

Siegfried Reusch

Image rescue plaques

History of an unintended intervention

On 12. January 2015 at exactly 12:16:09 CET, an email from WeTransfer interrupts my concentrated work. “christian-hasucha@t-online.de has sent you files”, as the server service informs me in the upper part of the characteristically designed email.

Half a year ago I got in touch with Christian Hasucha. In the course of a research project, I had become aware of his work entitled *später sein wird (later will be)*. On a grassy traffic island, he had installed a stencil in the shape of a deciduous tree, about eight metres wide and six metres high, made of a ten-centimetre-thick rectangular steel profile. Framed or squeezed in, depending on how you look at it, an apple tree about three and a half metres high and about five years old had been planted in the middle of the steel outline. My first assumption is that the rigid steel silhouette is supposed to illustrate the expected growth of the tree. The slender “young tree”, striving towards the light and the sky, is confronted by its expected future. The confrontation of a living young tree growing with a rigid steel frame anticipating the final state of potential growth is a wonderful illustration of what the philosopher Edmund Husserl wanted to express with the term “protention”. With this term, the founder of phenomenology refers to a functioning of human consciousness. For example, in order to be able to recognise a melody, the various individual events such as the temporally isolated sounding of individual notes must be brought into a context by our consciousness.



later will be. Central station forecourt, Paderborn 2013

According to Husserl, we can only perceive pieces of music as coherent unities because the previously heard tones of a certain piece are still present in our consciousness as memories after they have faded away, which he calls “retention”, and at the same time we always anticipate the sounding of new tones from the previously heard (protention). In this way, we combine individual, currently heard sounds into a unity in our “mental ear”. This means that we create an overall context out of – from a physical point of view – objectively unrelated events. Through the assumption of causal connections between individual events that are not causally related, these are connected by human consciousness to form a mental unity – the note “b” in a score is not followed by an “a”, a “c” and an “h” by chance. What is currently being heard, the tone that is sounding at the moment, is constantly compared by our consciousness with what we have already heard, always extrapolated towards an imagined end, and in this way what is not in itself connected is combined into a unity of meaning. This well-known phenomenon of our consciousness is often used by composers for surprising effects. Expectations are deliberately built up, only to steer the melody in a completely unexpected direction at the appropriate moment. Note by note, proximity to a familiar melody is established; bar by bar, the piece moves ever closer to a familiar sequence of notes; note by note, a corresponding expectation builds up in the consciousness. But before agreement can develop, before the identity of the expected note and the sounding note is fulfilled, a break occurs: suddenly and abruptly, a note is heard that does not fit the expected melody, that does not fit into the postulated harmony. Making a mockery of all the already anticipated following tones of the known melody, the surprisingly sounding tone is not a mistake, not a blunder on the part of the musician, but fits harmonically as a turning point into the framework of an unexpected or even completely unknown new melody. Expectations generated in this way can determine our consciousness to such an extreme that a drummer, for example, no longer has to produce any notes at all in order to make music sound in us: Just hinting at beats, slowing down his mallets just before they hit the heads of his drums, sounds are produced as if by magic in front of the listener's inner ear – his sounds, not the inner sounds of the audience. One knows the rhythm, extrapolates intuitively what one has already heard; one knows which note must follow, knows which tone should sound, although it does not really sound, that is, it does not experience any

physical representation. It is the reality of our consciousness that allows us to hear individual notes as coherent melodies, not the physical reality outside our consciousness. While a



single tone can be described physically, there is no scientific law for what we call melody. The fact that we perceive a sequence of tones as melody, establish a connection of some kind between these tones, sensing them as belonging together, is an original achievement of our mind that has no physical equivalent. According to Husserl's message, it is not physical contents that are linked by our brain as sensory impressions for perception, but rather consciousness contents. Remembering retrospection (retention) and anticipating expectation (protention), i.e. performances of consciousness, simulate a unified, seemingly coherent sensory perception.

With his work *later will be* Hasucha confronts the “now” of a being with the “later” of the same being, skipping the period of becoming; growing. Both states of being – the small, freshly planted living tree and its horizon of expectation in the form of a flat steel silhouette that looks two-dimensional from a distance – are present. Now, at the moment, the silhouette hints at what will be in the future, is so to speak, a present expectation: this is how far the tree could have extended one day. If one looks at the work from the silhouette, the past is also present in the present. Depending on the point of view, different levels of time and thus of being are confronted with each other and intertwined as a whole.

Perceiving means comparatively classifying and allocating, it always means establishing temporal and spatial connections, it means telling stories. In this way, *later will be*, is a story. A story that always foreshadows its end, its goal, and through this foreshadowing throws the viewer back onto his own temporal constitution: Will the tree grow beyond the limiting silhouette or wither away before then? Will gardeners or will Hasucha forcibly adapt its growth to the silhouette with pruning shears when it outgrows it? Will I live to see one or the other? What will I, the viewer, look like then? *later will be* is the question of becoming in time that has become factual, as well as the question of the horizons of perception and expectation of a life, the span between beginning and end, birth and death.

Back to the data transfer. The artist had thankfully already sent me the excellently resolved image data for his work *later will be* for the agreed reproduction in our journal for philosophy *der blaue reiter*. Has he perhaps uploaded more photographs from

later will be to the server? At least it will in all likelihood not be malware that is encoded and compressed for me to download from the server. So apart from disrupting my workflow, there is no reason not to activate the download button on the screen with a mouse click. Why do I always have to look at all emails as soon as I receive them? Why am I always so eager to see what others want to tell me? It takes three minutes to transfer the data, and a few seconds to unpack the ZIP file compressed for transmission. Finally: The unpacked folder contains three image files. So far so ordinary, if not directly ordered and expected, then not surprising – or is it? Curiosity wins out. My concentration has already been interrupted anyway, distracted from the flow of everyday work, torn out of the same rut. So: open the image editing programme and look at the pictures.

They are not “beautiful” pictures that Hasucha sent me. If one wants to force them into an order using the terms of aesthetics, then it is best to use the term trash aesthetics. What else are photos of walls luridly spray-painted with cryptic lettering supposed to represent than documentations of wild everyday decorations by bored self-promoters?

“Why is Hasucha sending me cut-outs of graffiti works?” was my first thought. After all, the whole works are not even on display, not even a whole graffiti? He can't seriously believe that we would print something like that in our journal as an illustration, especially in b/w? With what ulterior motive does he send me excerpts of such “territorial markings” like MRK, MOH, EL GATO, SFRESH, 2MULT! or BILLOE, which are not commissioned by the city authorities or house owners and are quickly sprayed on under the pressure of discovery? Youth fun that derives much of its appeal from playing hide-and-seek with caretakers and police. A public place with as much public traffic as possible, preferably a subway or tram that takes the work through the whole city, mask on, spraying, a quick mobile phone photo with which to impress the “peer group” later.

