



Missing Monuments, installation views, Landhaushof, Graz, 2007/08.

MISSING MONUMENTS

A Community Art Project and a Sculptural Installation by Kristina Leko
in collaboration with ...
Kunst im Öffentlichen Raum Steiermark, Graz, 2007/08

The project was dedicated to the immigrant communities of Graz, in honor of:
Fred Ohenhen, Nigeria, Talat El-Kholy, Egypt, Pawan Kohli, India, an Anonimus
Asylum Seeker, Africa, and Ante Repusic, Croatia.

Five sculptural portraits were modelled by Aminau Banna, Ileana El-Kholy,
Emanuel Nkrumah Kwabena - ENKS, Hermine Kurzweil and Ana Ludvik under the
guidance of David Smithson

www.missingmonuments.eu was realized in collaboration with Albena Angelova,
Bogie Balint, Marie-Louissette Douatsop, Mandoffane Faye, Herbert Fuchs,
Martin Gjecaj, Francisco Santiago Nino, Valentina Nistor, Peter Presinger,
Carlos Escobar Pukara, Veada Stoff, Interkulturelle Frauen, Österreichisch-
Kroatische Initiative, Österr. Russische Gesellschaft, Indisch-Österr.
Gesellschaft, NIL, and Ägyptischer Verein.

The installation consists of five sculptural monument-like artifacts honoring
five distinguished members of immigrant minorities in Graz. Each monument
consists of a head portrait and a text. The installation site is culturally
relevant and representative, the courtyard of the provincial parliament,
which is also a passage between the two main shopping streets in the
historical center of the town. The installation period was 4 months.

The missing monuments are dedicated to the five individuals who significantly
influenced their communities: Dr. Talat El-Kholy, Egyptian Cultural Club,
active for over three decades in the integration process, Fred Ohenhen,
Nigerian, first president of the Immigrant Council/Parliament of Graz, active
for over 10 years in educational programs against racism, Pawan Kohli,
president of the Indian Cultural Organization in Graz, Ante Repusic,
Croatian, dedicated himself to work with refugees from ex-Yugoslavian
countries, and an anonymous asylum seeker, an African woman living in the
Women's Home of Caritas Graz.



Missing Monuments, sculpture workshop.

The distinguished individuals were selected by their communities through a workshop involving volunteers from several communities. In the workshop, five biographical texts explaining accomplishments of the individuals honored by sculptural portraits were written. Within the workshop biographical texts of other people with migrant backgrounds were written as well. In addition, several texts were created based on interviews. There are 21 biographical texts created during the project, and they are made public through the web site missingmonuments.eu.

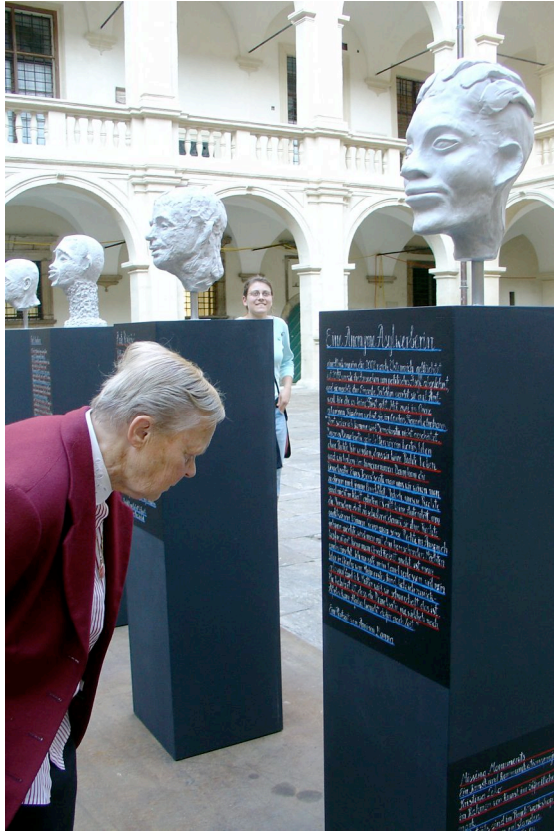
Following the idea of the political right of self-representation as applied to the artistic process; the sculptural artifacts of this project were not created by professional artists, but by community members who wanted to have an artistic affiliation, i.e. by five individuals who had never modeled before, in a 10-day workshop led by the sculptor David Smithson.

Afterwards, the sculptural portraits were cast by a professional sculptor. Each community involved received their portrait copy in plaster. For the installation in public space copies cast in marble powder were produced. After the installation in public space, the five heads with pedestals became part of the collection of the Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz.

The project wanted to benefit the selected immigrant communities. The participatory method aimed to develop and nourish intellectual and cultural resources of the communities. Therefore, the creation and production process of the project was done through the involvement of the communities' members/volunteers. On the other side, there was a wish to critically question the symbolic structure of cultural and historical representation present in the existing urban structures, and to integrate the immigrant minorities into the existing symbolic order.

The goal of the project was to improve the public image of the immigrant communities by presenting unexpected artifacts of a high artistic quality in the city public spaces of cultural and historical relevance. The main goal implies not only a benefit for the immigrant community, but, importantly, an

enrichment of the dominant culture through a critical self-reflection.



Missing Monuments, installation views. The El-Kholy family by the portrait of Talaat El-Kholy.



Vaeda Stoff and another member of *Liste Interkultureller Frauen* by the portrait of an anonymous African asylum seeker. Installation view. Missing Monuments project participants at the opening, September 15, 2007.



For the collection of biographical texts created within this project, please, visit www.missingmonuments.eu click on **Graz**, and then go to **Texte**.