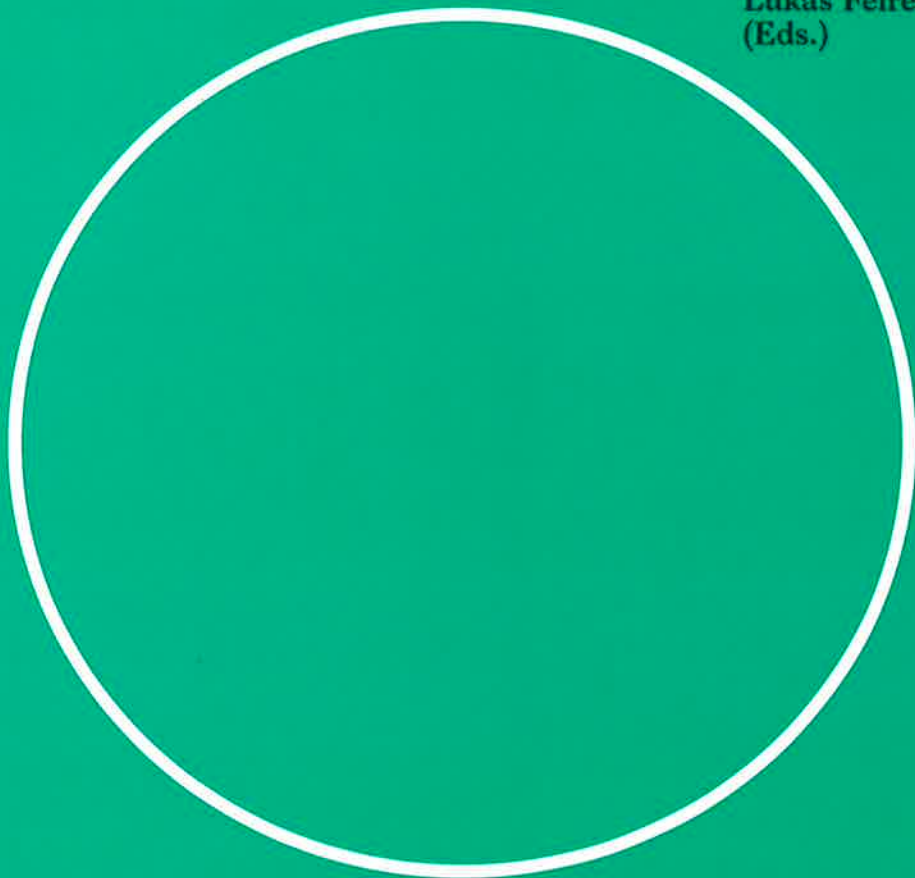


PUBLIC ACTION

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Lukas Feireiss
(Eds.)



