

EPHESUS

THE IMAGINATION OF HISTORY

21st September - 10th October 1995

On the occasion of the "Ephesus excavation centennial" 14 artists from Austria, Turkey and USA have developed their specific works on the theme "The Imagination of History" using different media, from objects, installations to modern technology and media, to redefine (or overcome) the meaning of this historical location.

The project's title carries an intended ambiguity:

While ideas, the illustration of temporality and of the temporal imagination are usually seen as the main concerns of historical research, the imagination of history itself always invokes illusion and fraud. Our main concern is an examination of terms like reconstruction, dis-illusion, authenticity, history, vision and the search for traces.

The search for traces is synonymous with the active reconstruction of the past as well as a projection of present states into the future. Scientists try to find out about the future by analyzing traces of the past; the gypsy draws destiny from the palm of the hand; the shaman derives visions from the intestines of an animal. The future is always told from the past and the past describes the things that have remained visible and real in the present.

The imagination unites the past with the future. Beside this topic we have the phenomenon of tourism. It is quite natural that contemporary artists will be dealing with this on a place like Ephesus. Therefore at least the half of the projects approach tourism within their specific concept.

The artists' work will be spread all over the site. For this project Ephesus will become an open space for contemporary artistic manifestations.

Participants and project descriptions:

HUSEYIN ALPTEKIN (Turkey) & MICHAEL MORRIS (USA)

Heracleitos Promenade

Our work is not going to be archeological. It's basically tracing the history in the physical context with the contemporary references. Like the work has historical sense, it is narrative too.

We produce the semantic sculpture of the metaphorical textures which we construct as we live and live as we construct. In Ephesos we will try to relate/communicate antiquity and contemporaneity. In another sense Derrida, Foucault, Bataille recall Heidegger, Fink recall Nietzsche recall Heraclitus. Therefore today we are able to conceive contemporaneity of Nietzsche and Heraclitus. Our plastic installation is analogous to that philosophical example.

SELDA ASAL (Turkey)

A History Book

Calligraphy information, books, writings in books are the forms of existence of silence in this project.

In text composed of sliding words or words which become non-existent, visible writing signifies the refusal of communicating information and telling history. (It is an alternative way of reading information and history). The writings are placed on information boards which will be exhibited in Ephesus in 15-20 different streets.

GUSTAV DEUTSCH (Austria)

EPHESOS - Yesterday/Today/Tomorrow

[Kunstradio, 21. September 1995, 22.20 (Fortsetzung)]

Taken from the series:

"Fictitious sound-documents of world history I - Ephesus."

An acoustic walk around Ephesus (with a walkman) listening to the town's typical noises from antiquity, the present, and the coming century, i.e., the future.

When I visited the area of Ephesos for the first time, in January 1981, everything was flooded. The bus could hardly reach Ephesos. I had to walk the last two miles towards the archeological site, and entered it together with some sheeps and goats between bushes and trees, without mentioning the border. There was no guard to be seen, no information or ticket office, there was no other tourists, but all of a sudden I

was walking on a marble paved road towards the amphitheatre.

The whole atmosphere was dominated by the weather, the deep clouds rushing over the hills, the water all over all, and a strong wind blowing from the direction of the sea. I spent almost the whole day, and had a very intensive and exciting time there, surrounded only by the sounds of nature, interrupted after hours by the guard, who climbed up to the last row of the theatre to ask me for my ticket.

When I was invited last year to participate in this project with the title "Ephesos - The Imagination of History", I had at once the idea to work on a sound project, based on this first impressions and concerning the sounds of nature of this historical site, before, during and after the presence of human beings. It will be based on the fact that the history of human beings and all their manifestations is just a part of the history of the earth, with all its natural phenomena, and as one can see on a place like Ephesos, a very ephemeral one.

The sound tape which I will produce is planned as part of a series of tapes - entitled:

Fictitious sound-documents of world history, Part I:

E P H E S U S - Yesterday/Today/Tomorrow

There will be further parts of

- o POMPEI (II)
- o MACHU PICHU (III)
- o TEOTIHUACAN (IV) and
- o ANGKOR (V).

IPEK AKSUGUR DUBEN (Turkey)

Artemis

Is history a story forgotten unless we try to remember it or is there something which remains pulsing through time and space. In Ephesus among the mountains of stone and traces

of a civilisation wiped away the sound of mystery takes over and makes me think of what survives. Artemis of Ephesus was a symbol of life and death, hope and fear. Did she die with Ephesus?

Out of a particularly ritualized manner of working I have created an image of myself which I feel gives expression to these feelings. It is a register of my spirit and the myth of my own presence. I think of it as a metaphor for Artemis. This image will be presented twice in Ephesus.

On the site of the prytaneum (Municipality Building) which housed the famous monument of Artemis for centuries it will be accompanied by a poem I have written for Artemis and a second time with a text containing the different names attributed to Artemis handwritten by 90 different women whose writing will stand as their signature in the continuous flow of history.

GERALD HARRINGER & WOLFGANG PREISINGER/DIE FABRIKANTEN (Austria)

a) The Guide

A guide usually refers to historical, cultural and aesthetic sights. He only shows objects, facades etc., which are generally known as interesting or remarkable.

