



Repertories of (in)discreetness

18 March 2015

5-10 pm

tranzit.ro/ București

Str. Gazelei nr. 44
cod 040514, sector 4, Bucharest

<http://ro.tranzit.org/>

Repertories of (in)discreetness – an artistic research project
18 March - 1 April 2015

Project initiated by: Tincuța Heinzl and Ioana Macrea-Toma

Artists: Irina Botea & Jon Dean, Tincuța Heinzl & Lasse Scherffig, Istvan Laszlo

Wednesday, 18 March 2015

5:30 pm

Round table: The Radio Free Europe Archives – between historiographical expression and artistic research

Participants: Irina Botea, Jon Dean, Daria Ghiu, Tincuța Heinzl, Istvan Laszlo, Ioana Macrea-Toma, Lasse Scherffig, Georg Trogemann.

7 pm

Sound performance: Maria Balabaș and Mihai Balabaș

8 pm

Opening of the exhibition

“Repertories of (in)discreetness” has its starting point in the archives of Radio Free Europe from the Open Society Archives in Budapest. It questions the act and mechanisms of archiving “the Other”, with a focus on the European “East”. The project discusses the ways in which information is collected and transferred, the ways in which the East has gained an epistemic body through refraction. Thus we would like to point out the relation between nature of the information, the production of knowledge and its reception.

Radio Free Europe is considered unique in the annals of international broadcasting: acting as surrogate domestic broadcaster for the nations under Communism. It also relied on local official media and informal news in order to broadcast what was considered objective information. Due to their wish to outline an exhaustive portrait of the world behind the Iron Curtain, Radio Free Europe Archives give way to a series of questions. What did the archives not capture and what rests uncatalogued and unverified? And, if something was indeed captured, how was it transformed through archiving? What parts of this composite portrait sketched by Radio Free Europe still survive today? And is this portrait only a mirror image resulting from the media war between East and West? By raising these questions, our project looks to divert and to put into a sensible perspective the act of collecting, organizing and using information, in order to question the nature of the information itself.

The project gathers artists and curators from different corners of the world, active both internationally and locally, and who are defined by mobility and the fact of being, eventually, “between” the two former political blocks. This, of course, feeds into the project a fresh perspective on the old debate about “East” and “West”, about the “Other” in general. It is the voice and the concept of a generation that has reached the maturity to look critically both towards the East and the West.

Partners: Goethe-Institut Bucharest, The International Visegrad Fund, Open Society Archives Budapest, Asociația 2580 Cluj, Radio România Archives, LAB 3 - Academy of Media Arts Cologne, Fortepan Budapest

Media partner: Observator Cultural

Thanks to: National Dance Centre Bucharest, Eduard Constantin, Ferenc’s Bar, Spatiul Platforma

ERSTE Foundation is the main partner of tranzit.ro.

WORKS



GENERAL MOOD: Irina Botea & Jon Dean

General Mood is a film that embodies a performative archive through exploring the process of categorization and anecdotal information gathering that constitutes much of the Radio Free Europe archive. Filmed on location in Budapest, fragments of original text create a fractured narrative of meta-archival sources that are materialized through the process of following the trail of Radio Free Europe, an institution sponsored by the CIA until 1971. The category of ‘General Mood’ is explored through questioning the structure and content of research methodologies designed to create ‘national pictures’.



GHOST VEIL: Istvan Laszlo

Ghost Veil is a project that functions as a time machine. It creates a temporal loop, which becomes visible by activating a carousel slide projector. The starting point is a selection of photographs from The Open Society Archives (OSA) Budapest, all taken in the second half of the 20th century Eastern Europe. The images were digitally manipulated and finally printed back on celluloid. By showing the re-worked old pictures in an analogue way, an *authentication* is effectuated. Through this technical reversal, the documentation of the past becomes an investigation of the present. New meanings are conferred by the intervention that hides monuments and public sculptures. Some of these represent socio-political ideologies, some have purely decorative roles. The changes draw attention to the absurdity or necessity of staging and propagating by any means in order to manipulate mass populations. At the same time, the interventions highlight other elements of the original pictures and awaken a curiosity to find and understand what it is missing or hidden. Thus, the project can become an interactive one, and ultimately invites us to search online through the archives in order to learn about the original images and their contexts.



SIGNAL TO NOISE: Tincuta Heinzl & Lasse Scherffig

„Signal to Noise” is a radio installation dealing with the concreteness of ideological discourses and the imaginary of the “Other”. The minimal and non-visual set-up will be composed of two radio stations using the same frequency which intersect and neutralize into a virtual line crossing the space of the exhibition. By broadcasting simultaneously Radio Free Europe and Radio Romania re-worked programs running back then, the two transmissions will interfere and effectively jam each other. It is only when someone carrying mobile radios or receivers will come across the middle line formed by the two transmissions, that he/she will break the neutral point and it will become possible to hear fragments from of one of the two broadcasts. It is like being cached between two Logos (or two ideological positions), where beyond words, the ideological and media wars embody beings. Far from being historical and contextual dated, the fluidity of radio (or “Hertzian”) space continues to be relevant today, in the age of wireless communication and coded information. Drawing invisible frontiers, building up on coded languages, are arsenals of producing and reiterating the “Other”.

