

«52°55'N, 13°37'E TO 43°55'N, 20°30'E»

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Starting Port: Uferstudios (52° 55' N, 13° 37' E), the familiar spot for the majority of the group. Thirteen bodies mostly stranger to each other but destined to share two hours of their lives. The headset, connected to GPS, was placed tight on my ears and soon poured unfamiliar machinery sounds along with a description of Spomenik, a man-made object commemorating the resistance against fascism in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the brutality and struggles during the People's Liberation War. As we strolled down a path located only 5 minutes from Uferstudios and yet hidden enough that I have never set foot in it in 4 years of my Berlin life, I couldn't help but wonder if the sounds that were landing on my ears came from the headset or from the actual surroundings. Is the sound coming from a space that holds Spomenik since 1960–80, or from the space across which my body is currently moving? That was how Christina Ciupke and Darko Dragičević's choreography of moving space hooked onto me. We were walking for two hours, destination unknown. The scenery was made of two distinct layers: a tangible place in which my body was moving, and an auditory landscape which has been traversed by the artists themselves. The two landscapes formed an elastic distance that shifts constantly during the performance. The audio files of the first two Spomenik sites focused mainly on exterior descriptions of the monuments, their historical value, and their surroundings. As the *given data* accumulated in my body, the group had reached a basketball court, no different from the kind that can be found on every corner of a building complex. There, a few teenagers were bouncing the ball in radiant sunlight. Their sweaty voices merged in the background of Christina's voice which dominated my senses, explaining the history of the concentration camp around the monuments. As my brain organically illustrated the ruins from the camp site from audio files, my eyes were witnessing the kids with basketballs chasing one another. This ironical superimposition eliminated the thin line between the spaces. Before I had the chance to savor this sensation of discordance, the group was already set back in motion, succumbing to the pace of urban reality; straight forward, turn left, cross a traffic signal. Soon I realized that thirteen bodies started to tread in a certain shared rhythm - not too fast nor too slow, occasionally glancing over the shoulder. I silently giggled at the thought of how human we are. By merely walking alongside one another, a group dynamic was being created. Each body bouncing ever so slightly as it steps on the ground, it already created a rhythm very different from that of other pedestrians passing us by. The third audio file started, signaling an expansion. It depicted not only the physical characteristics of the monuments and their surroundings, but also the physical posture of the speakers – Christina and Darko. The tone of their voices immediately made me imagine the space that

holds their bodies as they recorded the files – lying near the water where the sun hits, just as it did the basketball court a while ago. The intangible yet special intimacy between the two artists was transmitted into my body, piercing the thick layer of reality. There, the two sceneries were coexisting, expanding the tactile and visual territory of my body. I noticed Darko walking ahead of the group. He had his hands crossed behind his relaxed back, headset over his ears and was moving forward in a constant rhythm. His body was walking with me, breathing the same Berlin air. But at the same time, I could witness him re-entering that other space, the space of Spomenik, Serbia, (43° 55' N, 20° 30' E), surrounded by water and sun. I walked on the scenery, where I've never been. At that moment, I felt like that I could see the gaze of Darko from his back. The piece was designed to allow two different spaces to co-exist in time through the synesthesia. The auditory experience created a space for the imagination to enhance and recharge the available sensorial elements. For our bodies are wired to imagine the unknown. For our bodies are designed to empathize. Two weeks after the Audio Walk, I could barely remember the people's faces who walked along side of me during these two hours. However, when I cross a random street corner in Berlin, sceneries from former Yugoslavia, where I have never visited, and the walking rhythm of that day, reappear as if out of the blue. This makes me giggle silently. How human we are.



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SPOMENIK»
CHRISTINA CIUPKE/
DARKO DRAGIČEVIĆ:

AUDIOWALK



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