

Britta:

This Turkish man was talking quite a while to Özge at the opening. Do you remember the situation, Özge? How were the feelings from all of you finding yourself suddenly in front of the wall at S-Bahn Wilhelmsburg, which gave the project its focus and title, and starting the project? Secil, what comes to your mind when you see the photo?

Secil:

The punctum of the photo is hidden in the hand of Ozge that holds the microphone although the look of her is very sharp and catches the attention at the first side. What he has said has been recorded, what Ozge is hearing that made her look that way is being recorded; so I am curious to listen to the recording. Ozge is looking suspiciously to him, suspicion with curiosity to understand. She doesn't know him or the situation he is telling about. She looks to him not to where he is talking about; possibly the wall. The story teller is more important than the story for Ozge.

Nadin:

For me the project started much earlier. It started when we were first searching for a room and started talking to the people who have shops nearby the wall. As it turned out it was impossible to rent or use a room for the project and we had to rethink our strategies and decided therefore to be mobile. This mobility became a very important parameter in the project and shaped our contacts and relationships with the neighbours in Wilhelmsburg.

It also made it necessary to have an initiary and contact number so people can find us wherever we were. The building panel became the

focus point on the wall. It was the only visible change that ever appeared on the wall during the project.

I remember a rainy Thursday when we put up the panel with the help of the carpenter who had build it with us and the freeclimbers. Only with their help we could fix the panel and connect it with the wall. All this joint preparation work was already part of the project. People using the wall area as a parking space immediately noticed the change through the panel and started wondering what kind of building will start.

At the opening, where the picture was taken with the man talking to Özge, I felt I was already in the middle of the project. Yet I only realised what 15x75m really means when I saw the freeclimbers up high and later climbed the wall myself. The seize of the wall only then became real to me and pushed further questions of how to deal with it as a space.

I attach another photo and ask you (who were not there at the moment) to imagine... what is happening here? But first lets hear what Özge and Günez are saying to the pic with the man at the wall!

Gunes:

It was a great day.

Exciting and hopeless.

We were looking like a Building Company.

But we were just liars.

We were talking about wall.

But the wall wasn't there.

And somebody was playing football on the wall.

If there were a wall how could it be possible?

No no there wasn't a wall.

We were just talking about our imaginary wall.

Or maybe was there a wall?

Who could ever know whether that place had a wall or not?

Özge:

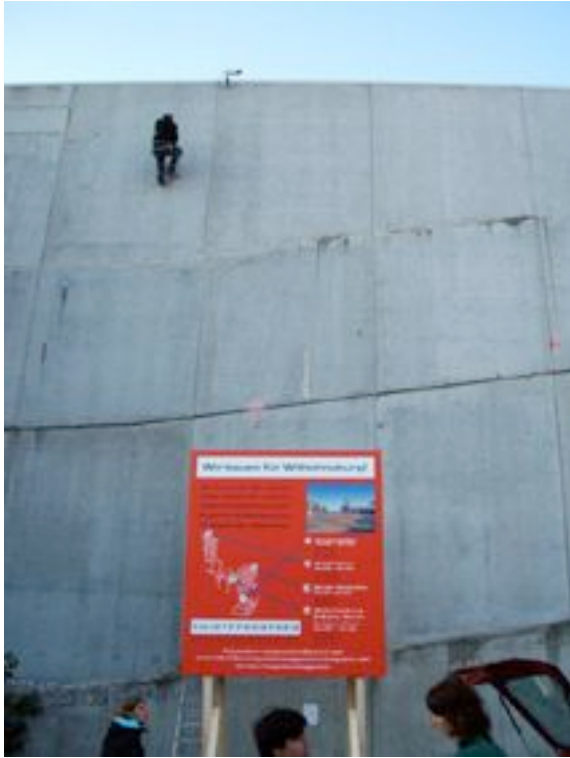
yes I remember that day, I remember almost everyday, except the day with the kids in Kirschdorf Süd. Cause it was very crowded that everybody was talking at the same time.

