



Labor Europa

.....OSNABRÜCK.....

17.—27.08.2023

POSSIBILITIES
DIALOGUES
EXPERIENCES



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POSSIBILITIES – DIALOGUES – EXPERIENCES

GREETING

Katharina Pötter | Johannes Dälken | Patricia Mersinger
Wolfgang Beckermann | Christine Grewe | Anush Darbinyan

Europe is a densely settled continent that will soon comprise 50 countries and a population of more than 800 million. Its landscape, its culture and its people, first and foremost, are correspondingly diverse. We thus had every reason to be curious about our young guests from 16 different European countries, who came to Osnabrück during the 375th anniversary of the Peace of Westphalia in order to participate in the Lab Europe project.

Once again, Lab Europe saw people meeting not at a conference table, but in a shared creative work process. Here it became evident that the European idea of integration, peace and democracy, of open-mindedness and pluralism, is no distant vision: In the labs for history, visual art & media and performance, these values were constantly experienced and realised by the participants in the most enriching way.

I am convinced, therefore, that the participants will take away important impulses for their future professional and private lives from this experience. And I hope that this project has encouraged them to continue to approach their fellow human beings with curiosity and to look for what they have in common and what unites them, rather than what divides them.

Katharina Pötter
Lord Mayor of the
City of Osnabrück



I am very grateful to the Felicitas and Werner Egerland Foundation for providing the decisive financial contribution to make this project a reality. My thanks also go to the cooperating cultural institutions and to the Berufsschulzentrum Westerberg, as well as to the numerous committed individuals who contributed to the success of the project.

More than 30 young people make their way to Osnabrück from all over Europe, in order to engage in an artistic dialogue spanning the subjects of culture of remembrance, a common understanding of peace and European perspectives. A moving and inspiring experience for everyone involved – for the participants as well as the audience.

Lab Europe is a project very much after the heart of our founder, Felicitas Egerland: Born in 1930, she lived through the terrors of war while growing up and, as a young woman, observed firsthand the arduous process of European neighbours growing to once more see each other as friends, rather than enemies. During her entire life, she was very aware of how fragile such a friendship can be. In establishing her foundation in 2003, it was therefore one of her chief aims to not only support young people in the fields of art, culture and science, but to do this with a European perspective in mind. She wished for cultural projects that would bring young people together and foster a sense of common understanding and appreciation. Lab Europe has now demonstrated, for the second time, what these encounters can look like. And we, as the audience, were once again lucky enough to bear witness to the artistic results of this exchange.

Johannes Dälken
Felicitas und Werner Egerland Foundation
Chairman of the Board



GREETING

375 years have passed since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, to whom Osnabrück owes both its epithet and its profile as a “city of peace”. But what does this peace have to say to us in these times of major global crises and challenges?

Under the headline “Reflecting History – Rethinking the Future”, the event program for the anniversary of the Peace of Westphalia created numerous spaces to seek answers to the questions of how we want to live in the future and what history can teach us.

When it comes to shaping the future, the active involvement of young people is now more important than ever: Intensive exchange took place in eight international youth meetings, international sustainable networks were created and numerous hopeful paths into the future were sketched out.

In the “Lab Europe” project, this understanding took the shape of a creative exchange process that produced impressive results in both performances and exhibitions.

This was made possible, first and foremost, by the Felicitas and Werner Egerland Foundation, whose main aim is to promote European youth. In the anniversary year, it was thus possible to bolster the visibility of young perspectives on the challenges of the present and to give numerous impulses for a more peaceful future.

REVIEW

The 375th anniversary of the Peace of Westphalia. A peace that is exemplary for achieving results through patient understanding and that laid the first foundations for our European community of states today. What better year to embark, once again, on a cultural encounter project with young adults from all over Europe?

And yet, the fact that “Lab Europe” had already seen a successful first instalment in 2018 presented us with a challenge: Would we succeed, once again, in bringing young Europeans together for a period of 10 days, to let them enter a creative process with each other in so-called “laboratories”? Would we, in the end, be amazed, moved and a little proud again, during the presentation of the results? After all, with the Covid pandemic still very fresh in our recent memory, many are retreating into virtual spaces or private life. And the war in Ukraine has been dominating the political agenda for many months.

But we had completely forgotten about the

young people who, in spite of the pervading sense of crisis in Europe, were only too happy to get involved in a joint creative process. Who met without reservations at eye level, with heaps of curiosity for the other participants’ personalities. For the experiences they brought with them. For what could be learned from them. And for what common ground might be found.