Social
Design
—
Arts as
Urban
Innovation

edition: 'Angewandte Birkhäuser

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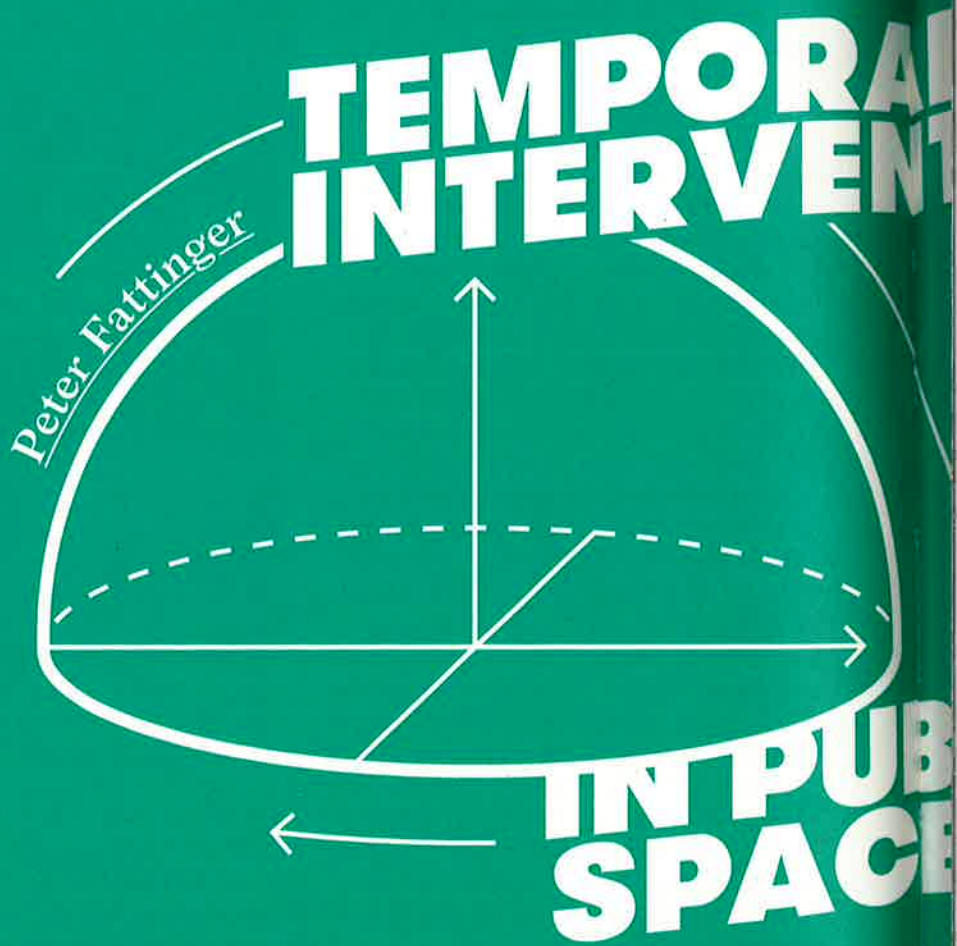
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By means of a selection of 4 temporary urban interventions, which we realized in the last couple of years, we would like to illustrate our approach of working in and with public space.

As experiments in public space, our installations aim to activate it, to facilitate urban appropriation and to improve the relationship between social and spatial matters.

Temporary interventions have the great advantage that more experimentation is possible than in the corset of permanence. The limited time-frame allows not only a more daring and lighter construction, but also a more intense and concentrated activity in and around the installation. Through our projects we try to change the perspective of existing places and question burned-in modes of perception. This way, new possibilities can be tested and discussed, and in the best case, a future development process can get started within a neighborhood district.

Depending on the definition of the project, we generally start with an intense examination of the site and its societal structures. We see public space as an intersection of social action. Where are the potentials and where are the shortcomings of a certain place? And what is needed to activate or respectively ease them?

For us, the attempt to analyze a site from as many diverse angles as possible is essential. Therefore we try to collaborate with various specialists from local institutions, from opinion leaders and decision makers to researchers of various disciplines, as well as neighboring residents who act as 'experts of the everyday'. Working together with artists is a particular source of inspiration for us, to the extent that within our projects we often invite guest-artists for a residency stay. Over a certain period from one

week up to several weeks, they live and work on site, within our spatial installation, where they develop artistic projects and strategies from site-specific and social interventions to participative concepts.

Within our projects we expand the traditional role of the architect as service provider by acting in most cases not only as designers, but also as initiators, fundraisers, constructors, program



ADD ON Overview
Photo: Michael Strasser

curators, general organizers and caretakers of these projects. In contrast to drop-sculptures, which can be left to their own devices, our interventions require intense care, communication and intermediation on site. Therefore with most of our projects we have a big team working and also living within the temporary installation, organizing workshops and events, supporting the artists in residence, cleaning and maintaining the constructions, giving advice at the info-kiosk, and running the canteen. The kitchen, in fact, always proved to be the best area for communication.

The appearance of our installations, which is very often quite emblematic, should at first hand evoke curiosity in

order to let the visitors engage with the new situation, in a second step. Thereby we understand architecture as a medium for creating so called 'spaces of possibility' which bring about specific social situations and spark communicative encounters.

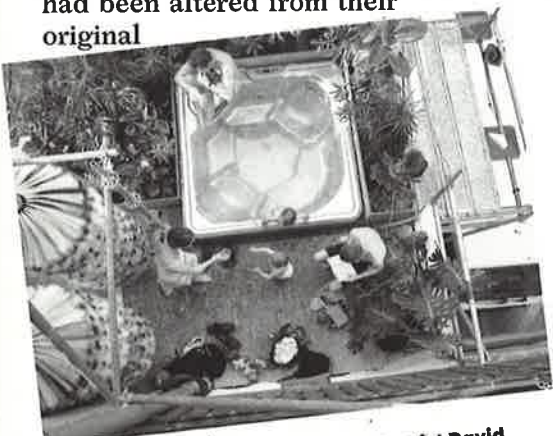
ADD ON. 20 HÖHENMETER, VIENNA (A), 2005

**A PROJECT BY PETER FATTINGER,
VERONIKA ORSO AND
MICHAEL RIEPER**

With the project ADD ON we wanted to add a vertical extension to public space, a collage of different functions of everyday life, stacked above each other.

