

ELEKTRONISCHES FEST STADTWERKSTATT



On the subject:

Technologically intelligent ambiances are projected as varied functional environments, electronically controlled living spaces, which offer a technically perfected environment as a reaction to general needs - An enabled environment serving the user. Today, a urinal with a light barrier, for example, in the past, pissing without flushing.

A nice, new world; it does what you want it to.

On the surface, one tends to imagine a land of milk and honey; life simply becomes simpler. Electronics and mechanisms take care of annoying manual labor.

The refinement / pulverization of existence

A really intelligent ambience must not let its intelligence lead to the idiocy of its users. An extremely intelligent ambience is not necessarily dependent on technological aids. An electronically controlled ambience must not only lead to the routine facilitation of everyday life; it must also take areas of unexpected stimulus into consideration.

A simpler life in a more complex environment.

The goal is to design the environment's intelligence so that it is conducive to the user's intelligence. However, this also requires that this ambience integrate itself into the big picture, into broader contexts. In this sense, everyday processes are put into motion, obstacles are created, and resistances are set, all of which stimulate the user to think and act. A power failure — an example of a learning aid. Friction - a challenge to interact.

Hauptplatz (Main Square): Examples of STWST operations

Scraping off shoes onto the surface:

Previously described as the most beautiful square in Europe. Remodelling of the Hauptplatz in 1979; barriers and stairs are constructed; the square's expansive unity was destroyed by the organizational measures. The bumpy cobblestones, which provide friction, had to make way for frictionless stone slabs and useless steps. Because of the friction caused by this remodelling concept for the Hauptplatz in 1979, the Stadtwerkstatt went into public action for the first time.



Hauptplatz 1920

Scraping the comedian off onto the public:

To sound out the age of performance culture, Gerald Wilhelm's STWST-Theater makes a contemporary report on the commedia dell'arte and public life on the Hauptplatz.

Scraping art off onto the construction site of the underground garage:

In 1987, the Hauptplatz was dug up for an underground garage. Only a bunker from the Nazi era stood in the way. STWST staged a two-hour concert at the construction site, "Hochzeit der Bagger" ("Marriage of the Power Shovels"), which integrated the site's machinery and complementary audio installations (Ars. E. 1987).



Hauptplatz 1987

Scraping public's eye on shattering glass:

In 1990, the STWST congratulated the city of Linz on its 500th anniversary: Before the eyes of the public, 4 metric tons of glass were dumped onto the square and shoveled back onto the bed cargo area by city workers. A glistening and clashing symphony of felicitations: "Broken glass brings luck".*



Hauptplatz 1990

Scraping the public against intelligent ambient traps: Prelude

"Interactive art" is made accessible to a wider public.

1) Opener

The Hauptplatz will be transformed into a type of intelligent ambience in which the audiences are the protagonists. Every entrance is designed in such a way so that the passer-by seems to step onto a stage when entering the square. Applause, a storm of camera flashbulbs, and calls of encouragement greet the visitor. On the square, he or she is automatically given the opportunity to make events happen. The individual could either be the lead actress or, in the next moment, a singer in a large chorus.

In this course, composed of electronic triggers of events, the visitor's involvement determines whether things happen to him or her, or whether he or she intentionally intervenes in the events and interacts with man and machine via control switches.

The scenario of the "Opener" is set up so that the "visitors" are encouraged to engage in audience participation.

2) Audience Participation

A laser beam defines the playing field in which the audience will go into action. As night falls, the playing field becomes more and more visible. Stadtwerkstatt is in charge of this project, the organizational, technical and artistic aspects.

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* Trans. note: The title of this work is a saying in German that has no correlation in English.