But that day was our first day into the public with the public. "Public" has different meanings for the four different neighbourhoods where we spent time.

But for this place I can say that we were in a kind of "passage" where the people were rushing from one point to the other, shopping or eating or drinking; there were only some young people standing and pausing.

Wilhelmsburg S-Bahn is a real suburban center that the planners are trying to turn out to an urban center. How can it be possible?

And that day we were talking about the wall, I remember exactly that he was saying: "it could be good if one paints a very realistic painting of what is seen behind the wall, so the wall could be invisible". I was looking at him and trying to figure out the next question that could come after this talk.



Britta:

I like all fotos showing the freeclimbers on the wall, because by moving vertical they create a very strange perspective inside the picture. If you look at it in a special way the wall almost turns into a street (with a very sudden edge). The wall looks huge, huge, huge specially on this picture and frightening because of the camera. In this context the Wir-bauen-für-Wilhelmsburg-sign is not really able to create an atmosphere of hope. The acting people (you!) seem to be very busy and very tiny at the same time – this is an aspect which I would consider as a bit too metaphoric, too theatrical in a way and hopefully at the end not true. I do believe that architecture has an influence on feeling and behavior, but I am not sure that it is so dominating. It is always a mixture of a lot of conditions which comes together in places like this. Architecture is one of the additives, but it can only gets overwhelming when other basic things go wrong: when there is no warm and social feeling for people next to you because there is no selfconsciousness and no satisfying perspective in life.

I love this picture. It shows the complete chaos, a breaking off situation. The only disadvenatge is that there are no people on it...



Nadin:

The picture looks to me like a ready stage set before the game/play starts. Exactly because there is no people in the scene. It looks like everything is ready. But the picture tells something more. It tells something from the perspective of the one who took it, standing with a distance and watching the scene. That is where all the other people were as well. Watching from a distance. That tells us something about the seize of the wall and what is happening on it. Its only possible to see and join it from a distance, only then the picture of what the two people hanging there do becomes clear. But what exactly is happening? I remember a turkish man standing next to me and Özge. He asked in turkish what the people do on the wall and he started worrying if it might not be dangerous for them to climb the wall. He was curious to find out. I could not understand what he said at the time when he was speaking but i could sense and see his curiosity and shy interest. He stayed at a distance and yet took part in the scene/game.

Özge:

For both photos I think there is one and same feeling: it is hard to reach the wall. When there is no audience, it becomes more part of everyday life, what the climbers are doing looks more normalized, is it? but still this question of "how the wall could be used differently?" doesn't disappear, it rather becomes more intensive and worthy to think on. I was there in both cases, but did not touch the wall, I just witnessed from a distance as Nadin said. The wall was so big that I felt like I will loose the space if I climb on it. The wall was like a vast scene or a borderless frame and everybody climbing on it were under the looks of the others. So I would like to ask Gunes how she felt when she climbed on the wall? And I would like to ask Secil if she would like to climb on it or do something else with it?

Secil:

I guess the camera on the wall is more interesting then the wall. I am curious "what does the camera see and who is watching?, why is the

camera there? who has put the camera? ".

Özge and Gunes had just come from hamburg when there was no project idea whatsoever, they came and started to talk about the wall, the wall that was there waiting to become the center of the project before it had any more meaning other than why it was made for.

I saw Özge watching the wall, I saw Gunes climbing on the wall, I saw the wall from a distance - I did not think to climb on it, I rather thought to come as close as possible and look at it from down to up, from right to left and left to right, try to feel the wall.

Although the wall was so big, so huge, I felt it like an emptiness, like a big hole. I was curious what the neighbors were thinking about it and still is.

Gunes

Yes I was climbing on the wall.

I saw the neighborhood from the birds eye

And I got stuck to the wall...

And the wall stuck on me...

I hope It was not just my dream.



Özge: I choose that picture, I don't know, I thought we can also question how pictures are considered as a memory since it looks like a real souvenir photo. But for now first I want to hear what you will say and then write back...

