

!MEDIENGRUPPE BITNIK
QUESTIONS I NOISE
28.1. - 26.2.2011

1 UBS LIES

Attacks 1971 | 2009

Vinylprint on Billboard (6x3m), Photo: Florian Bachmann, 2009 / 2010

With «UBS Lies» !Mediengruppe Bitnik re-enacts «Police Lies», a work by Peter Weibel from 1971. An investment banker who happened to walk by participates in the shooting unmasked. The shot of his quiet protest in front of a Zurich branch of United Bank of Switzerland (UBS) becomes «UBS lies: Attacks 1971/2009».

The work recently caused some uproar: During the exhibition opening of „Too Big To Fail / Too Small To Succeed“ in September 2010 in London the legal department of UBS had the image removed from a public billboard. In case of further use or publication of the image UBS threatened to sue for libel.

2 CHESS FOR CCTV OPERATORS

Intervention into Surveillance Spaces of Essen

Intervention in Public Space, Video Installation, 2010

For the exhibition „Hacking The City“ at the Museum Folkwang in Essen die !Mediengruppe Bitnik used urban surveillance spaces in the city of Essen as their stage. During their three day performance they went looking for surveillance camera signals. Using a video transmitter, antenna and a chess computer hidden in a portable suit case, they kidnapped the original surveillance signal and replaced it with an invitation to play chess.

The surveillance monitor in the control room is thus taken over from the outside and transformed into a games console. With the invitation to play !Mediengruppe Bitnik overcome the power structure produced by the surveillance situation - «Chess for CCTV Operators» is a subtle performance for a single and especially chosen Receptient.

During the 3-day Intervention none of the surveillers engaged in a chess game with !Mediengruppe Bitnik.

3 FOLLOWING THE CRISIS. TOO BIG TO FAIL I TOO SMALL TO SUCCEED

Audio / Video Installation, Instruction Printout / Handout, 2010

During their residency in London in the spring of 2010 !Mediengruppe Bitnik looked into the parasitical potential of the financial system. In various field trials, they took a closer look at the financial system, its media and structures, in order to determine how they could engage in these systems and open up their processes for a playful intervention.

With «Following The Crisis» !Mediengruppe Bitnik, by way of psychogeographical Dérives, re-appropriates the urban environment of the financial centers of Zurich and London. By randomly following bankers, bank customers they explore the financial districts. From this field research they then derive the „Instruction for a Dérive“. «Following the Crisis» presents exemplary extracts of a growing archive of personal journeys through the city documented via Telephone calls. The Dérive works as a symbolic act against the powerlessness in the crisis – a form of appropriation of the inaccessible and closed financial spaces of London and Zurich. The results are subjective wanderings in search of traces of the crisis using the means of observation.



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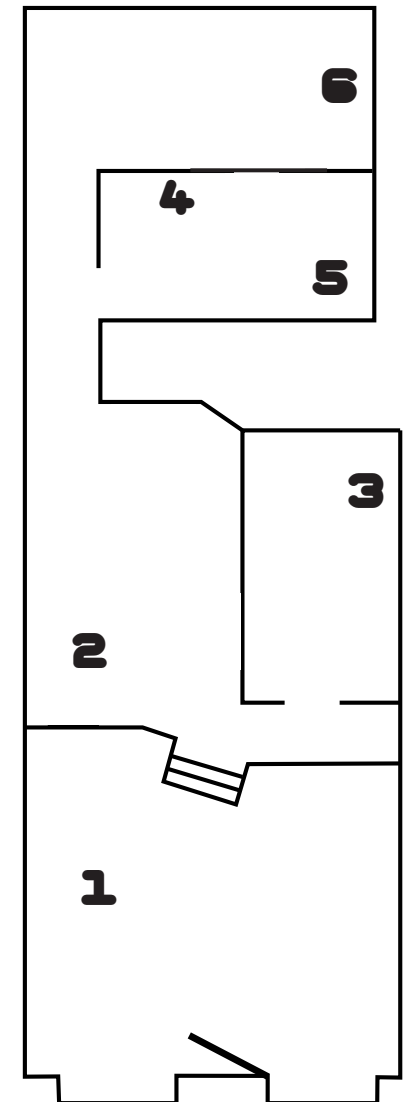
Öffnungszeiten:

Mi/Do 16h-19h, Fr 16h-21h, Sa 14h-18h

Torstrasse 159

10115 Berlin

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4 MILITÄRSTRASSE 105 | SOUSVEILLANCE

Intervention in Public Space, Site Specific Video Installation with Live Feed

White Space, Zurich, 24.04. - 5.06.2009

For the exhibition „leftover“ at the Kunstraum White Space in Zürich hijacked the police surveillance signals and showed these - usually invisible - video recordings in the exhibition space. The signals from the two surveillance cameras of a neighbouring police station were detected and transmitted live and unaltered into the exhibition space. Thus the spectator is given direct access to „surveillance from above“: Surveillance becomes sousveillance, the police' birds eye view becomes the spectators view on police work.

The images generated by the two surveillance cameras at 105 Militärstrasse are normally lost in the moment they are generated. They only gain attention and relevance when documenting a situation out of the ordinary. Otherwise they are leftover material. These leftovers are shown as an endless stream in the exhibition space, thus obtaining a new, official presence.

5 CCTV - A TRAIL OF IMAGES. GALLERY JAN NEUFFER.

Hijacked Images of Surveillance Camera of the Gallery Jan Neuffer, Auguststrasse 19, 10117 Berlin, 26.1.2010, 16h03

Video, 6'03, Loop

Since 2008, !Mediengruppe Bitnik has been conducting walks through the sceneries of invisible cities: Equipped with self-built CCTV video signal receivers and video recording devices they organise Dérives in search of hidden - and usually invisible - surveillance camera signals in public space. Surveillance becomes sousveillance: The self-built tools provide access to „surveillance from above“ by capturing and displaying CCTV signals, thus making them visible and recordable. During the exhibition the visitors can use two devices for individual tours. See information on separate sheet.

6 OPERA CALLING. ARIAS FOR ALL

Intervention, Video Installation, 2007

«Opera Calling» - was an artistic intervention into the cultural system of the Zurich Opera. By means of audio bugs placed within the auditorium of the local opera house, the outside public is given access to the performances on stage. The performances are retransmitted to the public not through broadcasting, but by telephoning each person individually.

From March 9th to May 26th 2007, audio bugs, hidden in the auditorium, transmitted the performances of the Zurich Opera to randomly selected telephone landlines in the city of Zurich. In proper style of a home-delivery-service, anyone that picked up their telephone, was able to listen to the on-going opera performances for as long as s/he wanted through a live connection with the audio bug signal. As soon as the listener would hang up, the telephone machine would call the next random number. With the use of the telephone for the dissemination of the opera transmissions a virtual auditory space is opened not as blanket coverage (as with broad-casting media) but as a home-delivery service: Every person is individually connected and can eaves-drop at their leisure from the comfort of their living room. In total over 90 hours of opera performances were retransmitted to 4363 households.

The Zurich Opera launched a search for the bugs and in a first reaction threatened to take legal action if the transmissions were not stopped and the bugs not removed. There followed a debate in the media over cultural ownership and cultural subsidies. Eventually the Zurich Opera decided to tolerate «Opera Calling» as a temporary enhancement of their performance repertoire.

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