one-meter-wide side walk, as well as population behaviours, especially when concerning car parking.



LISBON CAPITAL OF NOTHING

create, debate and intervene in public space
Transdisciplinary Festival -Marvila, Lisboa, 2001

general coordination with Mário Caeiro /Luis Seixas/ Teresa Alves
extra]muros[cultural association for the city
in cooperation with Marvila district council/ Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation



Lisboa Capital do Nada, Marvila 2001
Create, debate, intervene in public space
Extramuros: Lisboa, 2002.
English and Portuguese. 496pp.

In the same year that Porto was announced “Capital of Culture”, we declared Lisbon “Capital of Nothing”. Nothing special. Marvila was, at the time, an area that had the stigma of being “dangerous”, that suffered a certain prejudice for being punctuated by buildings of multicultural- and social-housing; a place that had suffered lots of fractures in its urban/rural fabrics; a place full of incongruities and uncertainties; a place full of potentialities. We were interested in activating those sleeping potentialities as well as inquiring into the relevance of art and culture in society. The event lasted for one month – the whole process for two years. It involved more than 100 activators and participants, among them artists, architects, geographers, designers, sociologists, local administrators and local populations. It aimed to uncover hiding possibilities and to create platforms that foster people’s self esteem. Capital of Nothing raised debate, created contacts, and persisted throughout time with an intangible visibility.

WHY IS THERE BEING INSTEAD OF NOTHING?
The project from artist José Maçãs de Carvalho, became the main marketing campaign for the whole event. A hot-line directed questions of the public directly to “Marvila Heroes”, people selected by the artist after a long casting in collaboration with local associations and the District Council. They were selected due to their daily activities’ commitment towards communitarian pursuits.



COMBINED LANDSCAPE
the intervention of artist André Guedes positioned the cultural publics towards the immense void and ruptures of Marvila’s landscapes. He coreographed local athletes to run around the tunnel, highways and walk paths.

RIGHT TO PLAY

various locations
Graz, 2011



Commenting on the “children’s right to play” charter, this urban intervention was installed in various locations in Graz by a team of uniformed performers. The UN charter text was written in the under space and the word “sky” was written in the set of languages that are mostly spoken in Graz.



ESTÁTUA!

Diploma — UFRJ
Rio de Janeiro, 1999

Departing from my diplom work in the Architecture Faculty in Rio de Janeiro in 1999, I initiated a series of urban research/ pedagogy projects that were displayed in the format of board games in gallery spaces. Four games were developed for the cities of Rio in 1999 and 2009, Luxembourg 2002 and Lisbon 2004.

This game presented a critical reading of the relation of statuary - as the representation and narration of power - and the urban development of the city center of Rio de Janeiro. Players had to collect “Statue cards” by walking around the city center and visiting the numbered fields on the board. They pictured public monuments, classified under the period of history of art they were created and in relation to their position on the urban fabric. The box contained a set of maps of the city in the years 1900, 1950 and 1999 which could be inserted under the acrylic playing board. Modifier-cards, as “traffic jam”, “carnival” or “subway strike” would alter the dynamic of streets usage. The character-cards assembled the ones used in Pedestre.



PEDESTRE

“A rua é de todos nós” — Centro Cultural da Justiça Federal Rio de Janeiro, 2009

This game proposes a drift around the city using real and imaginary transport systems. Players become stereotyped characters: school girl, businessman, tourist, street-seller, senior retired, young artist, etc. Each has a different pace and can only use certain transportation modes. Places to be visited vary from architectonic heritage to curiosities and everyday activities that imprint vitality in city life. Envisioning better futures, some spaces of the city have been improved, as environmental friendly politics would have been successfully implemented. We created a fictive ferry company - Rio Blurb (Barcos Leves Urbanos) that would solve mobility problems through aquatic connections.

Didactic and critical, Pedestre takes the city as an infinite puzzle, that can be interpreted through a myriad of fragments connected through choice and chance. It is an exercise of urban research based on a fragmentary method of reading and portraying a city: through its life styles, social practices, rhythms, spatial and temporal features.



LAPA
Crescendo ao redor do charco, foi atravessada pelo aqueduto que levava água ao centro, e que hoje leva o bondinho para Santa Teresa. Berço da malandragem, possui casas de música para todos os gostos: desde a Sala Cecília Meirelles ao Circo Voador.



BAR DO SERGINHO
É ponto de encontro e mercearia para os moradores do bairro. No carnaval é a concentração do bloco das carmelitas. Suas mesas agora ocupam o terreno das duas palmeiras, transformado num mirante com espetacular vista para o centro.



MARGA DOS GUIMARÃES
Localizado na bifurcação Largo das Neves - Sumaré da linha de bondinhos que vem da Lapa. Bares do Arnaldo e Sobrenatural e Açega do Pimenta tem se tornado alvo de expansão turística.

PLACE AND CHARACTER CARDS



PLAYING-BOARD CARPET