In the end, the labs for Visual Art and Media, History and Performance presented the impressive results of their work to a large public audience during the Osnabrück Culture Night. And we, once again, ended up being amazed, moved and a little proud. And we are full of joy and gratitude for this intense time with all the wonderful young guests from Europe!

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the participating institutions and the people involved in this endeavour, and especially to the Felicitas and Werner Egerland Foundation, which has made this project possible through its repeated significant support.

Patricia Mersinger
Head of the Department for
Culture and project manager
of the Peace Anniversary
City of Osnabrück

Wolfgang Beckermann
First Chair of the City Council
City of Osnabrück



**Christine Grewe &
Anush Darbinyan**
City of Osnabrück,
Department for Culture,
Office for Peace Culture



LABS FOR

“Visual Art” and “Digital Media & Games”

“I enjoyed the Lab Europe concept the most – providing resources, accommodation and the freedom to create. Thank you!”

Eglė Marcinkevičiūtė, Lithuania

“Lab Europe will remain a special memory for us. From the various gatherings of young artists that we were able to experience and help shape, we will definitely remember the open, diverse and lively atmosphere in the Visual arts and media lab at Kunstverein hase29 the most. In keeping with the theme of „communication“, both the artists and the team engaged in an exchange that encouraged free artistic development. The artists all contributed extremely individual approaches to the topic, which led to a wide-ranging exploration of the tensions between communication and peace.”

Alexandra Malobrodski & Joost-Hendrik Becker, lab assistants

NOW YOU Rethinking Dialogues

It is a commonly heard remark these days that the countries of Europe can never seem to agree on anything – that they fail to speak “with one unified voice”. What a relief, then, that a multitude of voices was more than welcome during Lab Europe – indeed, it was this very polyphony of voices that really made the project what it was!

In realising the joint labs for “Visual Art” and “Digital Media & Games”, the art space hase29, the European Media Art Festival and the LAG Jugend & Film Niedersachsen collaborated closely with the aim of presenting 17 young international artists with both a space for dialogue and creativity, as well as an opportunity to present their own work. And dialogue, communication, having to negotiate the situation of working together in the lab – all of those factors were more than just abstract variables – they were very much a core part of the experience!

The participants gladly took the opportunities offered to them, experimented with new forms of communicating and creating, and shaped their works into an exhibition that did not just have dialogue as its subject, but served as a live study of the processes of communication. We were fascinated by the variety of projects and creative approaches on show: Filming at the Piesberg quarry was very much on the agenda – as were the search for natural pigments in and around Osnabrück or long hours spent in front of the screen while editing and tweaking all kinds of moving images. This resulted in paintings, installations, crossover media collages, films or playable experiences – in short, projects that ran the gamut from art to media and back again.

The exhibition that resulted from all of this work clearly brought the participants’ enthusiasm, as well as their willingness to engage in open-ended dialogue, to life for the public: How can art help foster a new kind of dialogue? How can works of art open up new perspectives on contemporary issues and make them more accessible? The young artists and media professionals came up with their own answers to these questions. Answers that were experienced by more than 1,500 people during Osnabrück’s Night of Culture, when the exhibition “NOW YOU – Rethinking Dialogues” was presented to the public for the first time.

And yet, all of this merely provides a rough outline of what we were able to witness during the project: We were faced with participants who were as enthusiastic as they were inspiring – curious and captivating young artists at the beginning of their artistic careers, whose enjoyment of encounters, dialogue and exchange was clearly evident at every moment. Who took us along on their exploratory undertakings and allowed us insights into their creative processes. Being able to support young people during their artistic research was – and remains – a very special experience for everyone involved in the project!

We would like to thank all participants, the Office for Peace Culture, especially Christine Grewe and Anush Darbinyan, as well as the Felicitas and Werner Egerland Foundation for their generous support of the Lab Europe Osnabrück project!

Labs for „Visual Art“ and „Digital Media & Games“

NOW YOU – Rethinking Dialogues



LAB FOR

History

- yet another success story!

“What impressed me most about Lab Europe was the collaboration and communication between the participants. These things not only helped to create remarkable projects and learn new things, but also contributed to the development of friendships. Through a productive discussion, which was characterised by great understanding and sensitivity, all participants were able to get to know what Europe means to the different persons and how different or similar concepts of Europe can look.”

Lara Kolonko, lab assistant

“It was a nice experience, we had a tour guide and got to know the city. It was an international group, so I got to know a lot of people from different countries. As for the history lab, I met great people and visited museums, and learned about history. The online exhibition was something completely new for me and I also had a lot of fun with the physical exhibition. Overall the assistants and organisers were really supportive and helpful.”