BIOGRAPHIES

MARIA BALABAS. Maria Balabaş is a musician and a journalist. She moderates the broadcasting program called *Dimineața crossover* on the National Cultural Radio and created projects dedicated to new forms of radiophonic creation (The Sonorous Generation). In 2014 she was nominated for Prix Europa (Berlin) with the documentary *Maria Tănase - Urban Soundtrack For A Diva*. She creates installations and performative shows inspired by the artistic interest for the auditive memory specific to field recordings.

MIHAI BALABAS. Mihai Balabas is a multi-instrumentalist active both in symphonic area and in underground-independent scene. He collaborates with groups such as Trei Parale (old Romanian music), Abis (trip hop) and Bucium (ethno-rock), with artists such as Nik Bartsch (CH), Mircea Florian, Electric Brother, Norzeatic, Catalin Milea, Marcus Beuter (DE).

IRINA BOTEA. Irina Botea is a visual artist and an educator. Through her artistic methodology of combining reenactment strategies, simulated auditions, elements of direct cinema and cinéma vérité she is consistently questioning dominant socio-political ideas and centralizing human agency as a vehicle for meaning. Recent exhibition venues include: Rotterdam International Film Festival, Venice Biennial, NY New Museum, National Gallery Jeu de Paume, Reina Sofia, MNAC, Pompidou Center.

JON DEAN. Jon Dean has been working in the overlapping fields of community arts, education and applied social science for over twenty years in both England and Romania; initiating and developing diverse cultural projects through embedding differentiated and negotiated participatory strategies designed to place participants at the very core of artistic expression, learning and cultural policy.

DARIA GHIU. Daria Ghiu has just completed a PhD in Art History and Theory at the University of Arts in Bucharest about the history of the Romanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. She is an art critic, curator and a journalist at the Romanian Public Cultural Radio, where she focuses on the contemporary art scene - local and international. Between 2010 and 2013 she was a doctoral fellow at the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) in Zürich.

TINCUTA HEINZEL. Tincuta Heinzl is an artist, designer and curator, member of Paidia Institute (Cologne, Germany) and of the 2580 Association (Cluj, Romania). Following visual arts, design and cultural anthropology studies in Cluj (Romania), Tincuta Heinzl completed in 2012 her PhD in aesthetics and arts sciences at Paris 1 University (France) with a thesis on the foundations of interactive textiles aesthetics. She initiated, curated and/or coordinated several projects, such as “Artists in Industry” (Bucharest, 2011-2013) and “Haptosonics” (Oslo, 2013). As an editor, she published “Art, Space and Memory in the Digital Era” at Paidia Publishing House (Bucharest, 2010) and coordinated Studia Philosophia’s issue on the “Phenomenology of Digital Technology” (no.3/2010).

IOANA MACREA- TOMA. Ioana Macrea-Toma is a research archivist at the Open Society Archives at Central European University in Budapest. She holds a MA in History from C.E.U. and a PhD in comparative literature from Universite d’Artois (France) and Babes-Bolyai University (Romania). She wrote a book about the literary field in communist Romania (Privilighentsia, Cluj; 2009) and is currently working on a book about Radio Free Europe and informational systems during the Cold War.

ISTVAN LASZLO. Istvan Laszlo turns the focus on the subversive possibilities that lie in various forms of visual communication by making works that can and in many cases interact with real-life situations. Using different pre-existing formats like still images, moving pictures, physical and digital objects, his projects involve image and video interventions and in some cases extreme time-stretching to induce paradoxical layers of meaning.

LASSE SCHERFFIG. Lasse Scherffig is an artist and scientist working at the intersection between art, science and technology. His art projects deal with the global infrastructures of communication and control, and the human-machine relationship. He exhibited at transmediale Berlin (2012), Translife Triennial Beijing (2011), ISEA2010_RUHR (2010), and the ZKM (2004-2006), etc.

GEORG TROGEMANN. Prof. Dr. Georg Trogemann is founder and head of lab3 at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. After working as carpenter he studied Computer Science and Mathematics at the University of Erlangen. He did theoretical research in the field of supercomputing and finished a dissertation on performance evaluation of massively parallel machines. Since 1994 he is professor for Experimental Informatics at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne and author of the book *CodeArt* (2005) and editor of *Computing in Russia - The History of Computer Devices and Information Technology revealed*.