Even if, at the latest since the “graffiti” of the Zurich graffitist once sponsored by Joseph Beuys or the now globally active Banksy, so-called tagging art or street art also enjoys a high reputation in artist and collector circles, they are mostly more adolescent, vandalism-like statements of the kind “I'm here, notice me” than aesthetic and artistically valuable works. Undeniably, a certain aesthetic is inherent in all of them; just as an unpainted brick wall or a plastered house wall can be aesthetic in the sense that they excite the eye for a moment if they are perceived as a positive or negative

disturbance and charged with meaning. But the aesthetics of angularly broken graffiti letters interest typographers at best. Because they are rarely legible, however, they are not suitable as typefaces for books, at best for headlines. Concise and individualistic, sometimes far removed from the conventional typeface due to the interweaving of the individual letters, they quickly wear out visually due to their idiosyncratic graphic and colour design and are at best suitable as titles for record covers of punk bands, for tattoos of their protagonists or as headlines for so-called underground publications. They are often outline fonts whose inner faces are filled with garish colours and provided with high-contrast additional lines to increase the visual effect.

So far, so good. What can be seen in the pictures sent? In one of the photos, wide black bars on a blue background are accentuated by thin pink lines. You cannot even guess the letters – the detail is too small for that: a large part of the wall is “outside” the photo.

The works of the Zurich graffitist and those of Banksy, whether the latter is an individual artist, a female artist or a collective, as is sometimes speculated, differ fundamentally from such frequently encountered graffiti. Their works are very quickly recognised as unusual. Banksy's works are mostly representational – a woman plunges into the void with a shopping trolley, a couple appear to be kissing intensely while both stare at their mobile phones, which they hold in their hands with an outstretched arm behind their partner's head, and so on. The works of the two mentioned are also mostly in black, black and white or in reduced colours. Banksy's works in particular convey easily recognisable messages. For example, on a graffiti on a wall remnant in an industrial ruin, a young man dressed in black, is holding a paint bucket and a thin drawing brush in his hand, he looks anxious and reproachful at the same time, turns his head towards the viewer, the red lettering reads: “I remember when all this was trees”. The works are often anti-capitalist or pacifist, sometimes self-deprecating, such as the inscription “If graffiti changed anything – it would be illegal” next to a rat. Another work shows a kneeling boy spray-painted in black and white paint, with his hands raised in front of his face and placed together in prayer. In front of him is a paint bucket, also sprayed in black and white, and a brush. Pink paint is dripping only from the upper edge of the bucket and the bristles of the brush. The words “FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSING” are emblazoned above it in pink. Other artists are also quoted: A young

man walks a barking dog sprayed in Keith Haring's characteristic comic style, a uniformed policeman with the body of a model athlete holds a dog composed of bright pink modelling balloons à la Jeff Koons on a leash at knee height above the ground.

But nothing in this direction can be seen in the photographs that have been sent. Nor is it apparent that the photograph intended to document a single graffiti. Rather, as far as the graffiti are concerned, the three pictures seem to be random cut-outs without concentration on, or reference to a specific work. Individual letters are no longer recognisable, have been sprayed over several times by other taggers or find their continuation outside the photograph. The originators or messages of complete graffiti that are complete can at best only be understood by a very narrow circle of insiders. With the best will in the world, no sense can be made of the extracts. Only one characteristic is common to all three, only one feature gives the three photos an inner coherence, makes them become a kind of pictorial melody. In the centre of each picture is a stainless-steel plate screwed to the spray-painted wall. With an approximately one-centimetre technically perfect flanged edge in a small radius, the variously sized plates stand out from the wall by about one centimetre, suggesting a small empty space behind them. The distance from the wall is too small for the extensions of ventilation shafts, nor is there any opening visible at first glance through which significant amounts of air could flow in or out. These could be recently installed cover plates to protect electrical installations in the wall. This impression is reinforced by a light-coloured sealant visible on the sides. The only unusual feature is that no sealant is visible on the lower edge of the panels. But this could also be the result of a slightly elevated camera position, so that the narrow strip of light-coloured sealant disappears in the shadow cast by the protruding panels. Or it could simply have been forgotten to seal the lower side as well – but this is the case with all the panels? The plates have no original lettering, no engraving, no embossing and no riveted functional or company sign. It is not possible to see who applied the plates and why. In two of the photographs, the plates have been partially sprayed and have stickers on them. The plates are too technically correct and neatly manufactured and attached to have been “so to speak innately” provided with such lettering and stickers. Obviously, the spray-painting and stickers are, to use the jargon of the public order offices, vandalism – graffiti that is. The spray-painted lettering does not, however, integrate the panels into any

graffiti that had already been spray-painted on the wall before the panels were screwed on. The applied disturbance of the original “painting” was not “repaired”, the “work of art” “defaced” by the plate was not restored by being sprayed over. Nor is any of the applied lettering recognisably extended beyond the panel onto the wall. Rather, it seems as if the surface, which was presumably “empty” when it was applied, was understood by the taggers as a new stage for their coloured selves. Slightly set off from the wall, quasi elevated from the other graffiti, the undefaced matt sheen of the otherwise flat stainless-steel surface in the midst of a jumble of colours would only be disturbed by the slight indentations of the surface that resulted from screwing the plate to the wall using Allen screws – a provocation for any self-promoter. Like free-standing switchboxes, the panels act as screens for the cry for attention that motivates any public expression.

What is Christian Hasucha trying to tell me with these photographs? Are they supposed to be artistic works? Random photos of cover plates on walls sprayed with graffiti? “Technology destroys art”? “Art shapes technology”? “Unbridled emotional expression defaces or beautifies technically functional aesthetics?” “Technology becomes a stage for art?” “The mundane, the overlooked is brought into view by being covered over?” Is this his latest “Public Intervention”, as he calls his working method? Photographs of “stainless-steel plates on walls sprayed with graffiti”, so to speak?

Stainless-steel plates attached to paintings by Pierre-August Renoir or Piet Mondrian in the context of break-ins in museums would be something new, at least provocative. Similarly provocative and expanding the view are the “Tidy Up Pictures” by the Swiss artist Ursus Wehrli. His pairs of paintings consist of a faithful reproduction of a famous painting, such as Van Gogh's bedroom, and a “tidy” version of the original. In the case of Van Gogh's bedroom, the tidy version shows all the furniture in the room on the bed. It's as if an overzealous cleaning lady had made room for herself so that she could finally mop the floor thoroughly and remove all the paint residue. Wehrli confronts a female nude by Egon Schiele, drawn only with black lines, with a painting of a neatly wound string. “A Swiss man needs order,” is the brute psychological interpretation.

Once before, Christian Hasucha had sent me two unsolicited photographs of his work from a trip as part of our correspondence about his *later will be*.



