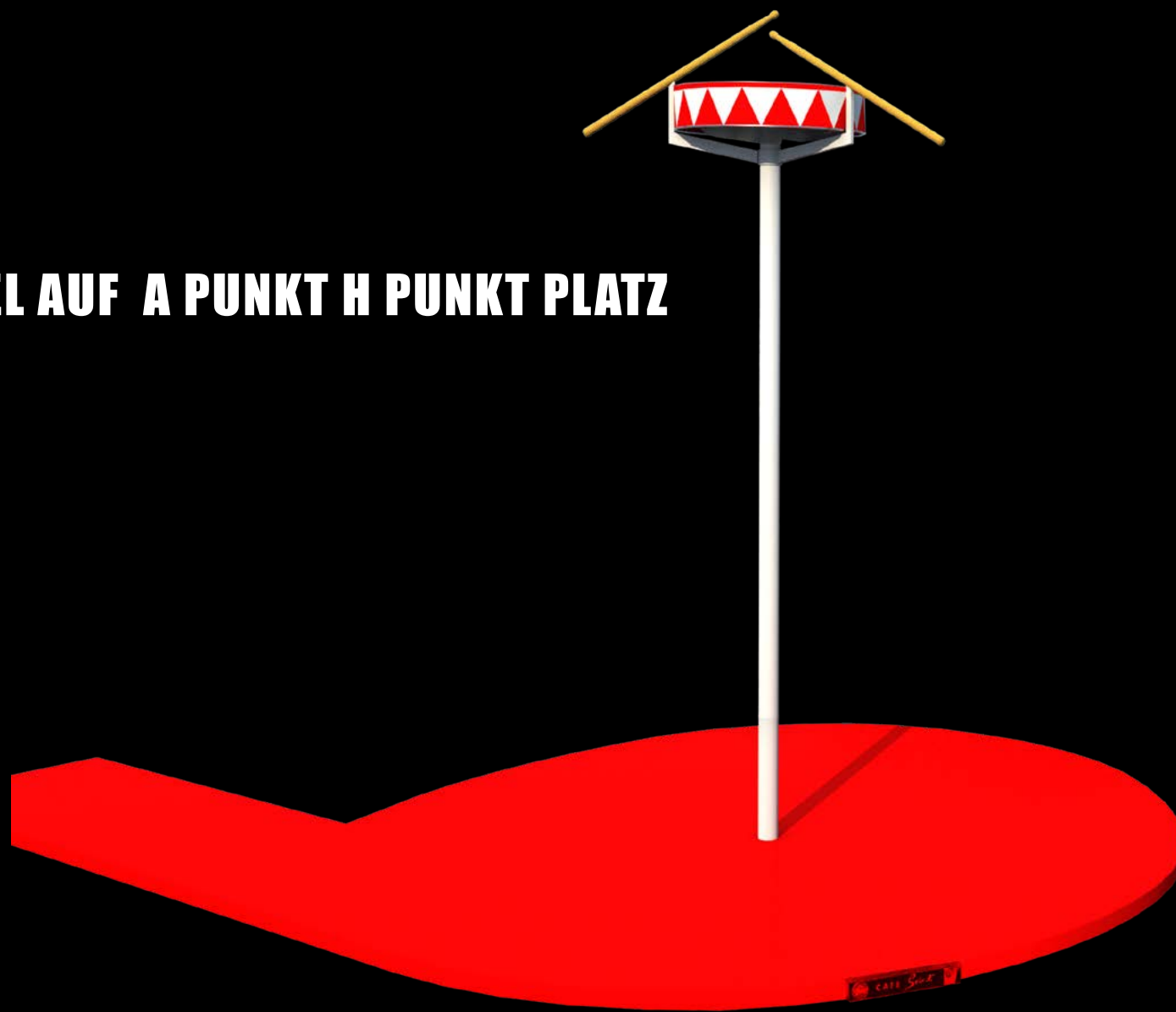


LICHTTROMMEL AUF A PUNKT H PUNKT PLATZ

PRESSE | EN



For millennia, people have devalued members of other groups or tribes by presenting them as infectious and disgusting. Diseases can be both trigger and bogus justification for racism and other forms of xenophobia.

Philipp Hübl

Fear and suspicion of the “other”, the “outsider”, has seemingly become officially sanctioned, validating the concept of Blood and Earth, and the dogma of the far-right is gaining further popularity and acceptance in mainstream political discourse. Just as the Spanish Flu helped fuel the rise of the Nazi Party 100 years ago, Covid 19 is fanning the flames of resurgent fascism.

