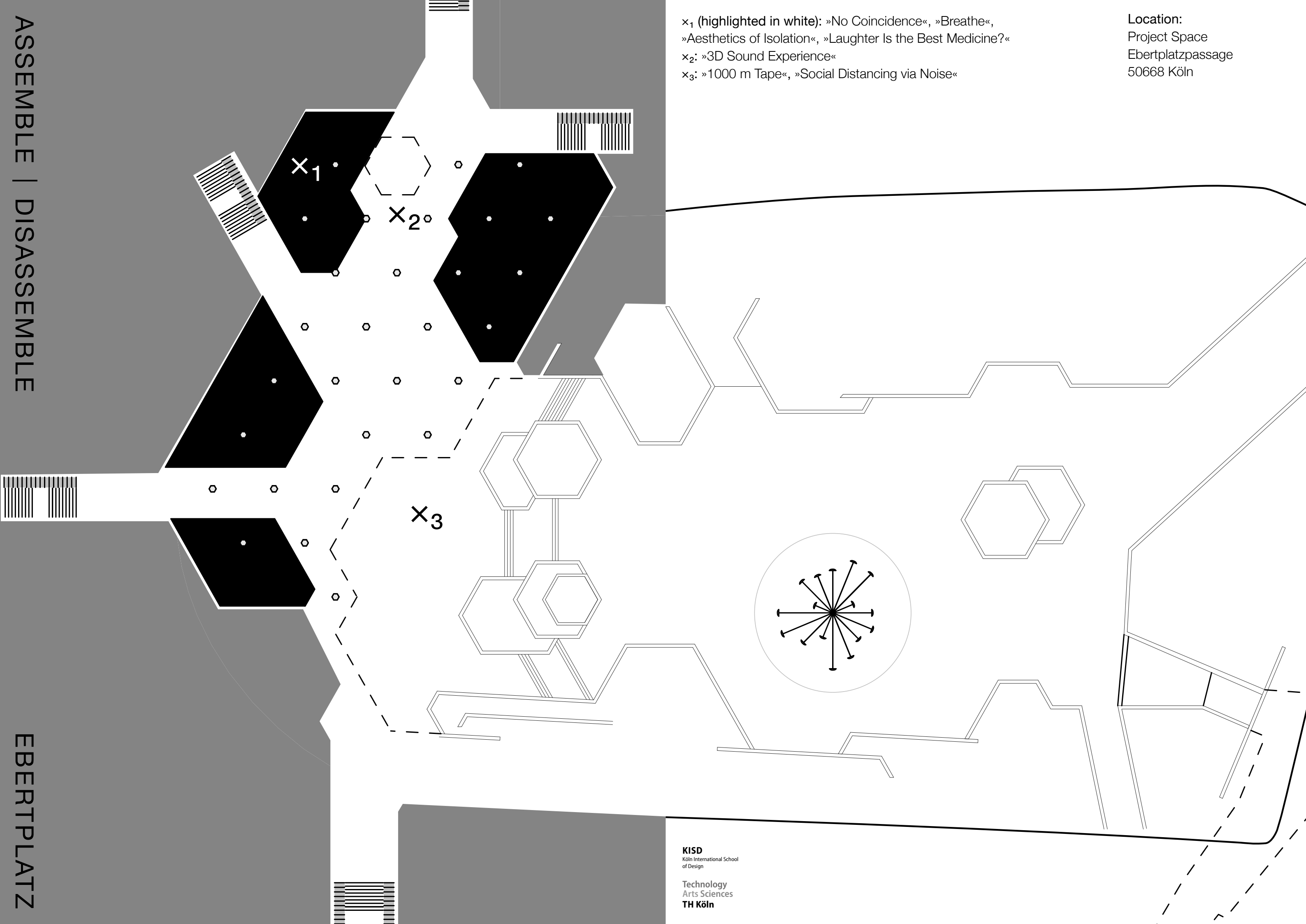




x₁ (highlighted in white): »No Coincidence«, »Breathe«,
»Aesthetics of Isolation«, »Laughter Is the Best Medicine?«
x₂: »3D Sound Experience«
x₃: »1000 m Tape«, »Social Distancing via Noise«

