

pitscher's journal

21.-28. February 2020



Dear Diary,

As part of the squatted.onLine exhibition during THE WRONG Biennale I am squatting the Keck Kiosk in Basel. My intention is to work on whatever I have to work on and have screens that show passengers on the street what I am doing on my computer and laptop. A livestream will be installed in the booth for people online to interact with me.

For the duration of my stay I will write about my experiences in this journal...

yours truly,
@pitscher

Day 0

I arrived at 15:15 in Basel. My suitcase and backpack is full with stuff that I collected at home and might need for the next couple of days. But I forgot my sleeping bag.

I am supposed to meet Yann at the Critical Media Lab...

He was busy, so I went to the exhibition at H3K and went through the magazines in the library. Neither of which were really interesting for the upcoming week.

Together we went to the city, to go to Arianna's where I will sleep tonight. Her house is amazing and very close to the kiosk. If it's too cold at Keck I can always go back and ask to sleep at the house. They have their key in a lock outside. The code is 6572.

I left my luggage at the house and we inspected the kiosk. It is located in a nice area, next to a little park as part of the cultural district "Kaserne". The inside is big enough to put a 90cm mattress and have some

table space to work. I'm curious if I can make it a bit more cozy in there.

Yann went home and I went back to Arianna's place. I will hang out here for a while and have a shower. Later I will meet Andrea, the other organizer of squatted.



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d me up at home and we went for beer and met with Yann at a restaurant. Great Pizza! [Y] left early and [A] and me went for another drink to a bar that had a tiny dancefloor in the back. After moving a bit to music we got bored and left. We took the key to the kiosk before we went home. At the house I got another schnapps from my temporary housemates and went to bed.

Day 1

I woke up around 9 but couldn't get up for the first 50 minutes. Not used to drinking anymore...

I was supposed to meet [A] at 10 at the Kiosk.

Got there around 10:15, but he was late, too.

Good, it's not only me who takes this whole thing kinda slow.

When he arrived, we went to a café first, sat down in the sun and discussed the plan for today.

At some point we will go to Germany to do some shopping. Maybe I will stop by in Weil where my brother used to live.

- Tee
- Müsli
- Hafermilch
- Öl
- Kaffeebohnen
- Herdplatte
- Bier/schnapps
- Taschentücher

After I came back from my shopping tour I went to the brocanthaus on the opposite site of the street. I asked if I could borrow some TVs and an electric heater. After an initial hesitation

the owner was very nice, so I gave him a 200 Franken deposit for those 3 things.

I cleaned my new home a bit and started to set up the router and TVs. I wanted to get the raspberry pi running over which the livestream will be constantly running.

When [A] came and brought me some blankets and a pillow I couldn't connect to the pi over ssh. Maybe it is using the same IP of one of the other connected devices? I will try to fix it tomorrow.

[Y] came with his modular synthesizer and we plugged him into the mixer and to one PA speaker that was already part of the kiosk. The sound quality of this setup was horrible, but we still had a lot of fun dancing alone in front of the booth. Two friends came by to drink some Rotkäpchen Sekt and we managed to stop some passengers on the street who were wondering. All in all a really nice housewarming party.

Ahh, I also had a chat with two interesting characters on the street. First I met Mattheo, who seemed kind of lost. He is a carpenter and

is filing a patent for wooden bike, which is why he went to Bern today. There he went through the process of finding similiar patents. The worker, a chinese-swiss, said that he has a folder with very strange patents and that some day he wants to make a book out of it. I gave Mattheo my card, so he can give my e-mail to the guy from the patent buero.

Then I met Stephan, who said he was a dancer. He made an instrument out of an alpine horn and suggested that we could play a bit at the kiosk.



We just went to a food court close by and ate a Sabich. Really good! Now we are back at the kiosk to play a bit more music and drink some beers. Then I will have my first night here...

Day 2

I slept long, even though people outside were quite loud during the night. I feel a bit groggy from all those beers last night. I guess I will take it slow today.

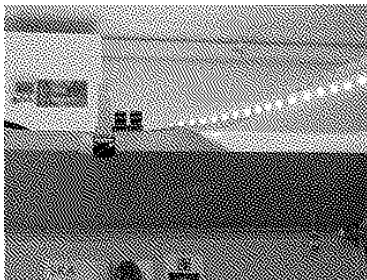
I managed to set up the two TVs and am streaming my computer to the left display and my phone to the right. People don't really seem to care about my presence in the kiosk. The weather is sunny and I have my door wide open.