ADD ON was realized at Wallensteinplatz, an urban square in the 20th district of Vienna and was funded—in large part—by KÖR, the public art fund for the city of Vienna, which has only recently been established.

The basic structure of 'add on' consisted of a scaffolding structure reaching up to twenty meters in height, in which specially-made space modules interlocked with found objects, which had been altered from their original



**ADD ON whirlpool
"carwash", an installation by guest artist David
Moises polished the skin of the visitors on their way
to the whirlpool
Photo: Peter Fattinger**

purpose. As a generally accessible environment, the structure let visitors explore new worlds, offering a fascinating variety of perspectives on everyday life, our surroundings, as well as the location of the platform itself. Crisscrossing the structure, guests could make use of very different spaces such as a public whirlpool, overhanging workplaces equipped with the internet, a table-soccer game, a self-service canteen with an attached garden 10 meters in height, a soft-cushioned recreation-area, a rooftop terrace with a telescope and many more.

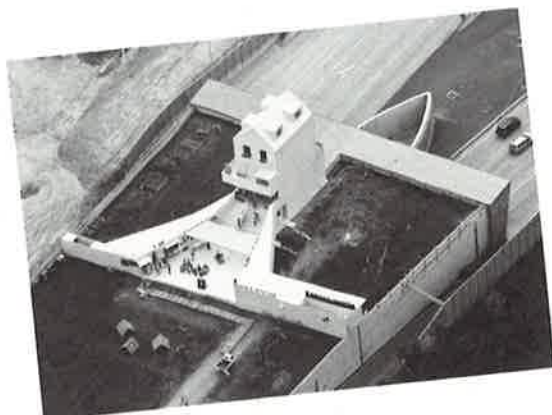
For 6 weeks, ADD ON hosted a dense program of daily workshops, lectures, performances and concerts. Artists in residence were invited to live and work on site, in an additional structure designed and built by students of the design-build studio, which we run at Vienna University of Technology. The invited artists were undertaking interventions especially related to the installation, the square and the neighborhood.

BELLEVUE. THE YELLOW HOUSE, LINZ (A), 2009

**A PROJECT BY PETER FATTINGER,
VERONIKA ORSO AND
MICHAEL RIEPER**

For the *European Capital of Culture Linz 09*, we initiated and realized a temporary intervention in the periphery of the city. We chose not to intervene in the inner city of Linz, but to take action in a suburb, where people live who do not count among the typical visitors of a museum, a theater, an opera or a Capital of Culture.

We came up with a specific site, which recently went through a massive transformation: the two districts BinderMichl and Spallerhoffor were



BELLEVUE
a house at the rim of the autobahn
Photo: Stadtplanung Linz / Pertlwieser



BELLEVUE Dancefloor
legendary local DJ Fatsy invited a bunch of his
former groupies from the 60s to the yellow house.
Photo: Peter Fattinger

for a long time—until 2005, in fact—divided by one of Austria's most frequented highway sections which connects Linz with all the other major cities of the country. After a long process of negotiations and demonstrations by the neighboring residents, the city decided to enclose this highway section and create a landscaped park on top of it. Although the newly created park provided a vast space for different activities, an inviting place offering the opportunity for an encounter and interaction was still missing. It is precisely at this point where BELLEVUE positioned itself, attempting to create a space to attract neighboring residents to come out into the

public to participate and challenge their social satisfaction.

Amidst the constructed idyllic scene of the park we erected a temporary structure: Bellevue, a house at the rim of the highway. On one side, a view of the never-sleeping highway emerged; on the other a sweeping view of the park. Reflecting the proportions of the surrounding residential buildings, this structure embodied a protective shell for the functions it hosted: housing quarters for guest artists, an info kiosk, a cafeteria with a terrace, a bicycle rental center, working space, exhibition space, a media room, a library, and a public stage. In total the multi-story wooden frame construction, covered with yellow painted chipboards, provided over 400 m² of usable space to its visitors.