Location:
Project Space
Ebertplatzpassage
50668 Köln

Prof. Dr. Carolin Höfler
Assemble | Disassemble

When people gather in public, they appear on squares, in churches, parliaments, or lecture halls. They gather to demonstrate, pray, govern, or learn together. A central element of coming together in public space is the physical presence of actors. Gathered bodies stage plural sovereignty per se. The spatial arrangement they form is indisputable and their bodily masses demand recognition. Since the Corona crisis, collective situations have been avoided worldwide. The reorganization of social life in order to flatten the curve profoundly effects spatial structures of the city. Buildings, public places, cities, and entire states are sealed off, and mobility is reduced while the virus spreads at the same time. The Ebertplatz in Cologne will exemplify the effects of the pandemic on communication and action in social spaces. Time- and media-based works deal with the reorganization of the public ground, the choreography of distance, the expansion of surveillance, the viral spread of humor vs. paranoia as well as the auditory experience of pandemic silence and self-soothing strategies in parks. They measure the spatial situation in the »Corona Society« and show perspectives for a future after the crisis.

Max Brückner
3D Sound Experience

The main motive behind my project was to study how the technique of »3D Audio« can create a feeling of physical presence in the mind of the listener, thus enabling sensations of traveling using only the sense of »hearing«. A precondition for live recording and 3D Audio quality is a »binaural microphone«. These microphones imitate the physical attributes of sounds reaching our eardrums. Because these microphones are very expensive, I decided to build this piece of equipment myself. Researching the standards of sound engineering, modeling a prototype of my rig and executing these concepts, was the big first part of my project. After the hardware was finished, I focused on applying the techniques of »binaural audio« to the topic of »Ebertplatz«. In the following I went through a process of gathering different sounds and voices from the Ebertplatz. The aim was to create a »sound-profile« of Ebertplatz that could be experienced in »3D Audio«. With this technique the mind can locate the sounds and voices in a certain space, making the experience and statements more realistic and genuine. The outcome of my work is a »binaural microphone rig« and a selection of 3D sounds and interviews from Ebertplatz.

Mario Frank & Konstantin Hehl
Aesthetics of Isolation

»Aesthetics of Isolation« is a performative research-project that aims to find out what is happening in the process of isolation within a massmovement. We want to gain insight on the contrast between belonging to a group and being individually isolated. We are interested in the tension between individuals and autarcic isolation. With a group of 20 people we are studying movement by giving orders and placing people in formations. The given orders symbolize rules that people don’t question. By observing the group we are examining the principle of following rules from an objective and neutral perspective. The performance group is moving in predetermined formations over the Ebertplatz whilst developing their own dynamics. Everyone is wearing a blue overall-uniform. We are extracting a style of military parades and flight-formations and inject it into the performance. Neutral posture and facial expression as well as machine-like movement help focus on the mere movement. With this method we are using means that are also object of our subtle critique. Our research result forms a time-piece that conserves aesthetic principles that surround us in the lockdown phase of 2020.

Ruth Müller, Christian Müller, Johannes Förster & Marlene Neumann
1000 m Tape

»1000 m Tape« refers to a conceptual visualization of the distance regulations at public assembly on Ebertplatz. The shape language is a quotation of the architecture of the Ebertplatz. This work emerged out of a previous visual tape intervention which should remind the people who move, live and act in the public square to keep distance when assembling as a group. After our first intervention we closely worked with the city officials to come up with a concept which would make assembling possible again. During that time we came up with different approaches and concepts for a guidance system and decided on hexagons with an edge length of 150 cm and a smaller hexagon inside. The inner hexagon limits the room, in which the visitors of different events at Ebertplatz can stay and still keep distance to the people in the next inner hexagon. Furthermore, we planned the movement to and out of the hexagons before and after an event and came up with a path system between the hexagons, in which the distance of 150 cm is always present and can be kept by the people. To obey the rules and regulations in the current times is important to protect our right to assemble and minimize the risks for each and everyone.