The owner of the restaurant Parterre One next to me just apologized for the smoke, as they were making a BBQ. He invited to me have some food and I got an amazing plate of smoked salmon, ribs, steak and potatoes.

I watched some random youtube videos. One documentary about the U-Bahn in Vienna. It's called Alltagsgeschichten and I really enjoy

the format. Maybe I should do something similar here. The producer just walks around and interviews random people, follows an elderly woman who is completely lost and talks to the youth.



I managed to connect to my raspberry and the stream to twitch is working well. I am trying to stream to facebook, but somehow that doesn't

work. I think it has something to with the encrypted stream they require.

I'm live! Some of my friends from uni joined the chatroom and shared my performance on social media. A friend from Cologne joined the chatroom and I realized I wanted to talk to him since December.

Cnrd is a great young artist/programmer/designer and we talked for almost an hour about a project that I am working on with some friends from Berlin. We want to redesign the fully funded residencies platform. The idea is to create an inclusive space for people to find opportunities to go abroad. During our discussion he brought up another idea of reversing the situation for artists. Instead of applying for exhibitions and residencies it would be nice to have a platform for curators to explore art that is not part of the mainstream. Definitely something to keep on examining.

For the past 2 hours I was mindlessly scrolling the internet, time to go to bed.

Day 3

Got up early today. It's even more sunny than yesterday. I had porridge for breakfast. Big amount. Made some coffee and am watching the news now.

Coronavirus in Italy. Elections in Hamburg, not a lot of far right voters. Greens got a 15% boost from last election. Christian Democrats lost a big amount of voters.

Stephan passed by and we talked about another project he wants to realize. He wants to make a radio play about a refugee from Prussia, who left the country when he was 6, but never talked about his experience until he was 80 years old. But the audio should not be linear. He wants to randomize the story, so every time someone listens to you get to know something different. Sounds like an easy thing to do in the web. [S] invited me for lunch later, which I gladly take.

Someone in the chat asked me to do Yoga, so I opened a short instruction video and did it. Later today a friend from Switzerland is coming

to visit me. Now I had of to Ss apartment for lunch.

We had some kind of pilaw and sat on the balcony in the sun. We talked about our experiences in different places of the world. [S] was a politician in the Kanton for a while, he worked as a teacher in Tansania. Institutions



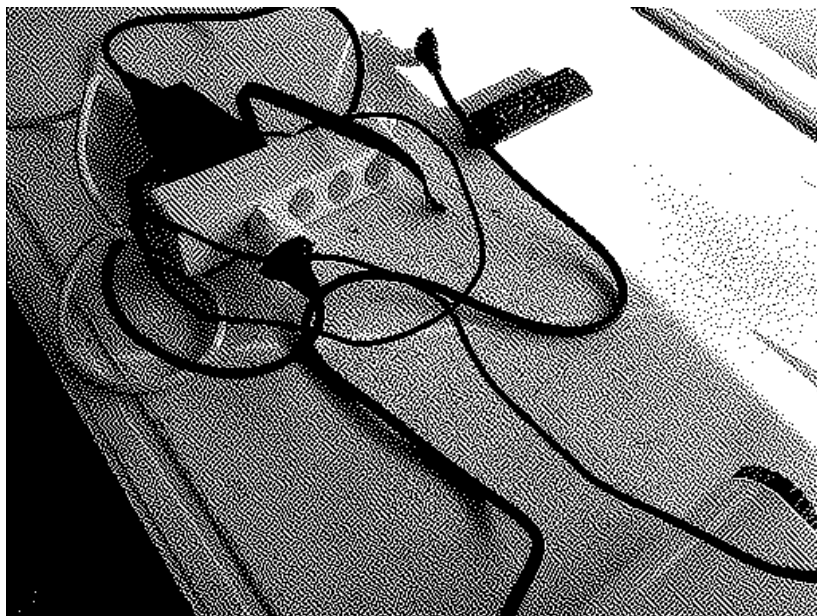
are not addressing corruption. He went to New York to the NYU for classes in '91 and we talked about Merce Cunningham (which he did not like to dance himself, too many things going on). He played on his alp horn and we discussed to jam tomorrow, so I could figure out how to pick up the sounds and digitally alter them.

