

“Stop being a tourist. Start a revolution. Start feeling at home.”

Part from Bora Petkova / HR-Stamenov Time Geometry

This text traces the relationship between separate situations, objects and actions that took place within a month and a half. Those produce sense of an Lived Artwork after they've been intuitively and logically integrated in a construction, consisting of unexpected and non-directed (by me) external factors, the realization of the self-identification in these externalities, my reaction through concrete actions and their documentation.

As a result of this long, often unpredictable in its mechanism process, the so called "external" and primary factors (as long we can locate the root of Cause as "external" or "internal"), found and recognized by me (suggesting the Search is a deed of an active subject, not to underestimate the potential attraction power of an active object), appear to be a function of my mentality, which acts as a medium at re-contextualizing real facts. This "double-mirror" aspect of the "cause and effect" relation, reveals invisible temporal, dimensional and semantic relationship between existing visible objects, their cultural denomination in given society and individual and the reverse reaction of the individual towards the "sealing" of these elements by action giving visual and written sense to all.

This documentation consists of a slogan inscription from a billboard, found and purchased objects and series of actions documented in video and photography.



Billboard of 9flats.com, Berlin, Germany
Photo Bora Petkova



11 reproductions of photographs, bought from a second hand store for household stuff in Berlin
Photo Bora Petkova

I arrived in Berlin and settled for a month and a half at the quarter of Lichtenberg, famous for the STASI Head Quarter, Ex operatives (still living there), nationalist movement, big Russian, Polish, Chinese and Vietnamese populations.

Walking the streets of Lichtenberg, I was stopped by a billboard stating "Stop being a tourist. Start a revolution. Start feeling at home." (1) I've had this kind of shakeups before. For their origin I can't say much, just know that intuitively I find them and they hit me a slap at the moment their message and my mental trajectory encounter, illuminate the landscape around and collapse in pieces covering the ground. At a later stage, when this bright moment becomes a memory, it changes its meaning and takes a logical and highly symbolic place in the concept of my work. I photographed the billboard sign and continued.

Day or two after this incident, during the daily roam in the neighborhood I walked into a shop for second hand household. In the sector for home accessories I found 11 faded 70's reproductions of ikebana (2), mounted on plywood and back-framed, used as home decoration. I bought them all for the total price of 5.50 Euros. Went back home and carefully arranged them on my worktable to contemplate knowing that their logical place in my work will be found providing their new function.

1. „Stop being a tourist. Start a revolution. Start feeling at home.“ Inscriptions from a billboard of 9flats.com

2. Ikebana (生け花 "living flowers") is the Japanese art of flower arrangement, also known as kadō (花道 the "way of flowers"). "Ikebana" is from the Japanese ikeru (生ける "to place, to arrange, life, birth") and hana (花 "flower"). Possible translations include "giving life to flowers" and "arranging flowers".

Quarter such as Lichtenberg, in its vastness, offers a huge range of historical and current models of urbanization. In addition to the contemporary methods of cultivation applied to the historical industrial areas and the adjacent housings, the modular panel constructions of socialism, bourgeois family homes and many others, my attention turned to the breaks between buildings, their declared private or public ownership, function and exploitation.

Thus, the purpose and location of activities during my daily trips become the public spaces around and between the buildings as they generously or sparingly offered me their adjacent sites, such as benches, fences, park sculpture and all kinds of constructions. Finding these places, I was sought to achieve both intense physical contact and a state of levitation (3) with the found objects, which best reflected my status as a temporary resident of Berlin.

3. Levitation(from Latin levis-light) is the process by which an object is suspended against gravity, in a stable position without any solid physical contact. Levitation is also a "magic" trick in which a person or object being lifted into space, without foreign or whatever interference. Most often it is done mechanically, using special lightning, etc.

"Stop being a tourist. Start a revolution. Start feeling at home."

2012

Site specific

11 found objects (reproductions of photographs, mounted on plywood and back-framed: 24,2 / 20,2 / 1,5 cm each) and series of photographs

Photo credit HR-Stamenov









Up here in my story, there are three completely unrelated elements: an inscription from a billboard, reproductions of ikebana and dozens of photographs documenting the physical relationship of my body to the urban environment.

For the past four years, I find it difficult to identify where my home is or where I feel at home. My revolution began when I became a "tourist". Berlin is a city with a huge influx of people who are trying (with all sorts of results) to hold and organize their life; a city whose permanent population at the moment, is destined primarily by post-war factors. These people have positioned themselves in the social arrangement which as is true of all other arts requires creative expression within certain rules governing its form and construction. There practicing the art of ikebana in such conditions, one becomes more patient, peaceful, silent and tolerant of differences, not only in nature but in general to the others, with the desire to reveal the natural beauty of each element in its full implementations, implications and every kind of manifestation. What distinguishes ikebana from other approaches to arranging flowers is the asymmetric shape and the use of empty space as an essential factor for the composition. A sense of harmony between the materials, the pot for ikebana and the surrounding setting is a key element, not to forget the aesthetic selection and the certain degree of materials adjustment to achieve this harmony.

My attempts at levitation within the "empty" spaces are equally ambiguous and compromise. Obviously, in all experiments I use the palm of a selected physical structure and so is notable the silence during the attempts. The only hidden thing from the eye remains the painful tension throughout my body needed to maintain in a stable position and balance with the environment.

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Variable dimensions

Installation view: Bora Petkova / HR-Stamenov, Time Geometry, Goethe-Institut, Sofia, Bulgaria

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Photo Bora Petkova

