

A Piece of Austria's Best. (Made in USA)

The installation points out the fictive character of history and the role of the media in the imagination of historical events. The starting point of my work is one of the main media-events of the 20th century, the world-wide successful musical film "The Sound of Music" (1964). This film boosts the tourism in Salzburg, because many locations have been there, and on the other hand is only known by a few people, even when it marks Austria's Image abroad until today.

A wall painting in pale colours shows the US-flag in which the Austrian flag is integrated in bright colours, marks the appropriation and simultaneous construction of a site- and timeless fairyland with unspoiled nature and singing inhabitants.

Supported by a slide-projection one can hear an American and an Austrian man speak alternately about their job as a tour guide of the "Sound of Music Tours". The statements of the two guides show different working methods and interpretation of history as well as different media socialisation. Filmstills of "The Sound of Music" and its counterpart the german-austrian "Heimatfilm" "Die Trapp Familie" (1956) underlines these cultural gaps further. The installation shows how much history depends on interpretations, interests and media-systems.

Installation with sound, wall painting, photographs and slide projection, 2002

Geschichte(n), (hi/story), Kunstverein Salzburg, 2002



installation views Kunstverein Salzburg 2002:
wall painting, loud speakers with sound pieces,
slide projection and film stills

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Episode II: A Bus Tour through the Touristic Scenarios of „The Sound of Music“

Based on the installation at the Kunstverein Salzburg a unique bus tour was carried out as a contribution to the exhibition Trichtlinnburg. It adapted the form of a typical Sound of Music Sightseeing Tour with the aim to take a look behind the scenarios of the tourism industry. The ride in a Sound of Music bus with specialized guides allowed the connection of a critical perspective on this myth, its characteristics and its marketing in conjunction with the „original“ tour experience. „The Sound of Music“ is a prime example of the phenomenon of „imaginary geography“. The tourists who do not travel in real geographical and political areas, but in „True Fictions“, find the staged dream world of the film confirmed from reality. So the „Sound of Music City“ adjusted also the offer to the foreign pictures for the guests from the U.S. and other Hollywood inspired countries – Salzburg staged in accordance with the medial fiction and avoids confrontation of visitors with its actual history.



Bus tour through the touristic scenarios of „The Sound of Music“: Leopoldskron Castle together with an Austrian and American guide (top), participants while boarding and in the bus, „Gazebo“ in the Hellbrunn palace garden, Café at the Mondsee

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Guided bus tour with specialists, 2005

Trichtlinnburg, Salzburg/Maastricht/Tallinn, public space, Salzburger Land, 2005