I am back in the Keck Kiosk and just finished to drink a coffee in the sun. Fabian is coming soon.

He arrived with a friend and I made another coffee for them. We talked about Japan, as F

was doing the same trip that I am planning this year. His friend told me a bit more about the university in Basel and that they have enough money to buy equipment and even pay their students if they are doing work for uni. Then F already had to leave to go watch a movie with his sister...

The rest of the night was uneventful. I started to work on this journal and made a little css graphic for the drawer.



Day 4

I first woke up around 9, but decided to sleep a bit longer. -- Next time I woke because the whole house was shaking! Fuck. I thought some drunk driver crashed into the kiosk. As it was completely dark I was not sure how much car was inside of the house. I got out of bed asap, opened the door, still with sleepy eyes and two guys next to pickup looked at me in disbelief.

One of them was laughing, but quickly contained himself. They told me that they hit the edge of the canopy and moved the whole booth around 50cm. They called their boss, I tried to get the contact of Maurits (the owner). The boss filed a report and said that the police is not coming because it is 'only' a damage to property.



After all the trouble I decided to go to the shared house and have a proper shower. That felt really good. I feel like a new person now

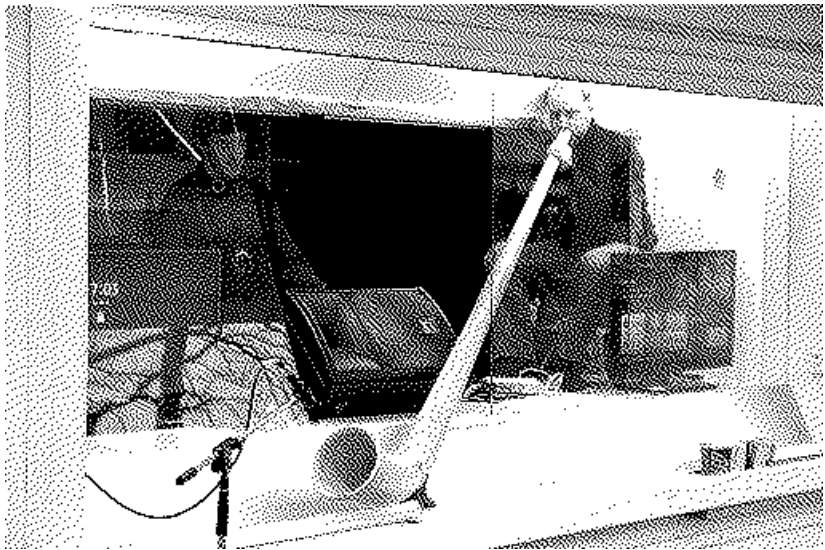
and my mood is much better. I will make a canned pea soup, because I didn't have a good breakfast.

When [M] came later he was shocked to hear that the police is not coming, when they are supposed, but when they are not they are there. So he went to the station, but came back empty handed half an hour later. It seems that the insurance is taking care of this. The outhouse next to the kiosk is ripped open as one wall seems to be attached to something and didn't want to move with the rest of the house.

I still feel a bit tired and down. The weather changed to dark grey...

[S] came with his alp horn. We will go to the Kulturbuero to ask for a cable that we need for the microphone.





Hahaha, that was an amazing performance. We decided to record some sounds before, because I didn't manage to route the sound through my computer. [S] uses the horn as a kind of didgeridoo and not in the conventional way. So he creates drones and different rythms. He also makes these sounds that I associate with some invented language. His ex-wife came to visit and asked if she could make some photos. We opened the windows and [S] was sitting on the windowsill, the horn ranging out of the window. I played with the prerecorded sounds, that I looped and distorted with different effects. At some point a child came and put her head

into the horn and started singing into it. Another child was looking at us in a mixture of horror and excitement.

After 25 minutes we stopped playing and even the sun came out. We made a little break and



started a second session for another 15 minutes, but this time it was not as good. The first try, it flowed better...

We drank a beer and talked a bit about life and music, I gave [S] my card and he left.



