

urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE ukraine

a performative practice and research in urban space

by claudia bosse

with g nther auer

in collaboration with "urban curators" (kiev)

cities:

kiev, kharkiv, vienna

timeline:

interventions / research / workshops ukraine

2–3 weeks

april / may 2017

presentation vienna

3–4 days

mid of october until mid of november 2017

project team:

artistic director: claudia bosse

documentation/sound artist: g nther auer

urban curators: anastasiya ponomaryova, iryna yakovchuk

production manager/theatercombinat: margot wehinger

a production by theatercombinat,
supported by wien kultur and
robert bosch stiftung- change of scene/ ITI germany

project description "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE ukraine"

"urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE ukraine" is an experimental performative process which will be implemented by claudia bosse / theatercombinat in collaboration with the urban curators (an independent agency that works in the field of architecture, urbanism and cultural management, based in kiev) and with international and interdisciplinary partners and experts until end of 2017. starting point for the performative practice in urban space was the "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE" in vienna (see page 4). the project "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE ukraine" is focussing on the physical investigation and the legal situation in and in correlation with the public space. the projects develops performative interventions and maps the public space in different ways: as an inventory of legal aspects, historical, architectural and political dimensions and as video documentations in form of observations of existing urban structures. the "urban laboratory" aims to transfer and challenge experience made in the performative practice "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE" in public space in vienna towards the ukrainian cities kiev and kharkiv. the challenge of this project lies, among other things, in the question of how public space can be re-appropriated – under consideration of architectural conditions – in the cities of kiev and kharkiv. the history and the techniques of a subversive use of the public space in times of political struggles are one part of the research. here, new knowledge and installative and performative applications can be derived. how is accessibility and utilisation of the urban space possible? which alternative utilisation can be developed temporarily? how can the body investigate in urban contexts? experiences gathered in vienna will be placed in new contexts in the ukraine – they will be reviewed, documented and intervene into municipal realities in kiev and kharkiv. finally, the documents of the process will be presented as installation, lecture or even as a laboratory in vienna.

the first research trip to kiev, lviv and kharkiv took place in september 2016, a next deepening research phase with claudia bosse and g nther auer in kiev will take place in december 2016. this research will prepare the interventions in spring 2017 and conceived as an additional conceptual phase with urban curators. in april / may 2017 interventions in 3 places in kiev will take place which involve local participants (non-professionals, urbanists, students of performing arts and architecture, inhabitants of the city) through workshops and in performative investigations of the public space. in spring 2017 there will also be the recording of the video documentation and the research in kharkiv.

in october / november 2017 the results of the laboratory and the methods of the research will be presented in vienna, unfolding the differences between the peculiarities of the social interactions in the public sphere in ukraine and austria.



photos: claudia bosse

*everywhere where there is interaction between a place,
a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm.*

- henri lefebvre. rhythmanalysis

starting point "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE" in vienna

starting point for the "urban laboratory" in ukraine was the project "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE" in vienna by claudia bosse / theatercombinat in autumn 2015. an experimental, choreographic and installative process, performed with different partners, experts and accomplices. it dealt with political circumstances of the present and was experimenting in different contexts and spaces. "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE" was a performative laboratory in the public and semi-public space for a time period of 2 months, initiated by claudia bosse. the "urban labs" regard the urban sphere as space of investigations of daily and spatial practices, performatives of everyday life, territories and its subversion in relation to bodies, rhythms, sounds, urban structures and their interweaving. the "urban lab" was operated by a pool of people, performers, musicians and architects who were involved differently in the project. it engaged guests and accomplices for different periods of the process in order to work together alongside several "performative modules" that served as instructions for examining the public space – a project between fine arts, performance, choreography, sociology, urbanism and critical theory.

the fact of not having a fixed spaces, vagrancy, became the working practice. the strategy to take the places of intervention as they exist, to accept the existing structures and regard them as starting point for the choreographic work: it is a relecture of the space which does not overwrite the space but inscribes into the space and incorporates its information. it is the attempt to leave the spaces of art in order to confront the concerns of art with different functionalities and realities.

