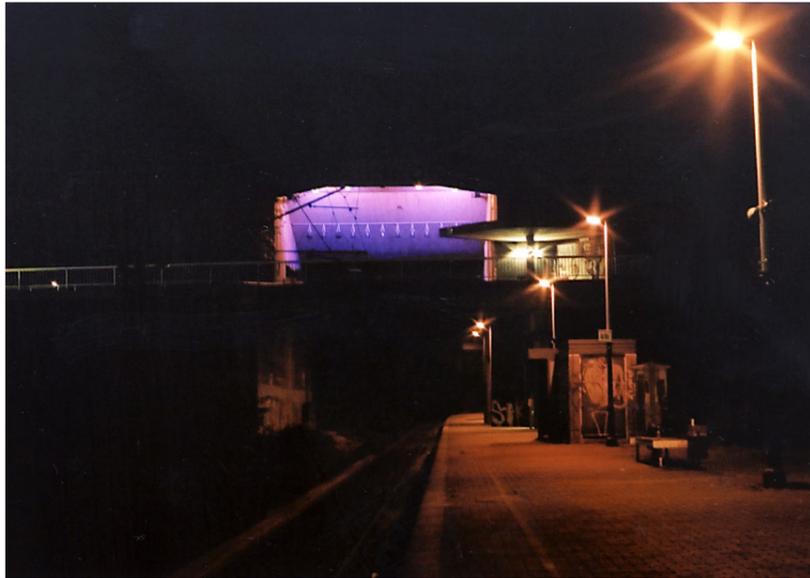


g e o r g k l e i n

Ortsklang Marl Mitte

**Ortsklang Marl Mitte. blaues blach. Viel Kunst. Wenig Arbeit.
Site Sound Marl Midtown. Blue Brat. Much Art. Little Work.**



Speakers: Becko Barjami, Mustafa Emra, Severjan Memeti, Katharina Pulina, Sandra Pulina, Helge Salmikau, Monja Scharnetzki, Timo Scharnetzki, Kathrin Wolf

**Sound-Light-Installation at Station Marl Mitte
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Utopia is, not only literally, no place. The non-existence of a place is an essential quality of Marl. The attempt to build it, as was attempted in Marl Centre in the 60s and 70s in order to give the surrounding towns and worker settlements a centre, is a constantly recurring motif of human civilisation: beginning with the dream of a heavenly Jerusalem until the visionary cities of the last century. The train station "Marl Centre" is covered by a concrete hall which has no function: it does not serve as a waiting room since the waiting are all standing on the station platform below. No train tickets are sold here, there is no information service; the hall opens in a gaping void to the south-west and consequently provides no shelter from rain, sun, wind or snow. On the contrary; because of the barred openings in the side walls the draught pulls as in a wind tunnel, all the stronger. Neither does a stair lead down to the platform from here since one is located in its own stairwell beside the hall. The only function of this building is tautological: it bears the inscription "Train Station", in giant letters.



It is precisely because it is a non-functional, transitory room that it presents itself as a free space, an association space, one, however, with ambivalent aspects. It is also a cave/hole from which one only looks out – often through bars. Not only the train station "Marl Centre", but also its surroundings are marked by an urban desolation characteristic of modern city suburbs and satellites. The decline is all the more painfully present when contrasted with its previous wealth (mining/chemistry), attested to by the art treasures in the nearby sculpture gardens. One hears "Much art, little work," in conversations and moving away is an often named alternative. To leave Marl in order to do something in the evenings is an established practice. The train station with its train and bus traffic is a crucial location especially for young people without cars: from here you can leave.

The sound material was won entirely from this location, the train station itself. For the first part, the sound of the bars in the side walls, of two lengths, hence two pitches (deep f and middle high f), which formed the sound background in the concrete hall by means of four loudspeakers and 2 subwoofers distributed in the space. The other sound material consists of graffiti inscriptions from the waiting room on the train platform where the conflicts of the locale are laconically and bluntly expressed: conflicts between the right and left, foreigners and Germans, adults and youth; between declarations of love and of despair, "no future" and sunny optimism. "Suakraz, you're the best." "Sick kids. Live in their own filth. Pigs." "Dear Geli, dear Vanni, I hope you forgive me! I'm really crazy about you!" "Life is hard + unjust" "Turks! White Power is the best thing in Marl!" "Love is a name. Sex is a game. Forget the name and play the game." "Embellish the city gates with Nazi heads" "I hate you right-wing pigs!!! – and I hate you, you left-wing wimp!"

These sayings were collected and then spoken to tape by young people from Marl. The recordings were arranged into a voice choir which sounded out of twelve loudspeakers hanging from the ceiling of the hall. What previously adorned the walls unnoticed now became an unmediated acoustic presence for the passers-by. Therewith, by means of three CD players playing at different time intervals, a constantly changing Voice-Bar arrangement was created. At night, the inner space of the hall was lit by a utopian blue such that the transformation of the hall could be recognised from far away. A billboard on the side of the train station was rented and, up to the title, offered a free, white space such that for the duration of the installation a process of public comment came into being, intensified by a metal sign mounted on the back wall of the hall on which stood: "Much art. Little work."