



Abwehr-Performance-Festival

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PRESS RELEASE

Six performances, presented by nine international artists, intervene with the public space. Poetically, polemically, politically, provoking. With performances by Nevin Aladag, Nezaket Ekici, Shahram Entekhabi mit Becky Ofek, Anny und Sibel Öztürk, Duo Stoll & Wachall, and Ona Tav.

The public performance festival "Abwehr" (defense) takes place on Saturday and Sunday, August 25th and 26th, nearby the former border watchtower at the park Schlesischer Busch, between Kreuzberg and Treptow. During two afternoons, from 2 pm to 7 pm, nine international artists present their performances in public space. The festival is open to the public, with free admission and ends on August 26th at 7 pm with a public discussion in presence of the artists involved (at the hall of the Kunstfabrik at Flutgraben).

Defense you can find on different levels, in biological, psychological, socio-political and cross-societal processes. On the biological level, defense functions as immune system while on the socio-political level you will find it in military, social marginalisation, laws, or borders. Defense responds to all kind of threats, no matter if they are real or just assumed. The term "defense" structures a wide range of social discourses covering as different topics as European borders, hackers and bootleggers, "islamistic terror", or the bird flue. Defense describes the concrete physical gesture of both, the individual person and abstract, law-constituting measures. On the social level, defense particularly deals with migration, expressing itself in xenophobia, social and political marginalisation, and criminalisation.

As gesture or action being bound in space and time, performance is the adequate medium for discussing strategies of defense, for displaying or imitating, satirising or condensing them. The immediate impact of direct confrontation with the audience allows not only for the re-staging of a conflict but also for an open view towards alternative options.

The festival takes place at the former border strip "Schlesischer Busch". So history and the direct reference to the Berlin Wall will be part of it. 17 years after its coming-down, the Berlin Wall is regarded as a symbol of a defense turned into stones, a constructed stronghold against the "imperialistic West", as an utmost station in a series of defensive measures which first and foremost were directed against the own citizens. As symbolic sculpture the watchtower forms a spatial point of reference and becomes hub and turning-point for the performances.

A project by Shahram Entekhabi and Svenja Moor, in co-operation with the Kunstfabrik am Flutgraben e.V. and with the friendly support of the Regierender Bürgermeister von Berlin, Senatskanzlei – Kulturelle Angelegenheiten



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