the "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE ukraine" connects to this practice and lecture of spaces. it expands them by taking the architectural and historical contexts into account, validates the practice and the space and subsequently transfers the practice from the ukraine back to vienna.

new contexts in ukraine "urban laboratory IDEAL PARADISE ukraine"

the revolutionary events in ukraine in 2014 impacted the functionality, the history and the physical and social practice of the public spaces in various cities reducing it to the political domain. they have become the places of resistance, of the collision of violence, of dead people, of killed people. now, some are places of the collective memory, of individual mourning, thus, becoming places where the political social body was (re-)created and self-identified.

however, in parallel to those national conflicts and worldwide processes of globalization, also the question of accessibility of various groups and individuals to the urban space arises.

like everywhere, the significant tension has escalated between the active citizens and the private investors and/or municipal administration who try to extend their power and commercial interest in the public sphere. what function can the public space obtain in a society and nation in transition? which "right to the city" do which citizens have in which regions of the city? how is a potential creation, participation and accessibility of public space regulated?

in a background investigation, the history of the selected places and their experienced – maybe different – corporeal practice over the last 30 years should be reviewed and documented. also, a manual about the legal aspects of the utilisation of public space should be developed. all those material will be published on the website of theatercombinat.

the "investigatory body" is the subversive tool and medium of the "urban labs" in kiev and and will be activated differently on site and at the 3 spots. in kharkiv, the inhabitants will become the actors who are documented on video. how they use the municipal sphere will be recorded as well as their thoughts on the city and the political situation. in both cities, in kiev and in kharkiv, the political circumstances will be negotiated and several possibilities and methods of (co)existence in the urban space tried out.

moreover, the urban labs are also the opportunity to open up the public space for multiple modes of participation. by proposing the examples of deviation and subversive tools of self-representation, the investigatory body widens the accessibility to the public realm and questions its homogeneity. in this way, the body also empowers the potential of the "invisible" groups which are usually suppressed. like this the project creates the democratic space for production of alternative discourses.

the "urban laboratory" will also discuss space theories and integrate discursive elements into the development process, the interventions and workshops.

the body. our body. (...) the body consists of a bundle of rhythms, different but in tune. (...) but the surrounding of bodies, be they in nature or a social setting are also bundle, bouquets, garlands of rhythms, to which it is necessary to listen in order to grasp the natural or produced ensembles.

the rhythm analyst will not be obliged to jump from the inside to the outside of observed bodies; he should come to listen to them as a whole and unify them by taking his own rhythms as a reference. by integrating the outside with the inside and vice versa.

for him nothing is immobile. (...) he thinks with his body, not in the abstract but in lived temporality. (...) he must arrive in the concrete through experience (...) the rhythm analyst will give an account of this relation between the present and presence: between their rhythms.

- henri lefebvre. rhythm analysis

interventions kiev and kharkiv

2–3 weeks
april / may 2017

in april / may 2017 after the RESEARCH I and II the preparations for the interventions and workshops in kiev and for the video mapping and the interviews in kharkiv involving local participants will take place.