Marjan Jeddi, Slovakia

2023's Lab History was easily able to carry on the great success of its 2018 predecessor. The great expectations on the part of the organisers, participants and cooperation partners were effortlessly fulfilled. Indeed, we were even able to develop the concept and implementation of a workshop with international participants, with the aim of creating an exhibition, even further and into the digital realm.

The lab's central subjects were “War and Peace in the European culture of remembrance”: How will we remember Europe going forward? Will Europe ever be able to attain a lasting peace? In order to reach a peaceful communication, we made it our goal to address both past and present conflicts in Europe.

As a “City of Peace” that seeks to foster tolerance and intercultural understanding, Osnabrück formed the perfect background for addressing the subject of “War and Peace in the European culture of remembrance”, especially since 2023 saw the 375th anniversary of the Peace of Westphalia, the first “European conference” in history. It is a sad truth that, even today, European cities and regions are torn apart by new confrontations. The dream of a truly peaceful Europe remains yet unfulfilled. Communication about a past ripe with conflict can either serve as a reason for new war – or as a starting point for lasting peace.

The international lab offered a forum to young Europeans to exchange their views on these very subjects and to learn from taking a more transnational perspective on matters. They were guided along by Dr Thorsten Heese, of the Museumsquartier Osnabrück, Dr Michael Gander, of the Augustaschacht and Gestapokeller memorials, and Alice Cadeddu of the Erich-Maria-Remarque Centre for Peace.

The eight young Europeans' creative work formed the exhibition “Unveiled – Stories to Remember” that was available both in real space as well as digitally.

Historical objects that the participants had brought to Osnabrück from their home countries formed the starting point for the exhibition. And in turn, the stories told by Zara from Sweden, Jan from Poland, Marjan from Slovakia, Hubert from France, Nino from Georgia, Olena from Lithuania, Sevanna from Armenia and Carlos from Spain all came from a very personal place as well. An extensive exchange with German “war children” from the Second World War, as part of the Museumsquartier's forum of contemporary history, was also a part of the programme. Over ten days of creative work, eight narrations dealing with war and peace in eight different countries were created, serving as a depiction of how history is remembered today in those countries, with family histories about the 20th century's various wars and the very recent events during the Russian war on Ukraine both sitting within the scope of the exhibition.

Drawings by Graphic-Novel artist Peter Eickmeyer, who had also been invited to the lab, formed yet another narrative building block of the exhibition. Eickmeyer was able to turn the stories brought along by the participants into evocative artwork, creating an interplay between original objects and Eickmeyer's visual interpretations for visitors of the exhibition. The exhibition was presented locally on August 26th, 2023, as part of Osnabrück's Night of Culture.

Dr Thorsten Heese,
Museumsquartier Osnabrück

Dr Michael Gander,
Gestapokeller & Augustaschacht Memorials

Alice Cadeddu,
Erich-Maria-Remarque-Centre for Peace

Lab for History

Yet another success story!



LAB FOR

Performance – Abandoned Practices

“While working as an assistant in the Performance Lab, I experienced a space in which young people approached each other with courage and appreciation and entered into an artistic process together, in which they were given space and resources for shared narratives, individual and collective development, cultural experiences and their own artistic visions. It was enriching to accompany these people in their process and to get to know them.”

Sophie Schollek, lab assistant

“I really enjoyed Lab Europe. The whole experience was something I have definitely never experienced before, and I’m glad I had the opportunity to participate :)”

Chloe Boyce, Ireland

What memories do you have of your childhood?

What happens after the technological collapse?

What does nature feel like?

What happens to pedestrian zones when all the shops are closed?

These and many other questions were discussed by young Europeans during Lab Performance. They were the result of the participants’ individual research into the subject of abandoned cultural practices. As time moves on, be it as part of technological advance, global pandemics or repressive power structures, old (cultural) practices are lost, or new ones are born.

Some attain dominance and find their way into our everyday lives. We are surrounded by such practices. They shape our day-to-day routines, consciously or unconsciously. We encounter our environment and the people that surround us through them. They express themselves through our bodies, are inherently performative and give us the opportunity to communicate without language. It is precisely because they have such a massive influence on us and on our world, that these practices are passed along from generation to generation – or that they are prohibited, forgotten or estranged from us.

For ten days, the group of participants used the results of their research as a starting point for a collective creative process, the result of which was an interdisciplinary performance that was shown at the Kunsthalle Osnabrück.

The performance presents a world that looks far back to childhood, followed by a rapid technological development boost that ultimately leads to a collapse. With the disappearance of technological implements, the performers are forced to turn back to nature, forming connections in an entirely analogue way. Through a mix of dance, theatre, installation and sound, we sought to create sensual representations of great societal questions from the past, present and future.