Nadin:

yes, this picture is indeed strange because it looks like everything stopped just for the purpose of that picture. it's about representation. at the same time it shows us with the children we were working with the three days before. proudly they present to the viewer with the camera what has been made with the posters. I remember the noise and the hundreds of questions they were asking... why we are there? and how it comes that we work together as Turkish and Germans in a team? and who the boss is

in our team? it was a very intense start of the project cause we were constantly questioned by the children who joined. I also remember that we were laughing a lot and made a frog race with the paper origami frogs the girls created from the posters. All this is not to be seen in this picture.

Secil:

the camera does it sometimes. gunes has been photographed at the instant that she has just closed her eyes. she looks like she is preparing herself to be in the photo, she is coming to the photograph one can say. the rest is already there. a photo for to show what they have been doing since. the camera has documented the day for "those were the days" saying. although I know the project still the carpet looks strange and also the black chair and the silver table; they are all from another time period. wir bauen fur wilhemsburg writes on the minibus but rather with the kids it looks like we are having fun for wilhemsburg.

Britta:

What I like about the picture – and about your project in the whole – is the mixture between private and public sphere. The carpet and the furniture turned a part of the marketplace into a private room, visible for the public and open for everybody who wants to join. The "family"-character of the photo, took with a automatic realease, mirrors this aspect. My feeling is that all the people who got in touch with you during the project made a very personal expierence with it. They need no documentation, I guess a lot of them took their posters and objects home as remembrance. For all the others the documentation by visual media is important to get an idea about the atmosphere and what happend, but of course it creates its own reality. The idea of the blogg which Secil set up from Istanbul, based on fotos and material you send her, is a strong way to reflect this and deal with this aspect a an intrinsic part of the project.

Gunes

I was just closing my eyes

Everybody was happy

Nadin had a nice skirt. On the skirt was a magical pool

A girl had a nice t-shirt. On the t-shirt was a magical pool

Özge had a nice poster. On the poster was an invisible wall

Girls had few nice bags. On the bags were walls

I had a nice cap. On the cap was an invisible wall

Our shuttle was there, waiting...

Our table was busy

Our chairs were waiting for ones to come.

Our carpet was dirty and in a good mood.

Old Spanish man was amazed

Old Russian ladies were surprised

Old lonely lady was full of suspect

Neighborhood's small market had some strange hand made package

Whole Neighborhood was confused...

Özge:

yes it is the image of one of the intensive moments, both because of being relaxed of having finished what we wanted to do together and feeling kind of bitter also because it was the last day in that neighbourhood and we were feeling like we just started our friendship with neighbours. This is the tricky side of this kind of relational projects: to have a limited time and when it's finished, it is finished. So it should be a big question about how to continue the relationship after the projects. As Oda Projesi, since many years we are also searching for the answer for each specific case.

Maybe Secil, this time, can choose one picture from the blog, one picture that she wants to hear the real story? :)



Gunes:

When I took this photo,  
It was summertime but it was cold.  
We were close to the mill.  
The mill was old,  
So was the mill's neighborhood.  
The weather was cold,  
So was the mill's feeling.

Nobody was friendly around, the neighbors were all distant to us.  
The whole day we sewed and made a big picnic carpet out of poster papers.  
The whole day we kept moving not to feel cold  
We dreamt about a nice picnic (*with our nice picnic carpet*),  
a nice day and a nice weather.

Suddenly a car stops on the street just in front of us.  
The man in the car asks: 'Are you tailors? I need big size clothing. You can see I'm a big man and I need a tailor to work for me.'

Nadin says: 'Honestly, we are not tailors, but we can sew clothes for you. We however use only paper material, the posters of our art project. Would you be interested in this kind of clothing?'  
He says: 'No!' and he's gone.



