

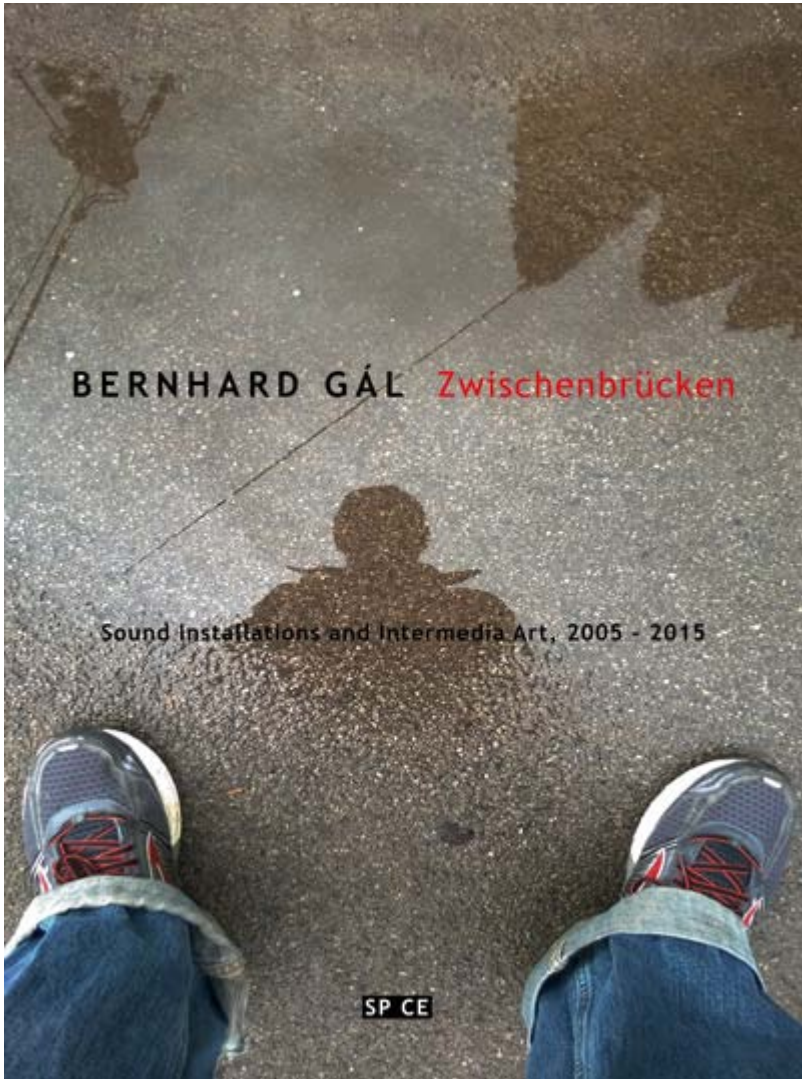
Bernhard Gál

Zwischenbrücken

Book & DVD-Video

edition sp ce | Gromoga Records

2015



BERNHARD GÁL *Zwischenbrücken*

Sound Installations and Intermedia Art, 2005 - 2015

SP CE

Bernhard Gál

Zwischenbrücken

Book & DVD-Video

144 pages, ca. 200 colour photos

DVD-9 (ca. four hrs. of audio resp. video documentation)

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Zwischenbrücken is Bernhard Gál's eleventh main publication, after eight full length audio CDs, one DVD-Video and one catalogue book. Featuring 25 installative and intermedia works from 2002 - 2015 and combining a book and a DVD-video, it is conceived as a follow-up and extension of 'Installations' (book & audio CD, Kehrer Verlag, Heidelberg 2005). On 144 pages, *Zwischenbrücken* presents art installations conceived for interior and exterior spaces, sound art performances and intermedia concerts as well as music theatre projects for young audiences, including about 200 colour images as well as four hours of audio and video materials. The book is published by Bernhard Gál in cooperation with *edition sp ce*, while the accompanying DVD-Video is released on *Gromoga Records*.

Since 2005, Gál's intermedia works have been presented in ca. 60 exhibitions and installations within the public sphere, as well as numerous performances and concerts on five continents. Given the chosen media combination of a book and a DVD-video, *Zwischenbrücken* predominantly features works which show acoustic and visual elements. Aside from detailed work descriptions, the book also offers short statements by the artist, providing insights in the various creative processes, conceptual considerations and production aspects. Last but not least, a short essay by the artist reveals background information about Gál's artistic beginnings.

