

Press Release

Conspiracy Dwellings

*Kunsthaus Erfurt, Germany. Exhibition runs from 28.09.2007 - 16.11.2007
Vernisage: Friday 28th September, 2007 at 6.00 pm*

Project by Pam Skelton, (GB) with contributions by invited artists **C.CRED** (SE/GB), **Tina Clausmeyer**, (D) and **Verena Kyselka** (D).

Conspiracy Dwellings is a visual arts project that explores the legacy of state surveillance. Presented is a network of almost 500 secret apartments and institutions in Erfurt from which the former East German Ministry of State Security (Stasi) operated from 1980 to 1989. Initiated by the British artist Pam Skelton and the German scholar Joachim Heinrich, the project displays audio/video installations in locations around the city based on the spying and denunciation that took place in the GDR. The project uses the original locations of the conspiracy dwellings to reveal the former surveillance practices in the city and its public life and considers how this history is understood in the context of the present.

Pam Skelton's 5 channel video work *Conspiracy Dwellings* (2007) considers the city as a three dimensional map in a video portrait of the city that situates the conspiracy dwellings as part of the architecture of the city, no longer 'blank spaces' absorbed in the urban geography. Skelton walked and cycled around Erfurt between 2004 and 2006 recording the conspiracy dwellings and other Stasi buildings active from 1980 -1989, taking on the role of an archeologist of contemporary history and the 'painter of modern life'. *Conspiracy Dwellings II* depicts the 21st century city as a hyper-real, technicolour landscape where the sun always shines (and we are told by the artist that it really did). Each of the 5 video channels portrays a different sector of the city with each sector screened at its corresponding micro station listed below. At Kunsthaus Erfurt the complete video work is screened as a 5 channel video installation.

C.CRED (Collective CREative Dissent) is a London based but very nomadic artist collective, a collaborative structure in a continuous process of becoming. Premised on the notion that within the framework of the overall Conspiracy Dwellings project there is a need for us to explore the specific historical issues brought up in an expanded and contextual sense allowing for a plurality of positions and narratives to be articulated simultaneously, C.CRED set out, in August 2007, to record a series of conversations with participants based primarily in and around Erfurt. During the Conspiracy Dwellings exhibition, these recorded conversations will be turned into a polyphonic audio installation comprising several sound sources corresponding to specific themes recurring in the conversations.

Tina Clausmeyer is based in Berlin and London. As an artist and cultural scientist she has worked on projects, which are an interface between art/politics and development cooperation in (post) conflict areas such as the Palestinian territories and the Congo. She has been a participating artist on the conspiracy dwellings project since July 2003. For this project she examined the former structures of surveillance and documented the hidden network of conspiracy dwellings as they are today. Her work constructs photo-optical anti-cartographies of the city of Erfurt in the form of a picture database of documentary photography. Besides this work she

considered secret networks after 9/11, the subject of the conference "Towards a New Visualization of Secrecy? Representations of Secrecy within Contemporary Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism", that she curated in the Stedelijk Museum CS, Amsterdam, in March 2007.

Verena Kyselka grew up in Erfurt, she is an artist and freelance curator based in Berlin and Erfurt. In her cross media art works she investigates socio-political, biographical and intercultural relations. Exhibition projects have resulted in activities in Central America, Taiwan and Australia between 1990 and 2007. She curated project including MultimedialistInnen -- international Performance Festival (1992), Vita Activa (1997), Babajagas & Witches - Mythologies between East and West (2000). Not only encouraged by her East-German background, especially the experiences her family had to make with the Stasi surveillance and its consequences, but also inspired by her own artistic attempts in this context she has been involved in the project since 2006 and took over the project management and curatorial responsibilities in February 2007.

The exhibition is in 6 locations across the city.

EXHIBITION at Kunsthaus Erfurt - The complete exhibition

Works by Tina Clausmeyer, C.CRED, Pam Skelton
Kunsthaus Erfurt,
Michaelisstr. 34, 99084 Erfurt,
opening hours: tues – fri 12 am – 7 pm, sat 12 am – 4 pm

MICRO-STATIONS

Pam Skelton's 5 channel video work Conspiracy dwellings // Konspiracy Dwellings is distributed amongst the 5 local community based venues listed where each

Public Library Berliner Platz – **Northern New Suburbs**
Opening hours: mon – wed 10 am – 6 pm, fri 10 am – 4 pm, sat 10 – 12 am
/ Berliner Platz 1, 99091 Erfurt
Tram 6, stop: Berliner Strasse

„glassbox“ at the University of Erfurt – **North Erfurt**
Opening hours: display window, non-stop
/ Nordhäuser Str. 63, 99089 Erfurt
Tram 3,6, stop: Universität

Foyer of the town hall – **Old Town and Central Erfurt**
Opening hours: mon, tues, wed 8 am – 6 pm, 8 am – 4 pm, fri 8 am – 2 pm, sat, sun 10 am – 5 pm
/ Fischmarkt 1, 99084 Erfurt
Tram 2,3,4,6, stop: Fischmarkt

Foyer of the State Parliament of Thuringia – **Southern Suburbs**
Opening hours: mon – fri 8 am – 5 pm, at the weekend by arrangement (Tel.: 0361 3772005)
/ Jürgen-Fuchs-Straße 1, 99096 Erfurt
Tram 4, Bus 60, 61, 163, stop: Landtag

Foyer of the Radisson SAS Erfurt – **Juri-Gagarin-Ring**
Opening hours: non-stop
/ Juri-Gagarin-Ring 127, 99084 Erfurt
Tram 1,2,3,4,5,6, stop: Anger

Contact

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