

steffi weismann

audioperformances and urban interventions

(Selection 2003-2010)



Isn't it nice to have a computer that will talk to you?

That was the beginning of our acquaintance.

Calling Victoria

live interview/video performance with speech recognition software by Steffi Weismann
performed in different versions (2003-2010)

Calling Victoria is a personal conversation between Steffi Weismann and Victoria, the artificial voice of a language synthesis programme. In the course of the dialogues, Victoria, with her talent for individual life advice and linguistic training, becomes an increasingly real interlocutor. It is hard for the audience to tell to what extent the artificial intelligence of a computer actually develops a “life of its own” here and where human manipulation begins.



Takeaway: *Haste Töne*

an interactive snack bar by Steffi Weismann & Georg Klein

Am Schlossplatz, sonambiente – internationales Festival für Hören und Sehen 2006

Since its invention, the snack van has been an expression of urban life. People stand together consuming beer and sausages, and sometimes chat for a brief moment. With their installation, Georg Klein and Steffi Weismann transform this transitory site of communication into an artistically compressed situation. If someone walks along the pavement through the sensor area a woman's voice coming from a loudspeaker addresses him or her in a Berlin accent. The closer the visitors approach, the more intimate the voice becomes. It is the voice of Tina Volkhardt, owner of the snack van. She comments on the situation at Schlossplatz in Berlin, the demolition of the 'Palast der Republik' and the remodelling of the former GDR Council of State building to house a European business school. She also addresses the sounding and speaking snack bar as a rationally operating art object that requires no staff. The limits of interactive play are underlined here, not without self-irony.





Car Event

urban intervention by Steffi Weismann, Downtown Johannesburg

international art project KIN:BE:JOZI curated by Dorothee Kreutzfeld, South Africa 2007

Like most „white“ people Steffi Weismann dares to cross Downtown Johannesburg only when she is protected by a car. She constructed her own „Land Rover“ to make a personal comment on the issues of crime and fear in the tense situation of the inner city of Joburg and got a lot of humorous reactions.





Venture Doll

Performance and video with a robot doll as a shopping guide

by Steffi Weismann & Georg Klein, Los Angeles 2008

It is a phenomenon of our globalised world of commodities that the selection of products on offer seems to be growing increasingly diverse and yet increasingly similar. Faced with supermarket shelves, we find it ever harder to make choices. All of the goods promise a lot, and all of them try to stand out from the crowd, whether through their design, their price or, more recently, their added ecological and health benefits.

The project *Venture Doll* plays with the helplessness, desires and fears of buyers as well as with the promotional strategies of vendors. To this end, Steffi Weismann and Georg Klein have developed the talking robot doll *Savvy*: Via a scanner in its mouth, the robot can read barcodes, to which *Savvy* offers snappy and not always unambiguous advice. The *Savvy*™ advertising video with its documentation of the prototype in action in Los Angeles supermarkets promotes the robot doll as a shopping guide for the whole family: www.savvy-shopping.info.

Move Mountains

a suggestive exercise by Steffi Weismann (Basel 2009)

for solo performer, voice, kakao, sugar, butter, prepared table, mini-speaker, vibration-egg, recordings of brainwaves, bass shaker and wine glasses

awarded with the swiss performance prize „Sicht auf das Original“, Kunsthaus Baselland 2009, Switzerland

Move Mountains (Berge versetzen) is a wide-stretched magical trick. The performer shows how she affects materials with the power of her thoughts. Minimalistic changes are hearable and observable. The patience of the swiss audience was taxed but also rewarded.



LapStrap

Solo for voice and portable audio devices (Berlin 2010)

In *LapStrap* groupings of sound and speech are performed in loops with the idea of identity formations as swarm. “To lap” means to turn in circles and the solo creates a specific space-time experience. The title of the piece plays with the image of the instrument itself – a veritable carpenter's belt with audio equipment (microphones, signal processor, amplifiers, speakers) that is wearable and controlable directly on the body .





Sirkülasyon

for voices and portable audio devices (Istanbul 2010)

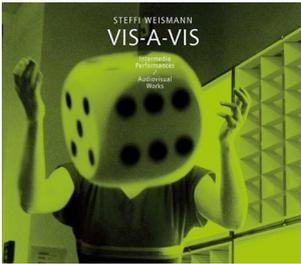
indoor version at the art space 5533 and outdoor version around Taksim

Sirkülasyon is the turkish version and development of *LapStrap* as a performative intervention in the city of Istanbul. Steffi Weismann collected voices and sounds from different areas of the city and condensed them to distinctive sound images that can be combined to create imaginary places. She interferes with this material and her voice in live situations. Using a microphone and live-loop-function she continues to add statements from passers-by and brings them in circulation. Therefore she constantly works with new layers of perception and shifting realities.

The performance is shaped by its striking visual character. The artist is "dressed up" as a moving sound sculpture with a grape of 10 loudspeakers in hudge plastic bottles on her back. Weismann is questioning with her performance her role of an artist as a service provider for the society, similar to the trash gatherers on the streets who play an important role for the city's recycling system. Indeed her action has a neo-dadaistic aspect.

CV Steffi Weismann

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Steffi Weismann, born in 1967 in Zurich, attended the the Zurich School of Design and studied costume and set design as well as experimental music and performance from 1989 to 1995 at the Berlin University of the Arts. She is working on audiovisual and spatial concepts in time based arts and is exploring the interactions between language, music and new communication media. Apart from works in the context of performance and visual art, she plays experimental music and fluxus concerts with the group *Die Maulwerker*. Since 2005 she is working with interactive elements in live-performances and installations in public space (MaxMSP or Arduino based) and realised several projects with the sound artist Georg Klein. Steffi Weismann received artist-residencies in Johannesburg (2007) and Los Angeles (2008) and a two-years grant for her artistic research from the Univerisity of Visual Arts in Braunschweig (Germany) where she is teaching in the fields of performance and sound art.

Awards/Grants:

kaskadenkondensator (space for performance) Basel, Switzerland (2003)
Nadine (media art centre) Brussels (2004)
Villa Aurora, Los Angeles (2008)
Swiss performance prize „Sicht auf das Original“ Kunstkredit Basel (2009)
Dorothea-Erxleben-Grant, Academy of Fine Arts Braunschweig (2009-2011)

Publication:

Steffi Weismann VIS-A-VIS Intermedia Performances / Audiovisual Works
Artist Monography with DVD, editors: Petra Reichensperger and Steffi Weismann, Verlag für moderne Kunst
Nürnberg 2009

Performances and Exhibitions (Selection):

QO2, Brussels (2011); TRANSATLANTISCHE IMPULSE, Akademie der Künste Berlin (2010);
INTERFICTION (interdisciplinary workshop symposium) Kassel (2010/2006); HÖRENSEHEN 2.0, Berlinische
Galerie Berlin (2009); GENERAL PUBLIC, Berlin (2009); MIGMA Performance-Festival Lucerne (2009);
TESLA im Podewils'schen Palais Berlin (2005/2006/2007); KIN:BE:JOZI Joubert Park Project,
Johannesburg, South-Africa (2007); SONAMBIENTE - internationales Festival für hören und sehen Berlin
(2006); ZKM Karlsruhe (2006); TRAMPOLINE - Media-Art-Festival Berlin (2004/2006); Museum of
Communication Berlin (2004); Swiss Institute Rome (2004); Goethe-Institute Buenos Aires (2004)