presentation vienna

3–4 days
mid of october until mid of november 2017

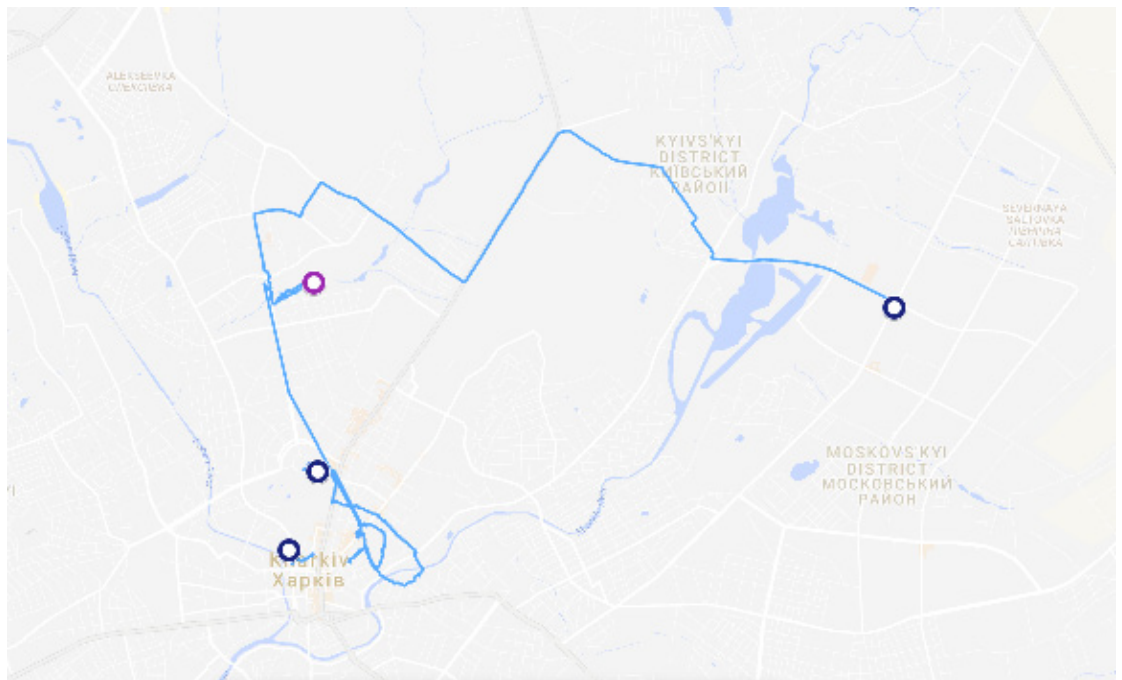
in the final phase in vienna the team will present the project and the results of the research in ukraine, unfolding the differences between the peculiarities of the social interactions in the public sphere in ukraine and austria.

previous project development:

RESEARCH I
23rd - 30th september 2016

during the first research trip by claudia bosse with the ukrainian partners anastasiya ponomaryova ("urban curators"), iryna yakovchuk ("urban curators") several explorations of the cities took place. the project team worked along in the 3 ukrainian cities lviv, kiev kharkiv. the elaboration of the possible realizations and the infrastructure on site lead to a reduction to the cities kiev and kharkiv where investigations and interventions will be conducted.

tracking – travel



click the link below to explore the different places where claudia bosse, anastasiya ponomaryova, iryna yakovchuk had travelled in ukraine.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1lfuPxOXIeLDM6RtX3CfmxzvOjYs&ll=51.72307742300548%2C25.829746472656325&z=6>

selected cities and places :
(after RESEARCH I)

KIEW (3 orte)

- 1) moskovska square
- 2) obolon
- 3) maidan nezalezhnosti

in kiev, 3 different urban areas and places will serve as places for interventions during a 5 day "urban laboratory", in which the 3 locations will be analysed, documents and compared. the places will be archived in the bodies of the participants and subsequently put into physical practice.

moreover, the idea is also to plan a bigger intervention at maidan which needs a delicate preparation. it is planned to occupy the roofs surrounding maidan with performative actions. the actions will lead to emptying the whole square, enabling a top view of the place which was a hotspot of the political fights and protests in 2013/2014 and the bloodless orange revolution in 2004. it is about emptying the space in order to be able to observe it again from its margins, to memorize the events that took place here and to create an empty space for the imagination of a possible future.