Özge

When I think about how different was that place from the other parts of Wilhelmsburg, I suddenly realize that it is also very different from where I'm coming from. But it doesn't mean that the other places look like my hometown. No. But the rest was like so-called "public spaces" or squares or "platz", common places in every city, where no one belongs to and no one cares about. They were only like passage-places, only the platz in Kirschdorf Süd was used by some mothers, mostly by the children and by elderly people. But here was different, it was mostly used by the people living there or the "tourists" coming to visit the windmill. But it was also very deserted that for the people it was even more difficult to see why we were there. So it was like they didn't want to contact us but they preferred to observe from a distance to understand why we were doing this. Kind of voyeurism... Because when we had an eye contact they were turning their heads and feeling like they did something unpolite.

The day before this day, one monsieur was shouting to make us hear, from a distance again, saying "Wir bauen für Wilhelmsburg!" and showing the broken bars of the balustrade in where the lady is standing now in the photo.

Britta:

Great foto! Nadin, for you it must be quite familiar sitting somewhere outside with a sewingmaschine, or? It makes me think of your "so far, so good"-project.

The picture is interesting because it describes exactly the relationships we encountered during our stay at the windmill in Wilhelmsburg. This purely residential area with large family houses mainly inhabited by Germans was a quiet and sometimes lonely place. Some hours we did not meet or talk to anybody. We watched the area from the minibus and started discussing if we could live in such an area and how it would change us to live here. Because it was such a quiet place it gave us the opportunity to discuss between ourselves and concentrate on questions which came up between us during the work in the other areas. Concentration also on ideas which we had collected and wanted to put into practise like sewing the posters into a large picnic carpet. The moment when this woman was watching me- I did not realise for a while because I was sewing. Yes, indeed the situation was quite familiar to me- working in public space is something I know from my project so far so good. Yet I was working in other countries and cultures then- the reaction of Germans is different. That's why I choose this place as one of our working areas. I wanted to see the reactions of German people living here.

It was when I was sewing the paper carpet that people stopped suddenly. They had not seen such a homely activity in their neighbourhood and were curious to know what it is for. "Wir bauen für Wilhelmsburg"- but how can you build with a sewing machine and from paper? Yet the woman stayed in a distance as Özge said, not wanting to approach us closer. The distance is resembling the distant living conditions in this area for me.

Each house has a large green garden around it and the fence to protect it from the neighbour. People don't meet and neighbours easily don't know much about each other.

Secil:

" sewing is meaningfull when done outside - on the street. why is nadin sewing? who is nadin sewing for? what does the passerby thinks? for this part of the project I am excited and even more excited then the wall experince; I started to hear the sound of the maschine... hmm what is private and what is public?"



Nadin

Hi,

Here is my last picture from the closing of our project.

The wall is still there. The posters which came out of our meetings and engagement with the people in the different neighbourhoods show many ideas of what to do with it.

We did not change it. We wanted to leave Wilhelmsburg like it is. Yet through asking questions we stirred up a thinking process which might still be going on today. Not only about the wall, but about changes which are happening in Wilhelmsburg.

We were part of this change and we know about it. One woman described it quite clearly and made a poster out of it. (in attachment)

We situated ourselves every day in the context we found ourselves in. We articulated ourselves every day and "aktualisierten" thereby who and

where we were in public space. And we were always moving which helped to always question again what we do and why we are there. It was becoming a place.

Özge asked me in the blog: "How was Nadin's experience as being living in Berlin, working in Wilhelmsburg, Hamburg and has been worked in Istanbul?" and I want to answer the question now. But before I let you comment to the picture or add posters and also answer to the question: "How was Oda Projesi's experience as being living in Istanbul, working in Wilhelmsburg, Hamburg and has been worked in other German cities?"

Secil:

In front of the wall so stands the project. the opening and closing of a wall. I guess people will not forget the wall and what happened around it. for me seeing the project from istanbul and through photos, made me try to connect the project with others like Tensta and Riem where the wall is also there but not visible this much. I guess from the side of oda projesi, all projects are linked to one another all in search for a new usage of a space or of the place. what can happen if we try to do this project in istanbul? can we find such a useless or "empty" wall in istanbul? can we look to the wall and say where it is? I write these listening to fanfare ciocarlia's "ma maren ma" makes the wall more warm I guess... so till another in search for a usage, cheers  
secil