Expedition RumBulTürGeo, near Abana, Turkey, 2014

One work shows a white lacquered chair lonely on a mountainside in a mountain range;



a radiantly bright seat in picturesque surroundings from which one would have a grandiose view of the surrounding mountains; the breaking in, so to speak, of the resting human being into the beauty and vastness of nature. The other shows a table on a rocky coast. The table is placed in the gentle surf between the strongly fissured coastal rocks in such a way that the top 30 centimetres of a rock protrude from the tabletop like a mountain peak.



Expedition RumBulTürGeo, near Abana, Turkey 2014

Obviously, a corresponding cut-out had been sawn out of the tabletop beforehand. The flat tabletop with the rock mutated into a mountain seems like a haven of calm in the turbulent surf. And yet it directs the viewer's gaze out to the restless, open sea. It is not bulky rubbish that landed in the surf. The recess for the rock is too accurately sawn out. No splinters are visible, all broken edges have been sanded clean. The "installation" of the table between the rocks is obviously intentional, is, as Hasucha would say, "intervention" for the gaze of the casual passer-by, a productive intervention in his

perception. "Human intrusion into nature" or "Nature compensates for an intrusion of the human into its realm through the growth of rocks", offer themselves as dialectical food for thought. I had copied both works into my picture folder on the laptop under "der blaue reiter". As illustrations that stimulate the readers' own thinking, the two travel photographs, rich in associations, fit perfectly into an article in our journal. But "stainless-steel plate on graffiti"? And then without depicting the entire graffiti?

At the end of my considerations, two basic interpretations remain: either Hasucha has photographed cover plates on house walls destroying graffiti on walls and in this way wants to point to the destruction of artistic expressions, or perhaps he has even installed the plates himself to provoke creativity by creating free painting area and subsequently documenting his work photographically. But neither the one nor the other interpretation can be established beyond doubt on the basis of the pictures sent. Perhaps an explanation will follow at some point. But what kind of art is this that needs an explanation? An art that does not immediately release associations? Irritation alone is not enough for art! A random car accident at a crossroads is also irritating, but unlike Wolf Vostell's cars embedded in concrete on a traffic island, this does not make it a work of art. The best thing for me to do is to wait, not write anything about it for the time being, and get back to my everyday business. Or – is Hasucha sending me art in statu nascendi, that is, art in the process of being created? Are the photos only documentations of a process? Do I simply lack the knowledge of a possible initial and final state to understand them? Does my lack of imagination make retention and protention impossible at the same time? No matter! Don't think about it, just keep working. Five minutes of perplexed contemplation and shaking of the head was well worth the permission to reprint *later will be*.

A few hours later, on 12.1.2015, I received the following e-mail:

"Dear Mr Reusch,
By mistake I emailed 3 pictures to you instead to Viola Rusche via WeTransfer. I'm sure you've wondered what this is all about. Viola Rusche is currently editing some video documentation of my work for me, including: *The Image Rescue Plaques*. In April 2014, I started making stainless-steel plaques in different sizes. I chose the formats intuitively. With appropriate stencils, I then searched the Berlin graffiti for parts of images of particular beauty. Permanently covered,

they should be able to be unveiled again intact in 20 years.

Please excuse the mis-sending and delete the pictures, which are incomprehensible without photos of the covered areas anyway.

Many greetings Christian Hasucha"

The matter is beginning to be clarified! As a surname, Rusche is alphabetically close to Reusch. Even if one has only a few contacts beginning with R in the directory, in our age of high-speed communication, which is all too often characterised by meaningless letter and emoji combinations, Rusche looks very similar to my surname. A typical mistake when clicking on the address directory in the e-mail programme. Typing "Return" too early on the keyboard or clicking "Send" with the mouse cursor without thinking. In the meantime, so to speak, a classic mistake of the e-mail age, which I regularly make. In the age of letters, this would not have happened.

At least I am reassured. I didn't misunderstand anything; – I didn't necessarily have to make sense of the photos. Indeed: the three photos are incomprehensible in themselves! My irritation was just as justified as the feedback-less continuation of my day's work at that time. But what I had previously only shrugged at as "stainless-steel plates on graffiti-walls" had been abruptly charged with meaning by Hasucha's renewed message. I search for the files in my picture folder and look at the photos again at my leisure. A short time of contemplation and reflection later:

12 January 2015

"Dear Mr Hasucha,
I found the uncommented WeTransfer extremely interesting. It forced me to deal with the work – stainless-steel plates on graffiti-walls. Since I didn't know what was hidden under the plates, I suspected that you wanted to create free islands for repainting/spraying over, so to speak, high-gloss islands that would later be removed again and taken out of context, perhaps even several plates collaged anew... I found this an extremely interesting idea! The effect of such a plate in a graffiti environment is amazing in itself. A matt-glossy blank sheet. A strikingly empty sheet that cries out for inscription, for expression, for meaning. A place of longing, emptiness, to be filled with human beings. What could be more exciting? So I have to thank you for food for thought, and I would be happy if I could keep the pictures for occasional viewing. Perhaps, depending on the incoming texts, one

or the other can also be accommodated in the issue of our journal on the theme of luxury.

Best regards

Your

Siegfried Reusch”

Admittedly, at first, I was more irritated than fascinated. Now that the works have been ennobled from mere documentary photographs to art, they do what good art must do: Initial irritation creates a projection surface, gives space for one's own thoughts, for an examination of world and self-perception, is an occasion for communication. One day later I receive the following reply from Hasucha:

13 January 2015

“Dear Siegfried Reusch,

I was very pleased to receive your e-mail. Of course, with my long-term projects, I hope to be able to harvest something at “intermediate optimal points” (for example, in the case of the picture rescue plaques, the phases of spraying/adhesion or at the time of de-montage, when the surrounding wall will then have been cleaned or painted). I often do not dare to be as optimistic as you, although I do try to create the conditions for possible harvesting. Let's take a look now and then and again in 20 years. In any case, I find your interpretation very beautiful and would be happy to quote you. Your theme of “luxury” completely slipped my mind, but now that you mention it, I have – because you also mention the “table and its mountain” – picked out a few more pictures that I think could fit the theme. Three of them were taken during my trip. The greatest luxury for me during this half year was being able to focus my attention on the nearby things and to limit my planning to the absolutely necessary. A kind of narrow-band linearity of living with frequent now-perceptions. You can find a small version of the pictures in the appendix... Kind regards
Christian Hasucha”

On 14.01.2015 09:37 I reply with the following email:

