

m y c a s t l e y o u r c a s t l e

my castle your castle operates as a TV talk show broadcasted from within the skeleton of what is becoming the 'Berliner Schloss' in an act of post-socialist urban cosmetics at Berlin's very center. In this arena of multiple ideological overwritings, Kerstin Honeit reenacts a popular West German Cold War TV format, the morning talk show for political debate called 'Internationaler Frühschoppen', to engage the building site as a stage for the material and social construction as well as the queer contestation of the concepts of 'nation' and (white) 'masculinity'.

Interviewed by a talk show host, two construction workers evoke the disappeared counterpart of the Prussian castle in a language of structural materialness: from 1973 to 1976 Peter Friedrich worked on the construction of the Palast der Republik (Palace of the Republic), the modernist GDR parliament building, on the ruins of the imperial castle. 40 years later, Gunter Teichert headed the dismantling of the same building, which in 1989 and 1990 had been one of the sites of continued political protests of GDR citizens and of the historical roundtable discussions between state functionaries and oppositional forces in the wake of the end of the GDR and German re-unification.

In the matter of fact conversation between the maker and the breaker of the Palace, their body of work—in other words architecture, political representation, memory—disintegrates in the builders' jargon. At the same time, the material and machinic vocabulary of the new building site around them resonates the redistributions of properties and redefinitions of political meaning through architecture that have followed the disappearance of state socialisms in Europe. In short interludes that interrupt and re-contextualize the talk show, the male drag talk master persona performed by the artist herself, emphasizes and queers this vocabulary. Displaced into different corners of the construction ruins, the friendly morning show moderator becomes imbued with explicit ideological performativity. In a lip-synch embodiment of antagonistic statements advocating for the imperial Castle or for the socialist Palace, their uncanny lines of convergence and all too similar desires materialize on a huge excavating machine or between metal poles that stabilize casts for concrete.

White fog takes over the set towards the end of the show and makes the speakers disappear while materializing the colonial haunting of the place. With the fog enter two cowboy figures to sing and dance on the very grounds where the Ethnographic Collections of Berlin's National Museums will find their new home once the Castle will be finished. Anticipating this unquestioned re-centering of Germany's legacies of colonial

violence, their camp reenactment of the Ray Price song 'I saw my Castles fall today' subversively quotes the hegemonic figure of the settler colonialist while celebrating – with glitter and high heels – the demolition of patriarchal Western phantasies of omnipotence.

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<http://www.sixtyeight.dk/dragkings.html>
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