

BERLIN

8. - 10. Aug.



BELGRADE

26. - 28. Sept.

Press Release

Berlin, June 2014

B_Tour Berlin and B_Tour Belgrade 2014

B_Tour Festival, an International Art Festival of Guided Tours, will be presented for the second time in Berlin between August 8 and 10, 2014. This year, B_Tour Berlin is accompanied by a younger Serbian sister in Belgrade between the 26th and the 28th of September. During B_Tour Festival, local and international artists from Europe, Russia, Israel and Australia will show 30 artistic guided tours in different locations of the Serbian and German capitals.

B_Tour Festival features tours that examine with public space, civil participation and urban social life in general. B_Tours are either led personally by the artist or employ an audio file, an instructive text or a variety of mapping systems. By using this hybrid form of art, B_Tours create a framework enabling the festival visitor to get to know their city from a different perspective and be inspired by their everyday surroundings. By utilizing conventional communication devices, GPS and audio devices, B_Tours interact with our mobile and digital urban way of life.

Mitte, Wedding, Neukölln, Charlottenburg, Friedrichshain, Prenzlauer Berg and Kreuzberg are only some of the sites audience will be invited to tour during B_Tour Berlin. Or, to put the festival in numbers: 16 tours by 26 artists from 12 different countries at 18 different venues in the city.

By bringing artists, scientists, urban planners and architects together, B_Tour aims to investigate present needs of urban life and examine how these can be represented and answered.

For instance, in his tour *Schlafgänger*, Francois Lombarts (Netherlands) researches emergent hidden economies in Prenzlauer Berg which have surfaced as a result of rising rents. Other B_Tours, which employ technological devices, question the perception of time and space in urban environments. For example, *Verwisch die Spuren* by the artistic group LIGNA (Germany); *OpenCity - Berlin* by Andrew Brown (England) or *Strays* by Melissa Deerson (Australia) all challenge conventional perception of space by introducing either an alternative visual space, audio environment or digital narration. Another dominant theme which is discussed in this year's edition is the interweaving of private and public spaces in urban environments and the blurred boundaries between them. The tours: *Draußen schlafen ist eine Kunst* by Uwe Tobias/querstadtein (Germany) and *A day in the life of...* by Alkistis Thomidou, Fotini Lazaridou-Hatzigoga, Martin Michette, Tinatin Gurgenidze (Greece and Germany) bring interiors outside and the exterior into the protected environment of the private home.

Presented in Berlin and Belgrade, the tour *B-B* by Serbian artist Dragan Strunjas draws historical, architectural and fictional parallels by superimposing sights, visuals, sounds and narratives of the two capitals. And scarcely after a transformation of a fictitiously created real space is perceived, it is thrown into question: how do we observe the specific features of a location and how do these impressions change if we interweave them with contemporary influences from a totally different space?

Another recurring topic this year is the merging of fiction and reality while dealing with historical events. In *The Berlin Circle Audio Walk* by Daniel Brunet (US/Germany), Producing Artistic Director of the English Theatre Berlin | International Performing Arts Center, leads the audience through the night of the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Cold War and recent history of the German capital. The tour explores the real locations via the fictional traces of a play by Charles Mee. Reflecting the past on the present, the last 25 years are superimposed and experienced through the narrations of one of Berlin's many immigrants. This audio walk also serves as the introduction to the larger ETB | IPAC project *25 Jahre Mauerfall or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Ossis/Wessis*.

In their tour, *One Trip for One Person*, Birgit Auf der Lauer and Caspar Pauli (Germany) also deal with the history of Berlin's division and its effects on the individual. In *One Trip for One Person*, 25 years of personal experiences created by the existence of the Berlin Wall are juxtaposed with refugees' current tragedies while risking their lives at the external borders of the EU and the Mediterranean Sea. In a canoe the visitors are tracking the former topography of the wall on the river Spree. Visitors journey from east to west while tracking the former topography of the Berlin Wall in a canoe on the Spree river

Alongside the daily tours, B_Tour offers a discursive framework of four panels (B_Talks). Two panels take place before and two during the festival in Berlin. The panels aim to open up urban discourse, which is conventionally reserved to an academic context, to the general public. These discussions, presented as B_Talks within the cozy atmosphere of a local café, reflect the aim of using B_Tour as a platform for audiences to become engaged with their city. The first B_Talk (which took place on June 23) reflected upon how new technologies influence the perception of digital and urban spaces. The speakers who gave brief 15 minutes presentations of their work and engaged in a moderated discussion were: Michael Markert (Bauhaus University Weimar), Karl Heinz Jeron (artist) and Susa Pop (Public Art Lab/Connecting Cities). The next B_Talks will take place on July 16 as well as on August 8 and 10, 2014.

B_Tour is a traveling festival which will be presented in Berlin and another city every year. The collaboration with the Belgrade based Art Production Company 80/10 enables artists, partner organizations and visitors to travel between both festival cities and exchange ideas about new artistic formats and European urban environments.

Where : Different venues all over the city.

For more information, please visit the B_Tour website <http://www.b-tour.org/>

Tickets : Will be available soon. For more information, please visit the B_Tour website.

1 B_Tour 6 Euro; 2 B_Tours 10 Euro; 3 B_Tours 14 Euro
weekend pass 25 Euro; weekend pass +1 35 Euro

For more information, please visit the B_Tour website: <http://www.b-tour.org/>

Visit B_Tour on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/btourfestival>

Contact: B_Tour

Christin Prätor, christin.praetor@b-tour.org

Antje Düselder, antje.dueselder@b-tour.org