“Dear Mr. Hasucha,

You are welcome to use my spontaneous quick interpretations as you see fit. If you send me some more detailed material on the project and I can find some time, I would be happy to try to create a better formulated text. It is interesting that your primary implication was “preservation through concealment”, while I immediately

thought of disruption, a provocation to creative integration, over-painting (which is already partly visible in the photos) and possible later context-shifting by removing and re-collaging the panels. The reality is probably, as so often, in between: Traces of life are preserved, as in a museum, by covering them up, so to speak. Years later, the “archived” objects are then juxtaposed as material contemporary witnesses of a “yesterday” for confrontation with what is still “future” today, the then current “now”. And doubly so: on the one hand, the old section of the graffiti will interact with the then current one by coming “into view” again. The empty space deliberately created by the panel – one could also say disturbing space, for what disturbs the viewer more than emptiness? – will have to justify itself for its empowerment, for its violent disturbance, for the act of protective covering and its eventual overpainting. Did it enable better? Was it merely a point of disruption? Did it get lost in the flow of development? Did it provoke, prevent, or destroy painterly manifestations of life? Was the panel integrated or was it left out? Moreover, the old graffiti, the past, history interacts in the form of a section with a whole – which in turn is also only a section of the world. The time leap visualised in this way provokes further confrontations. A thought process about the “in-between” is triggered, which is only figuratively available through a starting and ending point. If one joins the panels that are then painted over, a kind of optical sociography also emerges. Pictorial worlds of sometimes widely separated places interact: were the plates used as “picture frames” for individual images in a picture or rather integrated into larger pictures as merely a raised part of an imaginary canvas? Do fragments, quasi parts of whole graffiti, then find themselves in such a collage or are whole individual works put together, i.e. curated? Do different visual languages compete or do the taggers' worlds of signs form a unity?... The strangest thing would probably be if the panels remained unpainted, if the rhizomatically proliferating life simply passed over them, did not assimilate them and did not appropriate their essence by digesting them, but simply left them out, ignoring the metal plaques. But what would be bad about such emptiness, such a visualisation of the lifeless, the not-wanting, the manifestation of the not-wanting-to-be,

of nothingness? I could well imagine the illustration with the chair, the *Now* sculpture (possibly also one or two design drawings) as well as the table for an article on sensuality by Jean-Pierre Wils (title: “Existenz ist Genuss”).

Against the hope of world appropriation through the “rough” emancipation of sensuality). If you send me the high-resolution data (300 dpi with an image size of max. 20 cm image width), I will send them to our graphic designer, who will then decide on the basis of the available space...

With best regards I remain

Your

Siegfried Reusch”

So much for the story of an unintentional artistic intervention. A term that until now I was only familiar with from politics and medicine. But it is not inaccurate. An intervention is more than just a disturbance, not only in politics and medicine. An intervention, whether its intention is curative or destructive, has consequences. It not only changes the view of a thing, but also the thing itself.

Hasucha's *image rescue plaques* are irreversible interventions in a process. As *later will be*, all of Hasucha's interventions are borne by a curiosity about the relationship between what is, what will be and what was. However, both works address the question of time not in an abstract form, but on the basis of the only dimension of the manifestation and tangibility of time: becoming.

Becoming, and this is an essential aspect of Hasucha's work, is formally framed in the interventions by a beginning and end state, but more important is the process, the “in-between” start and finish.

Above all, the *image rescue plaques* do not postulate a pure beginning. Although a beginning is formally set by attaching the plaques, it is only manifested as a factual existence. Once the beginning has been set by screwing on the *image rescue plaques*, there is no longer any indication of a date, nor is there any end to be seen in the plaques. No signature refers to the author or the purpose of the plates. Rather, they seem to have been affixed, if not for eternity, then at least for the duration of their presumed functional context. During the twenty years that the plaques are affixed to the walls, the initial state disappears into the vague, losing its significant power as the beginning of a sequence of effects the very moment the artist has affixed the plaques and left the site. Whereas the silhouette of a tree in *later will be* at least hints of a goal, i.e. a final state, and the sight of a naturally grown tree

always suggests that it has grown from a seed or a sapling, the contemplation of the plaques after they have been affixed does not suggest any association with becoming. No signature elevates the plates to art, no hidden hint leads the unbiased viewer to conclude that there has been an artistic intervention. Moreover, the work takes its starting point from a state that has become. Not a random piece of wall is chosen, but a painted one. Not "anything" is to be "saved", but the aesthetically most valuable part of an everyday graffiti. Similar to the working process of gestural painters, Hasucha uses angle rulers and/or stencils to find the optimal cut-out. However, like painters of ferocious feelings, he does not select the most beautiful spot from a self-made great work, possibly created in a euphoria, but from the work of a stranger. What would art critics say if Hasucha were to preserve the most aesthetically valuable section of a graffiti by Banksy or one by the Zurich sprayer with an *image rescue plaque*?

Hasucha is not concerned with the destruction of a work of art, but with its partial conservation. This is also the reason for the lack of sealant on the lower edges of the plaques. While the sealant on the top edge and sides is intended to prevent moisture from penetrating, the bottom edge is deliberately not sealed so that any condensation that may form can drain away and the ventilation prevents mould from forming. But even with this care in the approach, Hasucha cannot conceal the fact that art must necessarily be destroyed for this intervention to come into being. In this way, saving artworks necessarily goes hand in hand with at least partial destruction of artworks. And, it must also be asked, what is the value of the partial rescue of a work of art if the view of the whole is no longer possible? Hasucha's documentation does not include a photograph of the whole graffiti, which has not yet been "damaged" or "saved" by a picture rescue plaque. Unless a photographer has captured the entire graffiti in a picture, only the previously covered section remains after the plaque has been removed. But what is the artistic aesthetic or conservation value of a small section of a picture that has been torn out of its overall context?

Already in the process of creation of the Intervention *image rescue plaques* a fundamental process of life is depicted: new things only come into being through the destruction of the existing. A classic dilemma that is also familiar to preservationists: A new townhouse can only be built if the demolition of an old one creates free space for a new building. For new buildings, natural disasters, accidents or wars solve this

problem in many places; graffitiists can count on the city cleaning service and angry house owners as guarantors for new "canvases". But while graffitiists mostly respect intact works of their colleagues for a certain period of time and mainly spray over free surfaces or already partially destroyed works, Hasucha intervenes directly in a work. However, the artist's *furere* does not pass over a work with a wild gesture, but in a coolly calculating manner. For an artist, it is also remarkable that Hasucha does not create palimpsests. He does not, as is customary with ancient and even medieval manuscripts, mainly for financial reasons, create a free space to apply the new, his own signature. It is not even his intention to create free surfaces for new signatures of the course of time by others, which, removed again after twenty years, could be exhibited quasi as works or contrasted with the surfaces hidden in the meantime and then unhidden. New creation is not his goal, but preservation. He does not see himself as a facilitator of art, but as a preserver, as a saviour of what has been.