During the production process, the intended size of the book almost doubled. Facing a far from boundless budget, yet being committed to include as many works as possible, the option of working with an external publishing house was eventually abandoned: the bulk of work was carried out by Gál himself, including audio, video and photo editing, all texts, layout and graphic design, as well as DVD authoring and design.

From the foreword of 'Zwischenbrücken'

Zwischenbrücken features a selection of installative and intermedia works from the last fourteen years. It may be seen as a follow-up to the catalogue book *Installations* which was published by the Kehrer Verlag Heidelberg in 2005. While mainly featuring works that have been conceived and realized within the past ten years, it also includes some installations that originated earlier and were presented in site-specific adaptations later on (*Defragmentation*, *Klangbojen*) and intermedia music projects that didn't find their way into the last book (*beshadowed*, *Klangschatten*). For obvious reasons, this publication does not include works that show no specific visual features, such as sound-only installations, as well as electroacoustic and instrumental compositions which often incorporate site-specific qualities as well, yet are better presented by other means.

The title *Zwischenbrücken* (literally 'between bridges', also 'bridges in between') can be seen as a metaphor for my personal condition as an artist working in between various artistic practices and scenes in the fields of new music and installation art/intermedia art in the context of the visual arts, as well as incorporating architectural, literary or theatrical 'side effects' in many works. After all, a transdisciplinary openness toward all forms of artistic expression is one of the particular virtues of so-called 'sound art', as I see it. *Zwischenbrücken* is also the name of a neighbourhood in Vienna, not far from where I was brought up.

This publication is not devised as an art catalogue in the classic sense. I rather see it as a personal reflection on previous art projects, offering some background information about the 'making-of'; the various processes and steps from the emergence of an idea until the final realization. The presentation of works is not reduced to selected images and descriptions of a finished 'product', but also addresses specific challenges and compromises to be encountered along the way. These statements and reflections might prove valuable to anyone interested in the nature of sound installations and intermedia art in general.

Most of the presented works have been conceived for and presented at a specific site. Given their intermedia and space-related nature, any attempts at a comprehensive representation are more or less doomed to fail. To explore the interconnections of acoustic, architectural and visual offerings individually, to experience artistic interventions in correspondence to a certain place with its specific historical and socio-cultural context, i.e. to experience an art installation on site, can never be adequately represented by any kind of documentation, no matter which medium is used. The attempt to preserve something fundamentally ephemeral may only lead to an autonomous artistic statement by itself, an aggregation of images and texts, of edited audio and video excerpts that one may consider artistic creations in their own right, if so inclined. Similar thoughts occupy my musicological research activities as well. During recent years I have been studying spatial and contextual aspects of sound installation art from an interdisciplinary point of view. Currently I am working on a PhD thesis comparing selected sound installations and sound art exhibitions, another long-term endeavour which will hopefully come to its completion soon.

Some of the works included in this book have been presented in rather far-flung geographic regions, and there is nobody else other than myself who has experienced a substantial part of it in person. Despite the aforementioned concerns, I am hoping to give at least a vague impression of what has been there, how it became what it became, and the underlying artistic impetus. After all, this accumulation of works also presents a set of artistic ideas and aesthetic decisions, a so to say state of mind during a certain time period. For those who were able to experience any of the works in person, it offers a way to recall one's own impressions, and to compare individual memories with the 'officially' presented documentation. In any case, it may also serve as an invitation to visit and experience any ongoing sound installations in person, while they are still around.

Last, but certainly not least, this publication is a present to myself, to my family and to my friends who supported me throughout these past 10+ years in many ways.