KHARKIV (2 places)

- 1) water spring in sarzhyn yar (sarzhyn ravine)
- 2) workout (site with gym equipment in the public space) in kharkiv nearby the water spring

in kharkiv, it is about an urban exploration using the medium of video in two different ways and on two different spots nearby. people who use the water from a healing spring will become urban actors and guides through the city: they will be asked, if we can accompany them. we would like to interview some of them and in this way record the path of the water as a urban exploration of kharkiv. that means, the paths from the public fountain into their private apartments will be observed.

the neighbouring outdoor workout will also be documented by video recordings. its body practices will be recorded and individual users will be interviewed about their opinion of the city, the state and the changes in their country in the recent 30 years. the urban users become actors and we follow and document their choreographies through the cities. alongside this observation we will be able to read the city and explore kharkiv.

material about the selected places in the cities kiev and kharkiv:

kiev, moskovska square

a classical non-place that is important for different transit functions of pedestrians and cars. it is an interesting place to deal with, because of the disused places under the bridge and the complicated system of signs for trespassing the roads around.

the last reconstruction did not solve previous problems: now there are almost no ground level pedestrian crossings in this area. people walk only along labyrinths in underpasses or violating the road traffic rules, cut down using ground-level passages under the overpass.



moskovska square with its different areas, photos: claudia bosse

material about the selected places in kiev and kharkiv:

kiev, obolon

the starting point of the interest in the space was the shift in the objectives and ideology of the obolon district: it was planned and realised based on big top-down master plan in 1970-80's as a "perfect place" to live, work and rest. however, nowadays it has turned into the place of flourishing of neo liberal architecture of non-human scale and low quality. there are certain problems with the public space in this district: big squares are almost not used by the citizens. the dnierper is hardly accessible because of the big church and other that is blocking the view and builds a religious landmark in the former socialist modernist urban ensemble.



obolon, photos: claudia bosse

kiew, maidan nezalezhnosti

(in the past: soviet square, kalinin square, square of the october revolution)

maidan is a busy central square which is full of advertisement, traffic, passers-by and multiple historical references that were build up in the 50s or even later, referring in its architectural appearance to times back in time. same does the independence pillar (built in 2001 and stylistically derived from corinthian columns and ukrainian baroque) that became one of the icons of the maidan fights.

one of the interventions would be emptying the place for an hour in order to perform a collective "RE:set" as almost impossible and common act of collective imagination, as a physical act emptied place of historical and political events. the attempt is an trial to imagine maidan a place for new possibilities and memories opened or announced by performers doing material movement on a number of rooftops.



maidan nezalezhnosti, photos: claudia bosse

kharkiv, healing water spring in sarzhyn yar (sarzhyn ravine)

the documentation of the people who come to the water spring and carry home the healing water is the starting point for the video recordings. following the water carriers through the city will conceive a mapping of kharkiv that will be documented on video. the people carrying the water will create our view on the city. the urban landscape will unfold with the path of the people, from the water spring leading to the private apartments. the urban research in this case would be researching the rhizomes of the healing water through the city, scrutinizing why people nowadays accept this effort and opens the condition for conversation and interview about their urban experience is the point of entrance for deeper connections and mapping of private stories in the public sphere.



water source in sarzhyn yar (sarzhyn ravine), photos: claudia bosse

kharkiv, outdoor workout

next to the water spring and a blessed swimming pool a outdoor workout is located that is used most of the time by elderly men.

one of the points of interest in the spot would be the realisation of a video documentation of the place, its practices as well as interviews with some of the older men who use it as a training spot: interviews about their thoughts, desires and visions, about the urban, the political situation and its changes. the reference point for the documentation of the outdoor workout would be the concept of the male body (in public) and the ideological shifts, the witnessing of the last 25 or 30 years.