The project aims to draw attention to this growing threat with an installation and a series of events to be held in outdoor locations around the city. The light canopy on Andreas Hofer Platz will be transformed into a representation of the tin drum from Gunter Grass’s anti-fascist novel of the same name. Additionally the car park roof on which the LICHTTROMMEL is based will be painted red, referencing the Blut und Boden concept. This installation, which will be visible from many different areas of the city will serve as a beacon, embodying active public action as opposed to “deadly silence”, and a focus for the other activities.

First at the opening of the installation at Andreas Hofer Platz, then once per month, for the duration of the project, thousands of flyers, drum sticks and metal cans will be distributed to passers-by. At the same time local artists will stage interventions, such as poetry readings, film projections and concerts. The artistic interventions will be kept in the form of a public surprise, a spontaneous release from daily tasks. This will involve ordinary people on the street in the artistic process as well as raising public awareness of the need to actively oppose nationalism and other forms of prejudice.

Even before the Covid crisis in Europe we were dealing with the far-right Identitarian Movement, either the light version “Europe of free nations” or the stronger one “White Europe”, fueled by waves of refugees fleeing war and the effects of the climate crisis. This phenomenon is linked to a new trend on the extreme right, so-called ‘eco-fascism’ springing directly from the concept of the Blood and Earth relationship (Blut und Boden) on which Nazi ideology was based.

LICHTTROMMEL AUF A-PUNKT-H-PUNKT-PLATZ



INSTALLATION

Andreas Hofer Platz falls out of circulation regarding its name. It is a familiar and at the same time strange, stable, boring, abstract “enclave” in the city center. The central feature, the 28m high pillar in the middle of the square, soars towards the sky like a silent scream. Although most passersby perceive it as a massive undefined monument, it is actually only a lamppost, the main source of light for Andreas Hofer Platz.

Andreas Hofer himself was a hero of Austria, Tyrol, a feudal warrior who fought for the freedom of his country and against the reforms of Napoleon. A hero who fought for a collective identity, his name was appropriated by the Nazis to suit their own agenda.

The Tin Drum by Günter Grass (a member of the Waffen-SS) is an anti-Nazi novel about a boy, Oskar Matzerath, a social enigma, someone extraordinary, whose individualism is discordant with the collective. Oskar refuses to speak in a world that will not hear his words. Instead, he uses his drum and his screams to counter the apathy of his fellow citizens in the face of fascism. A hero of individualism.

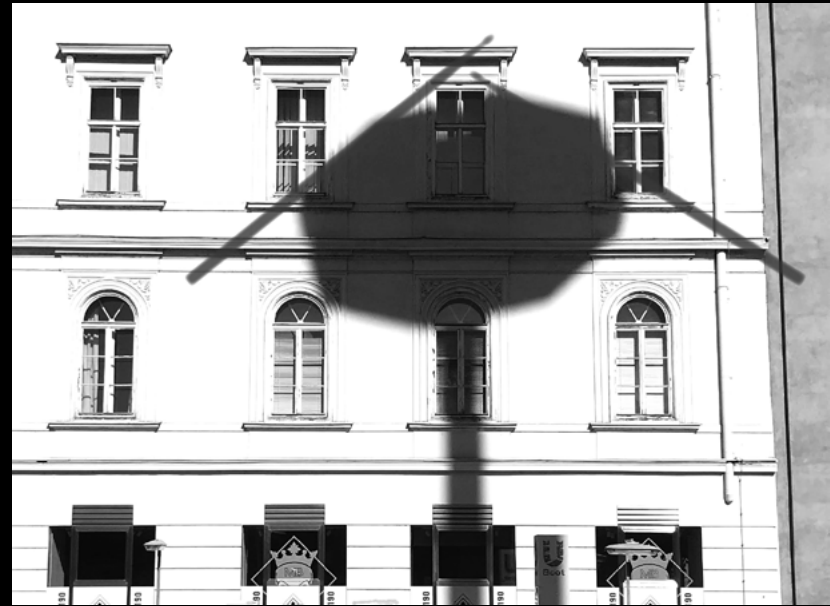
The contrapoints but at the same time associations between these “heroes” equate the light canopy on Andreas Hofer Square with Oskar Matzerath’s tin drum. The transformation of the tin lamp into the tin drum is a scream of warning to a passive society about the growing hostility, inequality, and hypocrisy that we promote ourselves. It is an act of opposition to the reality in which we are forced to live, and the systems that created it.

The installation transforms architectural Eastern Bloc style nostalgia into an enticing object, focusing the view of the passerby on the Tin Drum, and at the same time on the light canopy, unrecognised as such by the greater majority of inhabitants.

It is during our darkest moments that we must focus to see the light.

Aristotle

In the installation, as in the novel, the tin drum acquires a string of associations emphasizing social distress and political urgency for a population incapable of resistance and in denial of growing oppression and crimes against humanity.



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