

g e o r g k l e i n

m e t a . s t a s e n



Cables, streets and railroads are the arteries of our civilisation. Goods, information and people are shuttled from one place to another – uninterruptedly, busily, tirelessly. The installation transforms a tram wagon from Line 8 into an audiovisual space of alteration. The city appears in a tinted light, while tram noises, signals and announcements are musically processed live, creating an acoustic and visual alteration of our accustomed perspective of the world.

The theme of the travelling installation is growth. Like a magic word it is supposed to solve all the social and economic problems of our globalised society. Growth has to be relentlessly stimulated – worldwide, permanently, without limits. The installation confronts listeners with the prevailing ideology of growth in all spheres of life – health, business or politics – including all its excrescences and deformities.



These texts are permeated by musical processes, sharpening perception like a contrast medium. They render the theme aurally and visually perceptible, in the form of a spatial-acoustic metastasis with 111 tiny loudspeakers. The loudspeakers stick to the purple-tinted windows in small groups; from each one a black wire leads along the tram's ceiling to the front, producing a seemingly floral excrescence. Each group is sounded separately, so that the texts can be heard from two perspectives: as a babble of voices in the centre of the tram, which disentangles itself and becomes intelligible the closer one gets to the group of loudspeakers. However an acoustic metastasis can also suddenly occur, produced by ring modulation processes mutating the spoken texts into a chirping flying quickly through the space of the tram.

The sequence of texts is controlled by the tram itself by appropriating the announcement of stops with their characteristic ding-dong and using it as a chance impulse for playing a certain text. This results in a continually changing rendition corresponding to the 26 tram stops in Dresden. The familiar dingdong signal is also included, itself persistently modified in its frequencies.

The five speakers in the ceiling used for announcing stops are employed for playing clearly audible texts. They alternate with two floor-level speakers in order to introduce a growth topic like the announcement of a tram stop ("Could the earth crash if too many people live on it?") The two floor-level speakers also transmit the moving vehicle sounds of the tram, recorded live and musically transformed by means of resonance filters and delays. The result is the fundamental sound ambience for the tram.

The meta.stasen tram operates without a fixed schedule, floats along in regular traffic and appears unexpectedly. Passengers can decide when and where they get on and how long they travel. The journey into the coloured future is free-of-charge.

meta.stasen weltweit - unerwartet - zweistellig: Eine Wachstumsperspektive
meta.stases worldwide – unexpected – double-digit: a perspective on growth

Sound installation in a tram wagon at line 8 (Dresden-Hellerau)
in 26 stations, with 111 loud speakers and 3 news announcers
16-channel audio with live input and 17 windows tinted purple

Speakers: Emily Harris (NPR), Dirk Döbrich, Kerstin Schreiber (MDR)
Texts: original quotes on growth

40 minutes loop, random generated

Sept/26 – Oct/07 2007

21. Dresdner Tage der zeitgenössischen Musik
European Centre of Arts Hellerau (EZKH)

The texts are original quotes on the topic of growth spoken by news announcers from Dresden's MDR radio station and the US-American NPR news radio. They refer to growth in seven different areas: definitive growth, bodily growth and growth hormones, cancer growth, economic growth as news, economic growth in Dresden, economic growth strategies, political statements on growth. They contrast natural growth, which – unless pathological – always proceeds gradually, with globally propagated economic growth, which should be as unchecked as possible. The language of business "growth makers and pushers" is confronted with the language of cancer researchers, who regard this excessive enlargement as a communication failure between cells which "issue orders to grow to themselves"