Lab Performance was a collaboration between the Theater Osnabrück, the Kunsthalle Osnabrück and the artist, and mediator for theatre and art Simon Niemann.

Performers:

Anna Kulida, Chloe Boyce,
Dualtagh McDonnell-Grundy, Karl Mulligan,
Kyle Mullins, Ana Trif, Ewa Kwiatosz

Lab for Performance

Abandoned Practices



PARTICIPANTS LABOR EUROPA 2023

Photos: Angela von Brill



Alice Petrosino, Italy
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Andrei Manea, Romania
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Annika Anna Schröck, Germany
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Carlos Rubio, Spain
History



Hubert Launois, France
History



Jan Prange-Barczynski, Poland
History



Alexandra Malobroski, Assistance
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Jost Hendrik Becker, Assistance
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Eglė Marcinkevičiūtė, Lithuania
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Marjan Jeddi, Slovakia
History



Olena Pankevych, Ukraine
History



Sevannah Poghosyan, Armenia
History



Francisca Mazeda, Portugal
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Gloria Zeppilli, Italy
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Hannes Bent Meyer, Germany
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Zara Baghdasaryan, Sweden
History



Ana Trif, Romania
Performance



Anna Kulida, Netherlands
Performance



Īfeolúwa Adesina, Lithuania
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Jacks Richtering, Germany
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Jan Kursminski, Poland
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Sophie Schollek, Assistance
Performance



Chloe Boyce, Ireland
Performance



Dualtagh McDonnell-Grundy, Ireland
Performance



Kima Petrosyan, Armenia
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Mara Zota, Germany
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Marcel Matys, Ireland
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Ewa Kwiatosz, Poland
Performance



Karl Mulligan, Ireland
Performance



Kyle Mullins, Ireland
Performance



Salvatore Crucitti, Italy
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Zusanna Zietek, Poland
Visual Art and Digital Media&Games



Lara Kolonko, Assistance
History



Jonathan Arnold
Social Media Team supervision



Sebastian Wille
Social Media Team supervision



Laura Catalucci
Translation

SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM



"It was a very lovely project! It just feels unfortunate that so many pupils were in charge of the same Instagram account. That made the whole thing a bit unwieldy and led to lots of waiting."

Ira

"We were directly involved in the Performance Lab, where we were allowed to accompany the artists for a whole day and take part in their performance exercises."

Aileen

"I particularly liked the fact that we were able to express ourselves creatively and freely. It was great that we were able to organise our own times and determine the content we shared ourselves."

Marie

The social media account was created and accompanied between August 17th and 27th by a class of 12th grade pupils from the Berufsschulzentrum Westerberg's college of media design. In preparation, there was an introductory meeting with the class to answer initial questions and explain the existing tasks, followed by two further meetings between the two media educators to determine a structure and check the technical equipment. These meetings resulted in the following framework conditions:

The students arrived every day at 08:30 and stayed until 13:00 (including lunch). The media educators met at 08:00 to plan the day. There was a 30-minute meeting at the beginning and end of each day. The posts to be uploaded on each day were determined in the morning. The uploads were prepared until noon. This also involved working with Instagram's scheduling function, so posts were also uploaded after working hours. The uploads were handled exclusively by the media educators.

In addition, the structure of the first day was given to provide orientation. After a 1.5-hour meeting, all the labs were visited together with the whole class. Groups were assigned to the different labs, and a group focused on stories and content production was established.

The following findings emerged from these framework conditions:

The groups formed at the beginning remained the same until the end. This meant that all labs received coverage, and the groups worked effectively.

The use of digital media often caused problems. Sometimes there were problems with the sound, sometimes it took a long time to correctly format files. The students were able

to work most effectively with their cell phones. The quality was somewhat lower, but the content could be produced much more quickly and then edited with more time. It is worth checking which apps are suitable for recording and editing. There was also a demand for tablets.

It paid off to give the students freedom, so that they were increasingly motivated to work in their groups over the course of the week. This was also reported back to us as a positive.

The labs were not sufficiently informed about the working hours of the social media group or did not pay enough attention to them. As a result, there were sometimes no participants to be found during the shooting times, which made the work more difficult. It was good to provide a structure at the beginning and to slowly resolve this over the course of the project. The group and the media educators worked together very well and productively, especially during the last two days.



NIGHT OF CULTURE



"I enjoyed the Culture Night a lot. It was really nice to finally get to see what the other Labs were working on and to share our Labs work with everyone."

Anna Kulida, Netherlands



"It was amazing to be surrounded by audiences."

