

## Representation

The Oxford English dictionary's definition:

*"To represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or portrayal; to place a likeness of it before us in our mind."*

*"To represent also means to symbolise, stand for, to be a specimen of or to substitute for."*

Our ideas of reality usually come from other sources than our own experiences and encounters. They often come from information and representations that are conveyed to us mainly through the media. It has been said that contemporary culture is the culture of images. Through media we are constantly fed with images from the world outside our own. Our ideas of the world are guided by images seen on TV. However, this reality is a representation or by using the Oxford English dictionary's definition of representation, this reality is only a likeness, a symbol, a substitute for reality and is naturally a reality selected by someone as a story worth telling (selling).



We are served a reality that is composed, written, cropped, framed, captioned, branded, targeted and censored by its producers.

Representations are always someone else's concept of existence, a restricted experience of the world filtered through someone's values. Someone who makes the choice of what is represented, how it is represented, what was selected, what was not. However, the logic of representation is not a one way communication channel; it is fluid, a logic that includes both an intention and an interpretation. The audience will interpret the information that is given but what frames of reference will people use when interpreting the representation? The interpretation process involves seeing and then using your experience, presumptions, prejudices, stereotypes, knowledge, values and beliefs to understand and make sense of the representation.

## A space turned into a mega city

The exhibition aims at creating a place out of a space. We want to transform an empty exhibition space into a city by combining moments, memories and testimonies of cities through artworks by artists from Lahore, Bishkek, Tashkent, Teheran, Tbilisi and Istanbul as well as transitpassengers' works.

The place we aim at creating is like a market place of images, sounds and interactions. We want to invite the public to hang out in a city and to use their urban instincts to navigate themselves. All the six cities exhibited as one... mega city, with the invisible connections of common TV programs, dreams, lust, sorrow, laughter, etc.

### Levels of narration

The exhibition will explore urban experiences and the politics of representation through four levels of narration which cohabit within the exhibition space: artists from the cities telling a story from their context and lives, transitpassengers as artists and curators or maybe just as tourists, the exhibition's visitors' interpretations and the context/society in which the exhibition is taking place.

We explore urban life from a distance, we are the outsiders, artists and curators at once, they are the insiders, people and artists belonging to the cities we crossed. We are all caught in the trap of representation: where does reality unveil?

### Interactions

The exhibition space is a permeable one. The world around it gets in and the exhibition rubs off on its surroundings. For instance, the invited artists' discovery of the city hosting the exhibition might ignite a mirroring game of spaces' representation through performances and talks. For the audience, it is about interactions with the exhibition itself but also interactions with the various invited artists and guests. We would like to initiate discussions on the themes of 'representation' and 'urban life' through workshops, seminars and happenings. These events will be developed in collaboration with the visiting artists and the exhibition's venue.

## Collaborations

Artists are regularly at the core of the struggle to understand or to reveal and reconsider what urban life is about, what kind of relationships exist, freedom of expression, creation of space and to explore cities' personal stories. Transitpassengers met artists whose creative power more than often stems from their relation to their city. Many of them have had the opportunity to exhibit abroad, in the West or in neighbouring countries. Nevertheless their art and opinions remain mostly unknown to the vast European public. This project is an opportunity to work with many of them. Transitpassengers brings in the outsider's view. What do we see and document and why? What attracts us, what do we find strange? What are we trained to see? Video art, photography and sounds from Lahore, Bishkek, Tashkent, Tehran, Tbilisi and Istanbul (see Dvd for info).