For three months, daily events turned Bellevue into a hub of social and artistic interaction that invited residents, passersby, and other interested parties to see, communicate, and act—a stage that was modelling and changing perspectives on the existent. Residents, scholars, and artists came together to develop projects



BELLEVUE wedding
Guda Koster, a Dutch textile artist became a wedding planner and arranged a gorgeous marriage of the two once-separated neighborhoods. Therefore she cast a girl from Bindermichl and a guy from Spallerhof, who did not know each other before. The garments, especially tailored by Guda Koster from a thick yellow felt, were based on traditional Upper Austrian wedding costumes.
Photo: eSel/Lorenz Seidler

and to explore the culture and features of the neighboring districts. Everyday-phenomena in the Bindermichl and Spallerhof districts of Linz were thematized and reflected upon in a diversified way; through producing, documenting, cooking, dancing, gardening, writing, listening, and watching. Bellevue was transformed into a collective experience that linked history with the present and culture with everyday life.

After 3 months Bellevue was already history. While its physical presence may have disappeared at the end of the project, the memories and emotionality of the place still remain. In memoriam of the project the city of Linz, by decision of the council, named the landscaped park "Bellevue Park" in 2010 and invited us to do a follow-up project in the same districts for 2011, which we finally named DEJA-VU.

The impressive roundabout, which connects one of the most frequented autobahn-sections of Austria with the nearby urban districts Bindermichl and Spallerhof, makes up the center of the landscape park on top of the highway, which had already been the site of the BELLEVUE project two years before. Usually not open to the public, the green island within the roundabout was made accessible by a temporary bridge of scaffolding. An expanding, modular installation, made up of more than 7000 crates, provided the basic spatial infrastructure of Déjà-vu and served as a temporary



DEJA-VU overview
Photo: Peter Fattinger

DEJA-VU, LINZ (A), 2011

**A PROJECT BY PETER FATTINGER
AND VERONIKA ORSO**

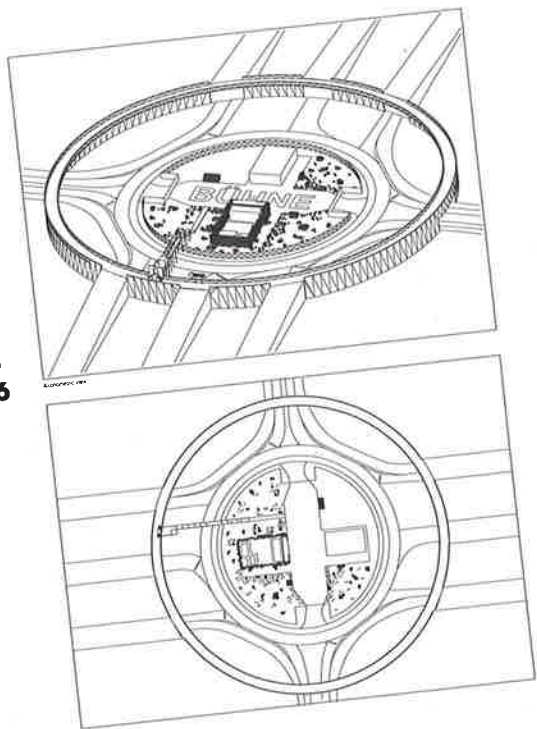
From July 1st until July 17th 2011 the roundabout Muldenstrasse, above the Mühlkreisautobahn in Linz, became the venue for a temporary festival of art and culture.



DEJA-VU
Public workshop on urban upcycling and micro-farming held at DEJA-VU
Photo: Peter Fattinger

supply-unit in the middle of the traffic-island. It featured stage, workshop and storage facilities as well as a canteen. 500 additional crates served as building-blocks for the further altering of functional elements, which were set up for the daily changing program; grandstand, platform, sun-lounger, catwalk, food bank, etc. The building-blocks were in constant modification. Teenagers and kids in particular made use of the offer to continue the building process, and erected bold constructions.