workout in kharkiv near the water source with mainly older half-clothed men, photo: claudia bosse

günther auer (AT)

born in 1965, media artist, studied composition and electro-acoustic composition at the vienna university for music and performative arts, where he subsequently worked as a lecturer in the field of music and computer. he worked in different contexts with different artists on numerous projects. since 2009 he is collaborating above all with claudia bosse ("IDEAL PARADISE shifting space", "IDEAL PARADISE", "IDEAL PARADISE clash", "a third step to IDEAL PARADISE", "a second step to IDEAL PARADISE", "a first step to IDEAL PARADISE", "catastrophic paradise", "what about catastrophes?", "designed desires", "dominant powers. was also tun?", "vampires of the 21st century", "dominant powers – landschaften des unbehagens", "je veux un mot vide que je puisse remplir", "2481 desaster zone", "rehe und raketen"). 2012/2013 he was a senior artist at the academy of applied arts in vienna.

claudia bosse (D/AT)

is an artist, choreographer and theatre director developing space specific works for festivals, theatres, museums or city spaces in zagreb, prague, geneva, berlin, new york, tunis, cairo, athens, beirut, podgorica as well as in vienna, graz, hamburg, frankfurt, dusseldorf etc. Claudia is a graduate of Germany's Ernst Busch School of Dramatic Arts for theatre directing and has diversified approaches to performance and theatre, including spatial choreographies, hybrid theatre works in open-plan spaces, choral speech choreographies, theatre projects involving various segments of the public, as well as installations, urban interventions and discourse of practice. she is the co-founder and artistic director of theatercombinat, a transdisciplinary company founded in berlin and based in vienna. As editor or author she was involved in various publications, she is giving lectures, initiates or participates at artistic researches and is collaborating regularly with theorists and artists of different fields. claudia is regularly teaching at art academies, universities, theatre schools or festivals. with the project series WHAT HAS TO BE DONE THEN?, (KATASTROPHEN 11/15) IDEAL PARADISE and SOME DEMOCRATICE FICTIONS for example, she is working via different artistic formats on research into political hybrids, combining documents, texts and spaces as a new dramaturgy unfolded into space. <http://claudiabosse.blogspot.com>

anastasiya ponomaryova (UA)

architect, urbanist, researcher, co-founder of NGO "urban curators" interested revitalization of post-industrial areas, the cultural aspect of urban-experience and enabling citizens to re-gain and shape the public space they wish to have.

margot wehinger (AT)

born 1983. studied theatre, film and media studies at the university of vienna. in 2012 she started working for theatercombinat in the production DESIGNED DESIRES/ vienna. since october 2013 she has been working as production manager for theatercombinat. she also worked for filmarchiv austria in the department of digitalization of analog home movies.

iryna yakovchuk (UA)

is a manager, urbanist, researcher, co-founder and director of NGO "urban curators". interested in a social and economical context of city transformations, also - in a public activities at the crossroads of urbanism, culture and social action.

theatercombinat

represents a highly experienced production company for independent art and theatre work. founded in 1996 in berlin and based in vienna, austria, since 1999, the artistic formation led by director and artist claudia bosse assembles actors, performers and dancers as well as theorists, sound and media artists, architects, visual artists and technicians in order to engage in research into theatrical concepts, pushing theatre beyond its limits in search of new, collective and adventurous ways to communicate with the spectators, the space and the organisation of the public.

the productions create new, experimental spaces for action and perception between theatre, installation, choreography, performance and discourse. the site specific works are developed within time frames of one week up to four years in cities like zagreb, tunis, berlin, dusseldorf, new york, vienna, hamburg, podgorica, prague, brunswick or geneva and contain urban interventions, space choreographies, hybrid theatre works, choral speech choreographies, theatrical concepts for different concepts of the public as well as discourse about theories of practice.

urban curators

is an independent agency of interdisciplinary team that works in the field of architecture, urbanism and cultural management. Our mission is we create and revitalize urban space for public benefit, with involvement of all stakeholders participation; we balance their interests and create a common vision for the project.

our values are: we create a high quality urban space. we are confident that such space is a result of joint interdisciplinary effort. we believe in public potential and support their right for the city. we choose meaningful work. we value freedom, creativity and honesty in work. we support innovators in our field (NGOs, municipalities and commercial enterprises who share our values).

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