The intervention *image rescue plaques* preserve a section of the past. The past is revealed in the distant future so that it can interact with the present. This is something different from, for example, the absurd attempt that is being made with the so-called "reconstruction" of the old city palace to the detriment of the former Palace of the Republic. Reconstruction is something other than conservation, restoring of the past something other than renewing, new construction something other than maintenance, and historicising architecture is the caricature of historic architecture!

Is the intervention *image rescue plaques* the reversal of the intervention *later will be*? The passage of time as a space of event and action is the theme of both works. The intervention *later will be* offers the viewer the extrapolation of an actual state. The juxtaposition of this actual state of a tree with its expected, future form confronts the viewer with his or her own inkling or vision of the future. Will the tree fill its "frame" or even go beyond it? Will the tree even become as expansive as the silhouette of the tree that far surpasses it at planting? Will it be able to survive on the crossroads or will it die prematurely due to all the exhaust fumes? Will the tree and/or the silhouette be destroyed in an accident? What happens if the tree dries out and dies? Will the work then change from a manifesto of hope into a signature of premature transience?

The project or rather the intervention *image*

rescue plaques offer the viewer a completely different form of future. It does not point to something new, not to possibilities, it does not foreshadow a possible development, it does not offer the viewer a particular future or even different futures. By means of the image rescue plaques, the present is withdrawn from view for the purpose of preservation. A wound is inflicted on the "is", the "now", which is to be left for the time being. However, the intention of the intervention *image rescue plaques* is not to signal an open future. The enabling space of the matt-silver shiny surface that has been freed by the conservation is rather a by-product, an unavoidable collateral damage, so to speak. Until the panels are removed, the reference to the future consists of a closed, or rather concealed, inaccessible past. Our concept of the future is in such a way assigned the meaning "unveiling space of the past". Future is no longer understood as completely random, no longer as totally open.

later will be does not directly intervene in the future, does not influence the becoming of the tree. The silhouette is only a reference to a possible future, only one image of many possible futures. It does not prevent the tree from growing into its own image of the future, it is not a real boundary that is impossible to go under or over. The tree is left to itself, to its own growth programme and to the elements, to become.

The intervention *image rescue plaques*, on the other hand, intervenes in the future by shaping the present. By attaching the plaques, not only what is present is removed from visibility in the present, but the future present



only an eternal repetition of the same? Is, as Aristotle writes, the tree already contained in the seed, or do the tenses and their contents always already exist in parallel? Is there, as in the paradoxes of Parmenides, no movement at all, i.e. is movement, or rather change, only an attribute that we assign to countless immovably established individual states? Or, as Heraclitus writes, is everything always in flux according to the ancient formula *panta rhei*? Does the past determine the present and the future, i.e. does the present always contain a (at least theoretically calculable) future, or do the present and the future have degrees of freedom?

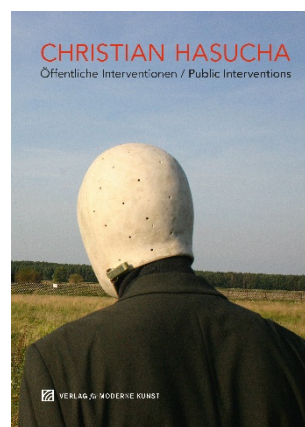
Hasucha's works suggest that being can only be understood as becoming through the confrontation with what has become real and imagined. Time as such is not and does not pass. Time only manifests itself in becoming, in change, is an abstract umbrella term for that which connects the individual points in time. We call *time* the structure of our thinking that brings events of our experience, which are in themselves unrelated, into a context that we can understand. In this respect, time is an important aspect of what we call *meaning*. While the term *time* ideally refers to a value-neutral, intersubjectively communicable structure of order, the term *meaning* refers to the individual value-setting. Time is the same for everyone, meaning is individual. However, the ontological structure and the function of time and meaning are the same: both are constituents of our reality as criteria of order. In other words, both are modes for structuring our world of experience.

What is special about time, however, is that it is a dialectical constituent. That is, time is an intangible in-between. It can only ever be grasped in a quasi-floating way between the extreme poles of the world of the spirit and the world of things, as Walter Schulz put it. It is precisely this “in-between” space that Hasucha repeatedly breaks into with his interventions, precisely this “in-between” that he repeatedly tries to point out to us. Human life is not a sequence of clearly definable and therefore calculable events, but occurs in the space between the realm of the mind, which our thinking fills, and the realm of things, which is spanned by the interpretation of sensory perceptions.

Man, as Hasucha's work can be summed up, must constantly question the conditions of his perceptions, must engage with the diversity and also the deceptiveness of his sensuality and its physical basis in order to become aware of a more comprehensive image of himself. Only then can more be revealed to the individual than his or her

factual That.

It is surely no coincidence that this engagement with the most diverse entanglements of our time constructions is the motif of one of Hasucha's catalogues: “I myself actually like to be one of those people who happen to coincidentally encounter something like this. Christian Hasucha in conversation with Olaf Grüneis, 2003” can be read there on the first pages. The cover picture shows a photograph of the intervention *Fremd in Neubausen*. It shows the upper back of a man wearing a black jacket and a reddish white mask, presumably slightly coloured by the rays of a low sun, which encloses his entire head and has only a few holes about five millimetres in size. FREMD is also the name Hasucha gives to the faceless man photographed from behind in front of a meadow landscape. A black turtleneck can be seen between the collar of the jacket and the lower edge of the mask. Everything personal, even the skin, seems deliberately concealed. The front part of the mask, which hides the face, is pulled down to under the chin and is thus slightly longer than the back part. A large brass buckle holds the two parts of the mask together, the only dimly discernible intersection of which runs roughly across the middle of the ears.



Monograph, *Public Interventions*, 2012

The “gaze” of the FREMD, anonymised in this way, goes across a meadow in the direction of a wooden lattice fence, to which a white sign, illegible at a distance, is attached. Presumably it is a prohibition sign. Behind the fence, after another stretch of grassland, a forest edge can be seen before the horizon under a sky in whose blue inconspicuous wispy clouds already reflect the first traces of the red of a sun saying goodbye to the day behind FREMD outside the viewer's angle of vision. But where is FREMD “looking”? On the cover of the catalogue, it is not clear how much he can see through the holes in the mask. Is it just a pale glimmer, a hint of light that can penetrate the holes of the mask made