Featured Works

1. **Das himmlische Kind**
Sound installation; Zurich University of the Arts (Toni Campus), Zurich 2015
2. **Alsógál**
Intermedia installation; Kunsthalle Budapest, Budapest 2014
- 3.- 4. **Klangschatten I + II**
Intermedia music project for a young audience; Premiere: Klangschatten I: ORF-KlangTheater, Vienna 2004 | Premiere: Klangschatten II: Wiener Konzerthaus, Vienna 2013
5. **solo (Košice)**
Intermedia installation; Hlavná ulica, Košice 2012
6. **Sterngucker**
Intermedia performance; Premiere: Planetarium Judenburg, Judenburg (Austria) 2011
7. **mil águas**
Intermedia Installation; Galeria de Arte do DMAE, Porto Alegre 2009
8. **solo**
Intermedia installation; Premiere: Rathausplatz, Tulln (Austria) 2007
9. **Klangbojen (Donaueschingen)**
Intermedia installation; River Brigach, Donaueschingen 2007
- 10.-16. **textur #2-8**
Intermedia performances / installations; Premiere of textur #2: Domu umení, Opava 2005
17. **beshadowed**
Intermedia composition; Premiere: Porgy & Bess, Vienna 2002
18. **earlift**
Intermedia installation; KunstQuartier, Salzburg 2011
19. **stromlinien**
Intermedia installation; KomponistInnenforum Mittersill, Mittersill (Austria) 2010
20. **becuadro**
Intermedia composition; Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna 2008
21. **Die Grüne Hölle**
Intermedia installation; Premiere: Gallery of the Austrian Embassy, Berlin 2006
22. **Airport**
Sound installation; Music Instruments Museum, Berlin 2006
23. **Defragmentation (Krems)**
Intermedia installation; Minoritenkirche (Kapitelsaal), Krems (Austria) 2005
24. **Infinitation**
Intermedia installation; Premiere: Centre of Contemporary Art, Seattle 2005
25. **Shinkai**
Intermedia installation; Premiere: ISE Cultural Foundation, New York City 2006

Bernhard Gál

Austrian artist, composer and musicologist Bernhard Gál is equally at home within the domains of contemporary music, installation art and media art. As of now, Gál has created around 80 sound installations and intermedia art projects, combining sound, light, objects, as well as architectural concepts and video projections into multidimensional and prevalently site-specific art works. He also composes for acoustic instruments and electroacoustic music. As a laptop musician, Gál has performed extensively on five continents, and worked with numerous musicians of the electronic and improvised music scenes. Another aspect of his work is interdisciplinary collaborations, e.g. with the choreographers/dancers Christian Aichinger and Akemi Takeya, the writer Róbert Gál, the visual artists Susana Gaudêncio, Mandy Morrison, John Roach and Silwa Sedlak, the architects Yumi Kori and P. Michael Schultes, the directors Ludwig Wüst and Dietmar Lenz, the film makers Emre Tuncer and Hervé Nisic, the sound engineers/technicians Günther Bernhart, Götz Dihlmann and Martin Murauer, as well as collaborative projects with fellow musicians such as Chao-Ming Tung, Kai Fagaschinski, Jennifer Walshe and Belma Bešlić-Gál.

Born in Vienna, Austria in 1971, Gál began to nurture his interest in music and (sound) art around 1985. After studies at Vienna's University of Music (Sound Engineering) and the University of Vienna (Musicology), and a year-long residency in New York City in 1997-98, he has focused on his compositional and artistic activities. Since 2006, Gál has also been the creative head behind 'shut up and listen!' - Interdisciplinary Festival for Music and Sound Art, in Vienna. Between 2006 and 2007 he taught sound art at the University of Arts in Berlin. From 2010-13 Gál held a research position at the Paris Lodron University Salzburg, in conjunction with the interdisciplinary doctoral college 'Art and the Public'.

Gál's work has been presented in concerts, sound and intermedia installations, exhibitions and radio portraits around the world, and performed by ensembles such as the China Found Music Workshop Taiwan, the NewTon-Ensemble Vienna, the Kammerensemble Neue Musik Berlin, the Ensemble Noamnesia Chicago, the OENM-Ensemble Salzburg and the Ensemble Kontrapunkte Vienna. He has been invited to international music and art festivals including Wien Modern, Vienna; MaerzMusik, Berlin; Sonambiente, Berlin; Donaueschinger Musiktage; Nuova Consonanza, Rome; MATA, New York; Soundfield, Chicago; Mutek, Montreal; Musicacoustica, Beijing; FILE, São Paulo, and frequently gives lectures and workshops. For his music and art projects Gál has received several awards, including the Karl Hofer Prize Berlin 2001, an annual composer fellowship from the DAAD Artists in Berlin Programme 2003, the Austrian State Scholarship for Composition 2004/2016, and the Outstanding Artist Award for Music of the City of Vienna 2010. His work has been made available on ca. 30 audio publications and documented with various catalogue books and DVDs.

<http://www.bernhardgal.com>

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