

## **permanent breakfast “Dissolving Borders“**

A number of impulse breakfasts have taken place under “permanent breakfast – dissolving borders“ since May 2002. Starting in Vienna, breakfast gatherings were held on an alternating basis in Czech, Austrian, Slovak and Hungarian cities and Austrian border towns. Different cross-border breakfast networks have emerged, which overlap, enter into exchange relationships and form more and more branches and sub-branches.

### **Border crossings**

Permanent breakfast is a project that is always close to the border. As a democratic rule, one refrains from crossing the border to the neighbour’s territory without being asked, and one possibly also refrains from closing this border to one's neighbour without being asked.

The borderline, this non-place that is nothing in itself but separates everything, has become the eponym for one of the favourite psychological diagnoses. Borderline belongs to the category of “emotionally unstable personality disorders“. Those affected tend to act out their impulses regardless of any consequences, showing frequent ups and downs in mood. Borderliners suffer from constant identity disturbances, which may cover areas from self-image to sexual orientation, occupational choice, long-term goals, value systems, and the desired type of partners or friends.

Manifesta 3, the “International Biennial of Contemporary Art“ took place in Ljubljana in 2000 under the title “Borderline Syndrome – Energies of Defence“: “Borderline Syndrome as a metaphor for present-day Europe.“ (Kathrin Rhomberg) – Collapse of the traditional ideologies (of bipolar “post-war categorizations“) – Newly jigsaw-puzzled fragments of (national) identity in dissociation from the globalization of the “free“ market. So much for the diagnosis.

## **Mental Borders**

Borders – since being forced to disappear from public view EU eastwards – have been transplanted into people's heads and have come to criss-cross bodies and censor ideas before these even have the chance to emerge. Our “dissolving borders“ project comprises the effort of revisualization. We place the breakfast table as an iridescent sign in places where the clear sign (barbed wire, frontier barrier) has long given way to a pure sense of taboo.

In the future, we might sit down for breakfast on the border between former East and West Germany, which still is or is increasingly becoming a poverty line again. Or perhaps on the borders of the former Imperial and Royal Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy as a collective memory of our regions?

## **Interior/Exterior Views**

The fact that normally not everybody is invited is expressed by us having the table go across the border, connecting interior and exterior.

In everyday life, too, borders frequently become perceptible only when they are explored, when attempts are made to cross them, when one starts to play with the fringes. Only in this way can we start to contemplate where and in which form a border may even make sense.

The punchline is of course that the borderline breakfast table creates an open border.

Invitation instead of deportation. Manifestation instead of a glass wall.

## **Spatial Zonings**

With our projects we are building up zigzag breakfast networks into the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Invitations are extended, towns become partners. Languages mingle, there is confusion in the codes used: what does an invitation for coffee mean on the main square of a Czech or an Austrian town? While on the one side passers-by might be sceptical and suspicious of being lured into buying something, on the other side the perception is marked by past

experiences of public events under a dictatorship. Our own learning experiences made during our initial breakfast tours formed the basis for a big EU project, “spatial zonings“ (2003/04/05): in this context, the impact of the public spaces in the border regions will be more closely investigated. A result of our research work has been the video documentation “searching for traces“, which is based on a number of interviews conducted with representatives of different population groups living in the border region.

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