For the duration of 17 days, a diverse program transformed the traffic island into a circular arena for artistic



DEJA-VU
Axonometric and top view

and social interaction. A temporary stage for local as well as international cultural institutions and guest-artists, offering public workshops, film-screenings, performances, concerts and exhibitions. Each invited artist or institution organized one day in particular and referred the interaction to the location itself.

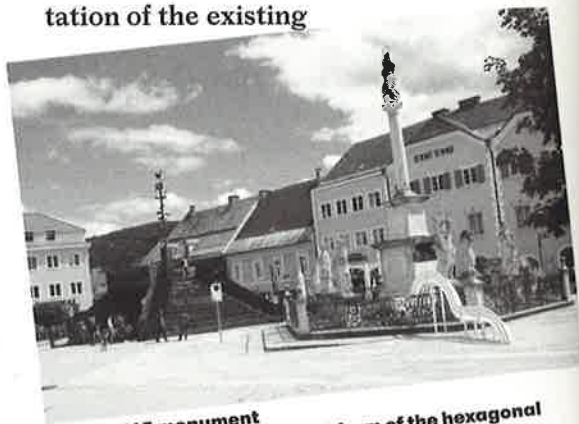
REGIONALE XII, MURAU (A), 2012

**A PROJECT BY PETER FATTINGER
AND VERONIKA ORSO**

From June 22nd to July 22nd 2012, the Styrian region around the town of Murau was the location and host of the biennial Austrian festival of contemporary art, Regionale. We were invited to design and develop the festival-center and decided to situate it in Murau's main square, Schillerplatz. Although in

its normal state Schillerplatz is dominated by traffic and parked cars, which are overshadowed only by a baroque Marian column, the square was made car-free at our request for the period of the festival and it was therefore possible to experience and use it in a completely new way. The festival-center acted not only as an information centre, but also as a landmark, stage and grandstand, as an observation deck and supply unit in a public space: a monument of limited time with added value.

For the duration of the festival the existing baroque column was given a temporary opposite. As a reinterpretation of the existing



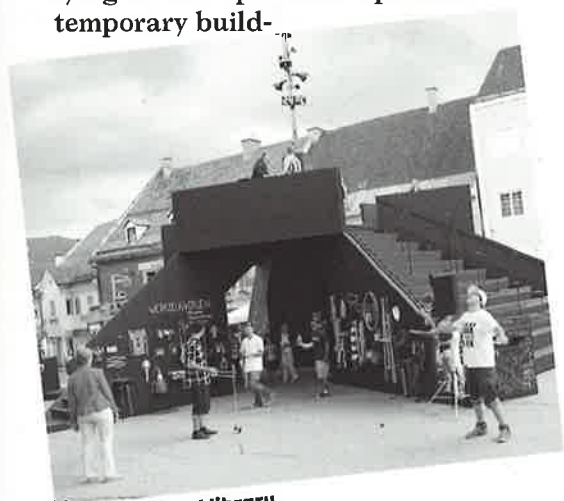
REGIONALE monument
Inspired by the dimension and form of the hexagonal historical monument, the installation occupied the lower part of the temporary car-free square.
Photo: Peter Fattinger



REGIONALE chalkdrawings
The content of the blackboard-surface of the installation changed on a daily basis.
Photo: Peter Fattinger

memorial, the intervention extended the square with different functions at different levels and invited residents, passers-by and festival-guests to watch, communicate and act.

Big steps for walking, sitting or lying on led up to the top of the temporary build-



REGIONALE tool library
Photo: Peter Fattinger

Sitting on the spacious steps of the installation, visitors were able to browse through an open-air library offering publications from participating artists as well as illustrated books about the region. A comprehensive tool library, providing items ranging from badminton rackets and picnic blankets to a ping-pong table and a mobile coal grill, found its place on two other walls of the installation and invited visitors to experience the potentials of the car-free Schillerplatz.

ing and made the intervention literally open and accessible on all sides. The entire construction of the festival-center, made of cross-laminated timber, was coated with black paint and served as a giant, three-dimensional blackboard. Chalk was issued at various points of the installation. Simple children's drawings were as warmly received as messages of all kinds.

Inside, the stairway-monument gave room to an info-kiosk and a showroom where screens and information boards gave insights into the different projects of the festival. A district plan rounded off the range of information in the showroom. Another wall of the sculpture housed a 24-hour shop, offering local souvenirs of all kinds, useful everyday goods, as well as fresh regional food and snacks through a vending machine.