

CONTEXT

The ending of the Cold War ushered in a new phase of hope for Europe. Artists, often at the vanguard of change in society, were responding to these new conditions but were ill served by the staleness of the art world's structures. More art institutions were springing up, but the work of young artists in the former Communist countries was rarely, if ever, shown in them. Clearly,

other methods of thinking and working in art were needed. This became even clearer as the world's social and political landscapes were radically altered by globalisation: attractive to many, but with a dark underbelly of growing nationalism and fundamentalism and (as it turned out) looming financial collapse. Against this backdrop, tranzit was formed.



IMPACT

tranzit exists to break the mould: challenging old art-world structures, showing new ways in which art can be made and reach its audiences, and bringing international exposure to Central European contemporary artists. Its self-organised activities span the local and the global, with tranzit units cooperating across different national, linguistic, psychological and historic borders.

Whether visible at Tate Modern or more modest settings, tranzit offers a much-needed platform for experimental procedures and visionary perspectives. It generates artistic, cultural and exhibition activities in a socially and politically aware manner, fully conscious that, in the words of one tranzit collaboration, "art always has its consequences".

Photo left:
tranzit Board of Directors (from left to right):
Vít Havránek (tranzit.cz)
Christine Böhler (ERSTE Foundation)
Dóra Hegyi (tranzit.hu)
Georg Schöllhammer (tranzit.at)
Boris Ondreička (tranzit.sk)

FACTS

Formed in 2002, the independent tranzit network now operates in Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Slovak Republic. Each tranzit local 'unit' has its unique and autonomous way of working, deals with several artistic settings (musical, poetical, literary, performative) and manifests itself in lectures, performances, discussions, publications, exhibitions and researches. The project heads in the four countries and an ERSTE Foundation representative make up the Board of Directors, and a general assembly meets once a year. This helps forge cooperation, common goals and the sharing of content.

Erste Group initiated tranzit, and local banks of the Group have long supported the project, but since 2010, ERSTE Foundation has become tranzit's main partner.

Every year, through February to November, tranzit offers an artist-in-residence programme in Vienna's MuseumsQuartier. Five artists from the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Slovak Republic have the chance to live in the city and work in one of the Quarter's studios for two months each.

tranzit was one of the three curatorial groups responsible for the artistic content of Manifesta 8, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art, which took place in the Region of Murcia, during 9 October 2010 – 9 January 2011.

tranzit.org

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Photos:

Moscow Cinema Theater open air hall, 1965,
"Sweet 60s" panel discussion

tranzit.cz publishes first Czech translation of a
book by John Cage: "Silence"

Cover:
Photo by Zbynek Baladran