Ayako Matsuda & Zoë Rush
Breathe

Pandemics transform urban landscapes. Cholera and yellow fever saw large areas of cities transformed into green spaces to benefit the health of citizens. During Covid 19 we are reawakened to how reliant we are on green spaces for our mental and physical well being.Our piece experiments with the abstract concept of »nature«, using films of insects, sand, trees, and water from within the city to explore alternatives to our perceptual division between the natural and unnatural elements of our urban environment. Behind the concrete streets we usually associate with cities, exists an ecosystem that we rely on to survive. We collected and assembled videos from across green spaces in Cologne to draw attention to the interconnection of this city's ecosystem. Can we create the meditative space associated with »being in nature« through technology? Converting spaces such as the Ebertplatz into green spaces comes at the price of vanishing cultural and community spaces within city centres. The content of these films is constantly repeated to try to create a synthetic experience of tranquillity within a busy transiting node of the city.

Marcelo Andregueti & Christopher Müller
Laughter Is the Best Medicine?

The COVID-19 Pandemic changed how we interact and also brought to light how absurd our society, culture, and politics can be. We are trapped in our homes, away from social interactions. And still, the capitalist economy wants us to keep consuming like nothing is going on (binge the next TV Series, keep buying, work from home or wherever...). And our so-called »Leaders« – with rare exceptions –, have no idea how to handle this, and even worse, most tried to dismiss it as long as they could. Faced with desperation, some started to support unproven »miracle« drugs (as the case with Chloroquine), or even going to the extreme of suggesting cleaning your body from the inside by injecting bleach. With such an absurd scenario to deal with we turn to laughter. After all, what could be more human than laugh in the face of tragedy? Laughter can be a therapeutic and liberating force, and comedy provides reflections on the absurdity with doses of humor and chaos. On our »Assemble« you find an animation, a sound collage, and a printed mural highlighting the absurd we find ourselves on. And laughter, just like the coronavirus that got us here, can too be contagious, pathological, and even turn into death.

Martin L. Sistig & David J.R. Sieverding
No Coincidence

Public space in democracies is freely usable by everyone and enables random meetings of individuals who otherwise would not have any point of contact with each other. This openness automatically leads to confrontation with the foreign and creates a feeling of insecurity in some people's minds. At Ebertplatz such insecurity is to be taken away by extensive video surveillance: Everything that happens on the square is recorded by soulless eyes of numerous cameras and is transmitted to a room completely unknown by visitors of Ebertplatz, although they all assemble there on screens. The so-called »operator room« is the heart of the surveillance apparatus at Ebertplatz. Remaining unseen, but seeing everything. The operator's task is to evaluate everything that happens on the footage and determines what is normal. Who is the operator? Where is he/she? Is it a human being or has an overpowering computer system already taken control? Is there anything coincidental left, if algorithms predict human actions? Does public life exist without gathering with strangers, without meeting random people, and without being confronted with different behaviour or culture? Does more surveillance really mean less uncertainty?

Organisation:
Prof. Dr. Carolin Höfler with Mario Frank, Konstantin Hehl & Julian Hoffmann, Köln International School of Design of the TH Köln in cooperation with the Urban Space Management of the City of Cologne as part of the temporary use of Ebertplatz, accompanied by the research center »Real-Time City« of the TH Köln

Opening times :
Thur — Sun, July, 16 — 26, 2020, daily, 3 — 8 p.m.

Project authors on site:
Fri — Sun, July, 17 — 19, 2020, 4 — 7 p.m.,
Fri — Sun, July, 24 — 26, 2020,, 4 — 7 p.m.

Performances on the Ebertplatz:
Max Brückner, »3D Sound Experience«
Fri — Sun, July, 17 — 19, 2020, 4 & 6 p.m.
Fri — Sun, July, 24 — 26, 2020, 4 & 6 p.m.

Johannes Förster, Ruth Müller, Christian Müller & Marlene Neumann, »Social Distancing via Noise«
Fri — Sat, July 17 — 18, 2020, 5 p.m.
Fri, July 24, 2020, 5 p.m.

Graphic Design:
Julian Hoffmann