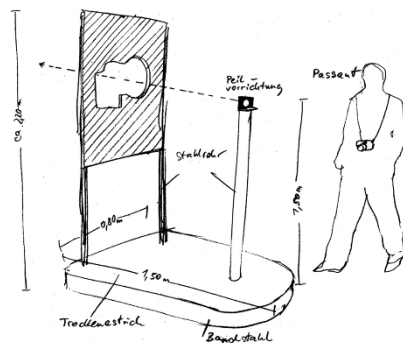
is represented to the informed through a current blank space. After their future removal, the premature can then be presented to the gaze as the present again, which after being removed is in turn left to the passage of time, to the uncertain future. With the intervention of *image rescue plaques*, the future present is disturbed by Hasucha at the moment of the unveiling of that which was. The past breaks into the actuality of a now that is still future, will assert and question origins and references of what is then present. The temporal dislocation creates a consciously induced temporal disorientation of the viewer. In other words, the two interventions confront us with the complex field of tension of our concept of the future: does the concept of the future stand for an open space of possibilities or for a space of revelation of the past? Does the future only fulfil the past or does the new come into being? Is living becoming

of fibreglass, or were large peepholes made at the front? Were the holes sized to allow an unobstructed view when properly placed on the front? It can be seen from the photographs of the documentation of the intervention in the inside section that FREMD also wears white, mitten-like glove shells. The description of the pictures showing FREMD at a garden party, in street scenes and in a pub only briefly says: "FREMD IN NEUHAUSEN. Neuhausen auf den Fildern, March 2003. Arranged by the local art association, a number of Neuhausen citizens meet the unusual-looking man, who is called FREMD by Hasucha. In the following two weeks, the stranger will accept the 25 invitations that lead him into private households, supermarkets, club rooms, etc. He seems to perceive a lot, although he is silent about everything and hardly reacts to anything." Those confronted with FREMD have to form their own picture of this stranger. Since he does not answer and reacts only very cautiously, if at all, they are forced to fill up the disturbance of their everyday life by a faceless being with their own ideas. A smooth surface with small holes must be interpreted as a face, human expressions of emotion must be attributed to an expressionless surface. FREMD could also be a perfect robot without a face or skin – you would have to touch it or, better still, injure it to find out whether it is made of flesh and blood. We even attribute states of mind to animals on the basis of our interpretation of their faces. Dolphins, for example, are considered friendly animals simply because of their seemingly always smiling faces. But their snouts also smile anatomically when they swim through a school of fish, killing and eating. But FREMD has no face, indeed no emotion can be inferred from his whole figure. He himself seems just as alien in Neuhausen as he is FREMD to the people of Neuhausen. How we deal with him is determined by the attributions of those who encounter him and depends on the projection of the images that people have of him.

Two interventions with so-called gaze gates and framing panels show how such images are created. View gates and framing panels are stencils that have been cut out in such a way that they only allow a view of a certain object when viewed from a certain position. The surroundings are blanked out, so to speak. One sees only a section of reality limited by the stencils, only a part of reality, a partial reality of what the human point of view normally presents to us.

In the case of the gaze locks, the desired perspective on the object to be exposed is enforced by a second template with a

circular "gaze guide hole". This second template is mounted in front of the actual "framing stencil" to control the view of the same base. The objects whose contours were selected for the stencils had been determined by the random choice of a companion, whom Hasucha refers to as "FRAU K.". A travel companion who has noted down all the objects that have captured her attention during a joint walk. Through the forced concentration on an object thus torn from its overall context, it becomes clear to the user of the locks not only that the context changes an object in our perception, but also that only being perceived and the environment in which it is embedded make an object what it is for us. If a part of the void, for example blue sky or black night, is framed in such a way, however, it is not the frame that makes the nothing into something, but our imagination. It is only the human imagination that allows something to emerge from nothingness in a frame.



Viewing gate, Art Association Kirchheim u. Teck, 1997

It is all too often forgotten that it is not the things that make our world what it is, but that our imagination has an enormous influence on what we perceive and how, and how we deal with what we perceive accordingly. Similar to the exposition panels, our sensory equipment in interaction with our imagination enforces a certain form of perception. This forms the framework for our personal constructions of reality, on the basis of which we deal with what is supposedly real and unreal.

But back to the *image rescue plaques*-intervention. Hasucha's *image rescue plaques* are not intended as a subversive action.

They are not meant to disturb the view, they are not meant, like the white chair in a lonely mountain landscape, to point to the possibility of new ways of seeing, they are not meant to show a new or old perspective, they are not meant to be special, but simply to save beauty. Hasucha cultivates the art of preservation, which always entails safekeeping, which for reasons of protection always also means taking out of sight. Similar to a museum, he removes traces of human creativity from their context of origin and effect. A painting by the most important Italian painter and mosaic artist of the late 13th century, the Florentine Cimabue, can, if it is to be preserved, only be kept in secure, air-conditioned rooms and no longer hang as a decoration in a French kitchen in ignorance of its financial and artistic value. Hasucha's intervention thus also raises the question of museality, the permanence of art. With the intervention *image rescue plaques*, a consciously chosen, artistic process is interrupted in its impact on the viewer by another artist. Here, the artist becomes a curator who intervenes by choosing what is worth preserving and what is not, according to his own taste. Art or violent art impudence? What would Salvador Dali, what would Gerhard Richter say if parts of their artworks were covered with steel plates by curators for posterity? Is Hasucha quasi-symbolically reflecting himself in covering graffiti in the matted stainless-steel surface of his plaques? Does art only become art when it becomes museal, in other words, does Hasucha ennoble graffiti with his image-saving plaques? Just as a graffitiist, for example, makes a fire wall visible through his graffiti by moving it out of the stream of uniform perception into the field of vision like an exposure sign and captivating the attention of the otherwise casual by-passer, Hasucha ennobles graffiti into art. He moves it out of the uniform stream of perception of the disinterested spectator and into the field of vision of those interested in art.

Hasucha's *image rescue plaques* are also not a special form of overpainting. While artists such as Joachim Kupke sometimes paint over works by other artists and in this way make use of foreign formal languages for themselves, Hasucha does not use the graffiti as a painting ground for his own creativity. Nor does he confront different ways of seeing and representing the human figure, as Kupke does by painting over a print by Joannis Avramidis with a section of a work by Jan Vermeer, faithfully reproduced down to the smallest detail. Hasucha does intervene in a work, but only to preserve part of its beauty.

With the unveiling of the protected section after 20 years, however, Hasucha points to another problem of our

perception: Image sensibility is always in flux, is always a comparison with what has been seen before. It's similar to fashion. How strangely old-fashioned do the skirts of the 1920s seem to us today? Even if quotation and copying are a popular stylistic device in fashion, a petticoat tailored today looks very different from one made 20 years ago. It works as a quotation! When Wolfgang Joop wears NVA trousers in an interview with editors of the *Journal für Philosophie der blauen reiter*, it is an allusion. The effect is not achieved by the special patterning of the fabric, but by the historical reference to the army of the defunct workers' and peasants' state. The fact that the trousers are worn by the owner of a Potsdam villa that has been renovated to the highest possible standards is the staging of a reinterpretation through de-placement. Camouflage clothing that was once worn in the field by socialist fighters against the class enemy in order to conceal the wearer is transformed and stylised into a conspicuous accessory in a noble capitalist environment. Joop, like Hasucha, plays with our pictorial memory. With his intervention, Hasucha disturbs precisely this image memory, or, better in the given context, our urban memory. Only curators spend most of their lives in museums – the world of people, including their visual world, is the public sphere in which they spend time. From the windows of their offices, they watch the spray-painted underground train go by. When they look up from their computer, the spray-painted firewall of the house opposite shines towards them, etc.