Our Guide will be acting in a different way. He gives hints to unconventional, unhistorical, yet worth seeing objects, situations, persons within Ephesus. With comments on the fashion of tourists, their language, landmark of their cameras, souvenirs they bought, etc, he will lead the audience on an unexpected trip. He also integrates the other artists work in his general analysis, which is set up inbetween banality and significance.

b) The Imagination

A video documents the artist's work. It shows their preparation and construction work on the site as well as the present tourists. A monitor is placed somewhere between excavated stones, like an object found.

c) Ephesus In The Net

All contributions, CV's, texts on the project are documented on Web-pages on WorldWideWeb (Internet)

MARGARETE JAHRMANN & MAX MOSWITZER/ MAMAX (Austria)

ArchiveArcade

On digital Imageoperation:

MAMAX are working as associative imageoperators on the development of metaphorical interfaces towards hiroglyphically supported navigations through dataspace as well as on creative programming for interactive applications.

To show the skribbles for rooms in datanetworks and to experiment with alternatives to industrial standards by irritation is relevant parameter for digital artsproduction as well as the idea of cooperation in life and business.

In the evolution of metaphors for the organisation of data after labyrinth, elevator, tunnel or maps the GAMBLER is coming up: ARCHEOLOGY ARCADE GAMBLERS are linking different kinds of gamblers operating with archeological documentary stuff as fotos and videos by one main NAVIGATIONS-GAMBLER, based on a random processor. With these elements subjective reconstructions can be done.

The gamblers of the ARCHIVE ARCADE are constructed as a reflexion on possibilities of science and simulation in media. MEDIARCHEOLOGY is a possibility for a virtual museum.

GULSUN KARAMUSTAFA

Souvenir

When I confronted Ephesus as a donation for a site-specific work, I found out that it was one of the most difficult spaces to work on. It had several different tensions coming from its rich historical background which gave you a feeling of being defeated as an artist. While I was spending days in the ancient town of Ephesos dealing with such problems, my project appeared from a daily attitude. A point especially seemed very attractive for taking photographs for those who were visiting the site. It was the front of Hadrianus Temple.

I am contributing a photographical panel of the old excavation days for Hadrianus Temple for those who like to take snapshots at the point. My work will be remembered by them whenever they look through their family albums.

HAKAN ONUR

False World

The words "FALSE WORLD" will be written on canvas and placed on the floor of the semicircular theater stage of Ephesus. The viewer will

be able to view this writing (Yalan Dunya, Yalanci Dunya...) on the stage from

any point above. Taking its Turkish meaning from Islamic mysticism, and reflecting a life viewpoint, this phrase, through its questioning the reality of life, will meet us on this stage. In this city, which we look at as an archeological finding we can tour in, which sheltered past lives, are we now in an unreal time within the reality? Who are the players? What sort of game is it?

HALE TENGER

Birth and Death

Although some ancient Greek thinkers had recognized change as inherent in life, few in antiquity and virtually none in early Christian Europe took seriously the idea that the present had emerged out of the past. (Carl N. Degler, 1990).

While it's common in experience to remember things from our childhood larger than they seem to us in our grownup perception, Ephesus' monumental outlook was to leave everlasting impressions on me.

Growing up in Izmir, I had been a witness to many earthquakes as a child, among which were serious ones as well. These frightening experiences were recorded in my memory together with the unescapable reality accepted admittedly that there are events which surpass mankind's sovereignty on life on earth. This was in some ways an ambiguous but a harsh comprehension of the facts of life.

The concept of my project will be dealing with the above issue, stressing ambitions and limits of humankind, in other words mortality. A metal information panel will be documenting each birth and death case that have been taken place in Selcuk (town at Ephesus) within the year of 1995 up to the very day of the opening of the exhibition.

FRANZ XAVER

The Visitors

Two mirrors are installed in Ephesus. In each of the mirrors is a film camera hidden. Everytime a visitor appears in front of a mirror a picture will be taken automatically. Each film roll stores approximately 4000 stills. Thus a time documentary emerges within the periode of the exhibition. The future archeology needs mechanical stores which has to be built.

Dates :

Thursday, Sept. 21, 1995:

19.30 Opening of the exhibition "100 Years of Austrian Research In Ephesus" at the communitiy hall in Selcuk, organized by the Austrian Archeological

Institute, presented by the Austrian Cultural Institute in Istanbul

Friday, Sept. 22, 1995:

17.00 Press conference with the artists in Ephesus at the Celsius library

18.30 Chamber concert of the "Wiener Symphoniker" in the theatre of Ephesus.

Saturday, Sept. 23, 1995:

9.30 Ceremonial act in the theatre of Ephesus with representatives of Turkey and Austria. Presentation of the EURO CARE programme

11.30 Presentation of the exhibition "The Imagination of History"

Guided tour through the exhibition headed by DIE FABRIKANTEN

Credits:

Idea:

Gerald Harringer & Wolfgang Preisinger (Die Fabrikanten) and
Dr. Erwin Lucius (Austrian Cultural Institute in Istanbul)

Organization:

Die Fabrikanten (Austria),
Ipek Duben and Gulsun Karamustafa (Turkey)

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NOVA REKLAMCILIK
PEGASUS Reisen

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