I was sitting in my bed surfing the web, when I saw a person approaching the windows. I looked at him briefly and turned my attention

back to my laptop. I looked again and realized that it is my brother. Holy shit. I haven't seen

him in 2 years and he was not answering any of the messages that I sent him. He lives in Weil am Rhein for 10 years already and gradually became more and more detached from our family. As he told me, he doesn't want anything to do with us anymore. He is fine the way he lives and has work on construction every now and then. Just yesterday he had his last working day and is looking for a job again. I was so happy to see him! He told me, he could not watch his small brother living on the street in 'his' city. He invited me to sleep at his place, but he sold all of his furniture, because he wanted to move out a couple months ago. I declined and told him about my performance and why I am sitting here. He invited to go to McDonald's, so we went and had a burger together. Afterwards we drank a beer at the kiosk and talked about our lives and what has happened. I can not share his wish for solitariness, as I more and more feel the need to strengthen the bonds with people I like. But I can accept his decision. He does not want to have anything to do with our family anymore. My brother left after Mark arrived. We have a

common friend in Leipzig and he saw my instagram story. I invited him over and asked if he wants to play music on thursday, which he gladly accepted. He also got something to smoke, so we had a joint, listened to music and looked at the street. Later [A] joined us and the 3 of us were sitting, listening and looking. I told them about the residency platform that I am currently working on and asked if they want to join. [A] is thinking about it and I showed him how far we are and what the time schedule is for this year.

At some point somebody knocked at the window and asked if he could get in. I invited the stranger and he told us that he grew up in this area. When he was a child they would go to the bakery and get a bun, then they came to this kiosk and got some sweets and make a sandwich out of both. After the shop closed it used to be empty for some years and then they made the Kaserne a cultural area, so the Keck Kiosk was used for performances. But he never so anybody sleeping inside and was quite bewildered when I told him that I was. I invited him to come over for coffee tomorrow and he said he would bring

Gipfeli (croissants).

[M] left and [A] stayed a bit longer. A storm started. It's raining and it's super windy.

[A] took the tram home and now I am slightly stoned in my tiny home. 2 friends are chatting on my livestream and we are playing games like "ho am I" and counting, sometimes both together.

Simultaneously I am watching

"Alltagsgeschichten" again. It is really nice how the interviewer is asking empathetic questions and does not seem to have judgement against anyone, if drug addict, former SS soldier or housewife. I closed the blinds and people are standing in front of the window and discussing loudly. I made an audio recording of that. I will watch the rest of the documentary and close my eyes.

Day 5

I slept long today. It's 11 in the morning. I don't feel like getting up just yet, so I will look through some img-boards and stay in bed for a while. Someone in the chatroom just asked if I was still in bed, it's noon now. I should get up.



I managed to go to the toilet and brush my teeth. The weather is cold, but it's not raining and sometimes the sun comes through the clouds. I will make some coffee and have ramen noodles for breakfast.

I watched news and some yt videos about machine learning and light tracing. I also downloaded the livestreams from twitch and I think for the exhibition I want to play them in timelapse.

Ah, I have to bring back the cable that I

borrowed from Kulturbuero yesterday.

I worked a bit more on this journal and stared out of the window to watch people a lot. One of the street guys Thomas came and asked for a cigarette. Two guys were looking at what I was doing on my computer for a while and talked about hypertext. It's the first time that this happened and as I was using my computer I felt like I had to 'perform' for them. I inspected the website and while they were talking I opened what I thought was relevant for them.

I've been sitting here for 3 hours now. I will go to the toilet and make pasta and pesto for lunch. Afterwards I really have to finish an image that showcases another performance I will do in a mall in Salzburg and I have to write a text about this years transmediale. I didn't go to the toilet, nor did I make pasta. Because an author approached my window and I invited her inside. I asked if she wanted tea and so I filled my pan with water and started boiling it. Our conversation immediately started to resolve around labels. I am an artist. You

say you are an artist? Are you an artist? No, I am an author. -- That's more professional. The author described a current problem, where she has to find a a videofile and send it to an institution for display. The problem seems to be the format of the video. I suggested that I could help. I asked her if she has a website and she showed me a flash page made in 2001, last time updated in 2010. Archeological. She wanted me to help her more in the studio, but as I will be going to Japan soon I had to decline. The prospect of working for her and digitizing and helping [B] with her works seemed fun. [B] told me she was in Japan for a while and has a lot of footage that she never used. I asked if I could see it and if we could collaborate on generative video work. Maybe some day.

As we drank tea and talked about life and work and the internet she said "Ich bin gegen das Internet". No social media, no remote work, but e-mail is fine.