Kima Petrosyan, Armenia

"I think it was really interesting and well organised mostly because I saw many people involved and curious about it, which is something that makes me so happy, since I don't see this kind of interest in art and culture anymore (at least in my daily life). Plus I thought it was really cool so I'm so happy that I experienced it, at least for a while!"

Alice Petrosino, Italy



"A beautiful event, a very beautiful way to activate the city of Osnabrück, not only in terms of social interactions and entertainment, but above all in terms of culture. I think that thanks to these projects, Osnabrück will be able to become an important place for art and culture, a point of reference at a European level. Thank you!"

Gloria Zeppilli, Italy

Photos: Angela von Brill



"It was quite a circus but alright."
Anika Schröck, Germany

"It was thrilling to see the work we did for more than a week come at last to display and fruition. I couldn't take away the smile from my face."
Carlos Rubio Perea, Spain



"It was an interesting event, and it was great to see so many people interested in it."

Eglė Marcinkevičiūtė, Lithuania

"It was very interesting and amazing, how much can the city prepare for the people - a lot of things have been happening!"

Jan (Jakub) Prange-Barczyński, Poland

"I loved it such a great atmosphere and was extremely fun"

Karl Mulligan, Ireland



FEEDBACK

This having been the second instalment of Lab Europe Osnabrück, hearing the participants' thoughts about the project was, of course, very important to us, as we are always striving to take suggestions and criticism on board for the next project in line.

In that regard, we were very happy that many of the participants gave us personal feedback about their respective experiences during Lab Europe: Many thanks to all those who provided personal observations!

It goes without saying that we were absolutely thrilled about the many kind words and positive reactions from you! It was our goal to create a project that would feel inclusive and welcoming, and that seems to have worked pretty well.

At the same time, we definitely hear your critical remarks as well, and all suggestions help us create even better projects and programmes in the future: We'll think even more about sustainability, about opportunities for even more exchange between the labs and about possible common activities. And about the food, of course. We are always thinking about the food...

Thank you all so much for making Lab Europe even better via your thoughtful suggestions! And even if we can only present a few of your soundbites here, please rest assured that we have read them all and will definitely be taking them to heart!

"I loved everything about Lab Europe from the organisation to the people that helped us during our all projects.

I think this kind of experience changes you forever and I know I'm gonna remember it forever (not just because of the tattoo i made), because I've also met so many amazing people during this experience and I feel like what I learnt there and the people I've met are gonna be part of me for a very long time.

So I think to me it was more than great experience it was just amazing! It's also true that I would have liked to spend more time with people from other labs but as far as I know some of them i know I'll find a way to see them again! And I really hope to come to Osnabruck again in the future! Since I'm Italian the only real thing I had problems with was the food which it wasn't always the best... but to be honest I managed anyway so I think at the end to me it was 10/10!! Thank you so much for everything again!!"

Alice Petrosino, Italy

"I really liked the opportunity to meet people from everywhere that are the same age, all different and very interesting to talk to. I also liked the contact to the organisers, everything was taken care of, I felt very welcome and very well treated and supported in every way. I would change about the art lab probably the amount of money every artist gets. To me this program was not about finishing great artworks with a lot of money but about connection and sharing of knowledge and experience.(...)"

We have to learn to act responsibly with the resources of our planet, as much as we have to learn and to sustain being kind + listening to each other. I think the second worked extremely well in this project. It really opened my eyes again to the importance of unprejudiced human interaction, the importance of joy (even in times of crisis), my own ability to listen and also to shape communication .

All in all a big THANK YOU and I really hope that Lab Europe can somehow take place again, so that more people can take part in it."

Anika Schröck, Germany

"This experience was perfect for me, I liked it as it was. Everyone was talking about the food, but it was not that big problem for me. The most important things were organised very well. I felt very cared. Maybe next year/time there could be more interaction between the labs. I know it might be hard to organise, but at least one/two hours a day, some creative interaction in small mixed groups would be very nice!

Thank you a lot for the opportunity to spend these 10 days in Osnabrueck! "

Jan (Jakub) Prange-Barczyński, Poland

"I really loved this experience, it was truly amazing. I met so many wonderful people and have gotten the chance to express myself in so many ways. What I would change about it is maybe that the Labs get to mix or communicate a bit more so there's even more connection amongst people. And also, because this is such an amazing project it's important that lots of people hear about it in different parts of Europe."

Anna Kulida, Netherlands

"Everything was well planned. I made a lot of friends and incredible memories."

Kima Petrosyan, Armenia

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Christine Grewe
Stefan Berendes

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