We can only ever perceive sections. No one can always keep the whole in view and Hasucha chooses an excerpt from this excerpt to seal it inconspicuously. Later, it is presented in an altered environment – as a quotation from another time. To put it quite banally: Van Gogh's sunflowers are different today than they were 100 years ago. Not because they have changed – that's where the conservators of the Amsterdam Museum come in, who go to great lengths to preserve their presumed original state – but because they are perceived differently, because we have seen abstract painting etc. in the meantime. Whether the rescued sections of the Graffiti will be perceived as a provocation, a sentimental reminder or with indifference when they are unveiled will only be seen in the future. Today, no one can predict the criteria of future perception. In any case, the sections will then be contemporary witnesses of historical perception and design practice.

It is still in question whether what Hasucha calls “coincidence”, whether what he likes to happen, as he prefaces his catalogue as a motif, is actually independent of the

perceiving subject. Is it not rather the case that we only call what we consciously perceive a coincidence? What is not noticed, what is ignored, cannot happen to us, cannot become a coincidence for us. Rather, coincidences can only happen when we turn towards what seems to happen by chance, when we are prepared to give an event our attention and in this way integrate it into our lives. Unconsciously, nothing comes to you; for an unconscious person, nothing happens. It is not to us that the coincidental falls, but we fall to what we call coincidence.

Hasucha cultivates a special form of turning to the course of time, a form of engaging perception and reshaping. He knows how to use what he encounters for his interventions in order to make the world, including his world of perception visible to others, to people who pass by carelessly, thoughtlessly or even unconsciously. Turning to the question of time, exposing oneself to the entanglements of what we call past, present and future and making the interactions of remembering, experiencing and hoping perceptible is anything but a coincidence. In other words, with his works Hasucha deliberately tries to create precisely those coincidences for the viewer that he himself likes to be affected and stimulated by. The often-heard complaint about unused coincidences, the lament about all too often missed opportunities, makes it clear how much the willingness to encounter the world with openness needs training. The very existence of the term *coincidence* shows how much we colonise the future in a planning way, check what we encounter to see if it fits our idea of the future, if it matches our plans, if it seems useful to us. What seems useful is perceived and accepted, what does not seem useful to our goals is discarded and forgotten. In this way, the occupation of the future by planning becomes a substitute for a lack of meaning. Wanting to anticipate the future in the now robs chance of its chance, relieves the coming of the fear of uncertainty.

Christian Hasucha is a master of the most original task of the arts: with the staging of his interventions, he provides the viewers with new perspectives on themselves and the world. Tirelessly, he plans those coincidences for others that break habitual perspectives. He is, so to speak, a first-class coincidence generator operating according to precise and technical plans. His form of turning towards and shaping the world is the confrontation with the basic condition of our being. In the words of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Hasucha creates those inner-worldly manifestations that enable the I, hovering groundlessly

between world-binding and transcendence, to deliberately “accidentally” react to the formal structure of its first inner self-perception: the seemingly simple judgement “I=I”. Only through the prompting character of another I, a “You”, does the subject become a conscious I. In this process, however, the I does not recognise itself qua reflection of itself in the other. That would be too trivial. Rather, it is a matter of the I being irritated, of rising from the unconscious, everyday self-referentiality of pure self-perception in the structure I=I to a conscious form of perception of this structure. It is not that there is an Other that is the irritating thing that enables us to take the step towards awareness of ourselves, but the simple inking that the Other, this Other, is a You, that is, an I likewise, that is also conscious.

Hasucha deliberately “constructs” dialectical interventions that break conventional perception: A man walks on a two-metre-forty-high concrete pedestal next to a busy road, relaxed and incessantly on the spot; on an artificially raised hill, a cyclist pedals powerfully and with relish, without making even one centimetre of progress within an hour. The technical aspect is meticulously constructed and constantly monitored for the duration of the intervention.



Mister Individual walking, Berlin, 1997

In the case of the stationary walker, it is a treadmill – invisible from below and without handholds at the sides – that makes it impossible to move forward; in the case of the stationary cyclist, a roller mechanism buried in the ground prevents movement. In both cases, it is a matter of strenuously moving standstill, the moving version of a Roaring Silence, so to speak. In this way, Hasucha's art also reflects the dialectic of human subjectivity: one is only “I” thanks to a “You”!

If Hasucha is deliberately staging communication with his interventions, the starting point of my reflections, the intervention *image rescue plaques*, must be reconsidered. What Deutsche Bahn calls “material damage” and which, according to their figures, cost 8.1 million euros in cleaning costs in 2014 alone, appears in a

different light under the previously mentioned aspects. Why does Hasucha want to save sections of graffiti that most people don't care about at best, that, apart from the few artistic spray-paintings cited, seem to have no artistic qualities worth preserving? Hasucha is not a life-artist in disguise who seeks attention in the art world through anti-aesthetics or deliberately staged scandals.



Kurz vor Heinde (Just out of Heinde),
Project LANDARBEIT 07, 2007

His works, like the accompanying plan sketches, are rather characterised by a profound knowledge of aesthetic perceptual practice. Do the picture rescue plaques perhaps conceal aesthetically valuable excerpts of works worthy of preservation after all? Has Hasucha discovered partial views of great artistic quality with his artistically trained eye and then concealed them? Do people with normal vision only become aware of these aspects when they appear in a different environment after the plaques have been removed by spraying over the surroundings? Has Hasucha taken the official initiators of the Barbara Tunnel in the Schauinsland in Breisgau as a model and tried to save cultural assets, so to speak, with his intervention? In view of the destruction of irretrievable cultural assets in the wars of the past, state-recognised cultural assets are documented by officials in the former Barbara mine adit, packed bomb-proof and stored over 600 metres deep in the rock for later generations. But while in the case of the Barbara mine adit it would be possible to look up what is in the containers stored there at any time on the basis of archive lists – German civil servants can't take a joke when it comes to such state expenditure and document their actions extremely thoroughly with a meticulous accountant's mentality – no one except Hasucha knows what special places are hidden behind his

