

ENTER: Staff Only

Guided tours: "expeditions"

for: RE_public. Zur Wahrnehmung des Öffentlichen als Öffentliches, Grazer Kunstverein at the EXPO Hanover/Germany 2000

and: *Arbeiten für den herbst*, RE_public, Grazer Kunstverein im steirischen herbst, Graz/Austria 2000

The guided-tour form also appears in a piece I did for EXPO 2000, the World Exhibition in Hanover. The event *RE_public* wanted to examine the concept of public space. Every day a different artist would do an intervention related to this theme (participating artists were Rirkrit Tirvanija, Christine Hill, John Bock, Jeremy Deller to name but a few).

Atelier Van Lieshout provided tents which served as a base camp. I invited the public to take part in my piece *ENTER: Staff Only* where they plunged into the reality of working behind the machinery of pleasure. I gave the guided tour the ironic name of *Expeditions in search of hidden cultures*. Within the first months of opening, several scandals regarding bad working conditions at the EXPO had been reported in the news. Especially the foreign workers were getting extremely bad wages, despite one of the EXPO's themes being paradoxically 'the future of work.'

The employees worked either out of sight or were simply not seen by the visitors. We went to find them behind the façades at their respective places of work and spoke to them about their tasks. For example, the EXPO mascot, Twipsy, took off her animal head and spoke of the heat in the costume, from being kicked by the visitors and finally from her impending unemployment, because the EXPO visitors didn't like Twipsy. Our visit to a woman employed in the complaints bureau made clear how important it was not to let negative details leak to the public. Thus I had to get special permission for my project as questioning of the public and the EXPO employees was forbidden.