[S] also came in to ask if the performance on Friday is still on. Sure. [S] and [B] have a common friend. Bs partner. [B] is very concerned about her privacy. I told her that she is on

camera on the internet and how I want to use the footage for the exhibition. She was also concerned about other artists stealing her work, which I deeply oppose. I think 'stealing' as an artist is fine as you can never reproduce a work. The stealer puts his own handwriting on the concept. But maybe she meant something different, I want to talk more about this with her in the future. Tomorrow she will pass by with the film and we try to make it work together. Maybe I will visit [B] in her atelier in Weil am Rhein, too.

In any case it was a very fruitful and pleasant experience.

I just had some time for myself. I made pasta with pesto and beetroot. Watching videos on yt about dada and classical greek sculptures. [A] came by and now we work side by side. I'll try to start the fucking image for Salzburg.



I did a 3d vizualisation in sketchup and as I was removing the watermark somebody looked at the TV and said it's amazing what I can do. I invited him in, as it is pretty cold outside. He told me about his life and that he was educated in political science. Now he is in activist and writes. He came from the south of Nigeria and applied for refuge in Italy. Got accepted. In Africa people want to become kings or queens. People are working against each other, not together. He wanted to leave and walk a bit more. I asked if he was selling. He's new here.

I am tired. I'll smoke a bit, get to bed and watch another episode of Alltagsgeschichte.

Day 6

It's my last day at the kiosk. Feels nostalgic. I woke up early, but stayed in bed until 11 and read stuff on my phone. An article from the New Yorker about phone location data and how datasets are sold to advertisers. 'Anonymous' location data can easily be traced to individual people. So the New Yorker found and followed some people in power.

It's raining again. And it's grey. I had coffee and müsli and watched the news.

[B] came to visit me. She found another person to help her with the video file, but we watched some of her films that she produced in Japan. The first was a body builder show in the rail station in Kyoto overlaid with a beautiful choir soundtrack. The images connected to the audio form an interesting nostalgia that is neither sad or happy. The other one was similar in style, but depicted a puppet player (that I have mistaken for a robot first), who performed only for one person and two boys

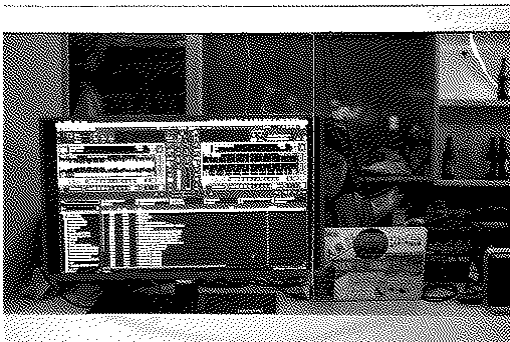
playing and fighting in what seemed like a bus or small house. It was interesting to see again how private she seems about her work and her life. As I installed VLC on the ipad she was concerned that the app would take her videos and I had to reassure her that it is made by an open source community that has no commercial interest in her data.

I asked [B] for advice on the project I am planning for Salzburg. The working title is "Visitors from the future" and she liked it. But she had a lot of concerns on how I labeled the central gathering place as 'Headquarter'. It is too militaristic, so we tried to come up with different names. Camp, park or office. We drank tea and I told her that I want to visit her studio. She will come tomorrow morning and watch me set up my stuff in the gallery.

I can not believe that I will be leaving the kiosk tomorrow. It became a cozy and almost homely environment. Certain people on the street are passing every day. That they can watch me and my screens does not feel awkward anymore. On the contrary, I really like sitting

in this glass box and having people interact with me every now and then. I once read that ... Some people were just passing by and talked about the kiosk as a place of their childhood. They were very happy it is still used today. I think I read about Marcel Duchamps studio in New York that was also open to the public. But I can not find any evidence online right now.

Another storm is coming. We wanted to make another closing party for my last night. But I would rather stay inside and just hang out with some people and look out of the window. Marklando is bringing his laptop and will play some tunes.



He is playing some weird 90s chillout musik. It's fun. We drink beer and look out of the window.

Sometimes I work on this journal and add images, sometimes we talk. He is recording the mix, so I will put it up on github later.

It was nice having him around. We called our common friend. We had him and other lovely people in the kiosk over videochat for a while. Dann haben wir aufgelegt. [M] started to show videos of planes for the people outside. After he left, I played a bit longer. Had to think of my brother and my mom.