picture rescue plaques. So is Hasucha's intervention *image rescue plaques* more comparable to the “exhibition” curated by Adalbert Hoesle in the Barbara Tunnel on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict? In the summer of 2004, the action artist had asked colleagues to donate one of their works each to be stored, packed in special metal cans, in the Barbara mine adit for one and a half thousand years. Only the participating artists, such as Karin Sander, Jonathan Meese, Jörg Immendorff, Andreas Gursky and Christoph Schlingensiefel, know what is in the cans until they are opened in 3504. Their works were declared cultural assets by being concealed, unseen by others. In contrast, Hasucha subjects the works of the graffiti artists to being covered up for the purpose of conservation based on his artistic appraisal. He does not decide on the basis of an artist's name whether his work or a certain section of his work is worth preserving, but on the basis of his aesthetic criteria. Nor are the picture rescue plaques a supra-temporal action that transcends the span of a human life. But what criteria are applied? Does the overall image after the plaques have been affixed also find its way into these criteria or does only the quality of the then covered section count? Or does Hasucha rely on the pure power of the confrontation of a future present with what is then long past, beyond any aesthetics? In other words, are the cut-outs ultimately arbitrary? Does the action draw its power from the confrontation with the environment, which will presumably have changed significantly in twenty years, and a changed practice of perception, which, similar to the works of expressionists such as Edvard Munch or Franz Marc, changed our perception of colours? Is Hasucha playing with the means of protection similar to a composer who seemingly directs his composition towards a known melody by using set pieces of it, only to insert a break shortly before the hitherto postulated identity occurs in order to lead the melody in a completely different, unexpected direction? Is Hasucha only playing with the dimension of expectation, i.e. does he want to stimulate the viewer's imagination? Are we supposed to complete the interrupted graffiti according to our own taste, like a “paint-by-numbers” picture in which the numbers are no longer recognisable at one point, and in this way be curious to see whether our expectation, whether our imagination coincides with that of the painter? The inconspicuousness of the attached plates rules out this interpretation. Hasucha does not publicise his project for a long time. He does not send out maps or

lists with the spatial coordinates of his picture rescue plaques, which could be used to locate them with a GPS receiver, similar to the popular outdoor game geocaching. Nor can he be sure that the walls on which he places his picture rescue plaques are even still standing at the time of the planned removal. Rather, he plays, once again, with the concept of chance. A form of chance that illuminates it in a special way. From the outside, it may seem coincidental that this very house was demolished. On the part of the house owner and the construction workers, it is deliberate. A plan is being fulfilled, a new house is being built because the old one was dilapidated, or the property is to be put to a new use. The intention of one generates the coincidence of the other. In this respect, Bazon Brock would speak of an archaeology of the future. While conventional archaeologists want to snatch traces of the past from the darkness of oblivion, Hasucha tries to illuminate the space of the future. But, and this is where the conception of the intervention *image rescue plaques* differs from many other artistic actions, Hasucha plans for the actions of others. While Bogomir Ecker insisted on a notarial guarantee of existence for the 500-year duration of his dripstone machine set up in the Hamburg Kunsthalle, Hasucha leaves his *image rescue plaques* to the passage of time. If a wall with a plaque is to be torn down, he does not intervene against it, does not seek to save either the wall or the plaque or the concealed graffiti section, and does not remove the respective plaque prematurely. He consciously leaves his works to what he sees as the random intentions of others. The image-saving plaques are also not a reference to the present, like his interventions *heute (today)* or *JETZT (NOW)*. The five letters h, e, u, t, e, cast in concrete and erected in an open field, which when read together form the word “heute”, point to the actuality of our existence as beings of the moment.



Heute (today), Sculpture Biennale Münsterland, 2005

This is even more striking with the illuminated letters J, E, T, Z, T, mounted on the roof of a building. At irregular intervals, they briefly illuminate the impenetrability of the night like flashes of light with a “JETZT”. A flash of light whose signature

burns itself onto the retina in the otherwise pitch-black night. The message, “NOW” lingers longer than the period of time it signifies; it is present on the retina longer, is perceived there clearly longer than it was in reality.



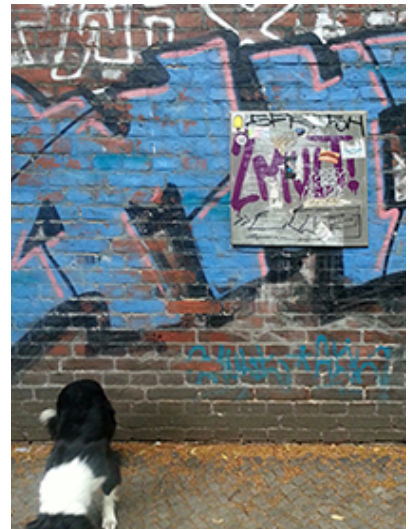
JETZT (NOW), Frankfurt am Main, 1990

"Jetzt (Now)" is the only factual existence of the stream of consciousness. Our consciousness can only think and feel in the infinitely short moment denoted by the adverb “now”.

The temporal dimension of the intervention *image rescue plaques*, on the other hand, has nothing to do with the temporal dimension of *JETZT*. Nor with its extreme opposite, infinity. The temporal dimension of the *image rescue plaques*, in connection with the openness of their existence until their unveiling, is the simultaneity of “having been” and “not yet being again”. It is the space of a distant expectation, the space of a twenty-year hope. Such a hope for a “will be again”, as Hasucha's intervention *image rescue plaques* could also be called, is in stark contrast to the anti-archaeology of the works of the Colombian artist Oskar Muñoz. In 2003, he drew a portrait on a stone without any paint, using only water. No sooner are the facial features recognisable than the first “brushstrokes” begin to evaporate. No trace of the drawn self remains – the other self evaporates in less time than its “construction” required, it disappears forever. This work unfolds its dialectical potential only through the attempt to preserve the depicted fleetingness and transience of being with a video camera. Muñoz practices anti-ontology, so to speak, on several parallel levels. In another work, he draws portraits of disappeared people with grease pencils on round and convex mirrors. The faces are

only visible, however, when the mirrors are fogged up, i.e. when they are brought to life by the water vapour contained in the breath condensing on the unpainted parts of the mirrors. But the painted mirrors and the video shot for documentation are, despite the common theme of transience and visibility, museum-preserved, ephemeral invisibility. Both are “preserved” most of the time invisibly in archives from their subject, transience.

Hasucha's intervention *image rescue plaques* is entirely different! It intervenes as a long-lasting public process. But what will happen after twenty years with the rescued and then liberated “works of art”? How will Hasucha, how will we then react to a possible destruction, a further painting over of the unveiled testimonies of time?



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More details about the projects illustrated in this text can be found in Volume I: Christian Hasucha *Öffentliche Interventionen* ISBN 978-3-86984-461-9 and in www.hasucha.de

Image Rescue Plaques

In April 2014, Christian Hasucha began mounting stainless steel panels over large-scale graffiti. he made a drawing and specified,

- a. they had to do with selected parts of the graffiti that were particularly beautiful, e.g., those parts could be found with a stencil
- b. that they were covered with the plate to conserve them - let's say for 20 years.
- c. that the plates would be removed after 20 years and the graffiti detail would be confronted with the prevailing circumstances in that time.