APPARA-TUS BERLIN

INTERACTIVE PERFORMATIVE ACTION

FREE ENTRY
Saturday 9th November. 12 pm and 4.30 pm

More information at:
elbornculturaimemoria.barcelona.cat

BERLIN / BARCELONA
WALL PARADIGM
1989-**2019** / 1961-**2021**

Ajuntament de **Barcelona**

EL BORN CCM

APPARATUS BERLIN

To agree to disagree. Where are we now —in Berlin, Barcelona, Europe or the world— 30 years after the fall of the Berlin wall?

Rimini Protokoll theatre creatives, Helgard Haug and Daniel Wetzel, discovered, in the Deutschlandradio Berlin archive, some 60 tapes from the winter of 1963-1964, which documented the "special VHF service of the RIAS for issuing passes". It was a 13-hour radio programme broadcast on weekdays which kept track of and documented in detail, the so-called "border pass agreement", which, after a 28 month-long ban on all type of contact, allowed the citizens of West Berlin to visit family members in East Berlin.

The "border pass agreement" was an offer made by the deputy prime minister of the RDA, Alexander Abusch, to the mayor of Berlin, Willy Brandt, which allowed the inhabitants of West Berlin temporary visits to the eastern part of the city at Christmas and New Year. Owing to Bonn's policy of not recognising the RDA, any pact with the slightest hint of being interstate was seen as taboo. At best, an agreement of a "technical nature" could be reached.

These documents are of particular importance because they demonstrate the relationship between the major policies (the first attempts of a rapprochement between East and West) and their immediate and specific impact on the life of the people (if they were allowed take a chicken or a video camera with them, how they dealt with the wait, the degree of kinship required to be able to make a visit...). "Apparatus Berlin", therefore, is a magnificent audio on contemporary history that describes the border pass agreement and presents a complex vision of a stage in Berlin's history when the first glimmers of hope after the impact that had caused the division can be seen, and in which the image of a hard enemy is soon put into perspective. The sound documents embody hope, but at the same time they speak of the madness of bureaucracy and the misanthropy of systems created by man.

"Apparat Herz", named after the broadcaster Peter Herz, who took all the listeners' questions, centres on the apparently confidential conversation between Peter Herz and the listener. It provides no information on the historical context, it wanders off the subject and it does not clarify the material before taking its effect on the listener.

"Apparatus Berlin", for its part, is presented as a construct between the two segments of a city separated by the wall, and which creates technical solutions for passing from one side to the other. The crossing points are organised, despite the disparity of opinions (to agree to disagree). The general procedures and the resulting paradoxical difficulties are at the forefront. "Apparatus Berlin" deals with the provisional set-up for enabling the short-term micro-reunification in the living rooms of Berlin and the fragility of the organisational framework.

Three decades after the fall of the Berlin wall, on 9th November 2019 "Apparatus Berlin" will become an experiment, in El Born CCM Barcelona. There, a series of questions will be formulated: how do these telephone calls sound thirty years after the fall of the wall, from an apparent distance? What is the relationship between the individual and the state, here, and today? How much pain is there in nostalgia? And how do the people of Barcelona feel about their encounter with this work of radio which is broadcast in Catalan and Spanish by seven "agents"? Which walls and political barriers do we live with today, in spite of the Berlin wall now being consigned to history?

Stefan Kaegi, Helgard Haug and Daniel Wetzel
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