



Interview with Noa Treister



Noa Treister finished the Bezalel Art and Design Academy in Jerusalem, Israel and currently in Postgraduate studies at the Media and communication program of the European Graduate School in Switzerland. She is a practicing artist and a curator, presently living working in Serbia. Noa focuses on rethinking socio-economic-political issues in both curatorial and artistic projects. She is currently running the program "Art Interventions" which is an interdisciplinary program of artists and scholars from different fields and media coming together in disenfranchised communities to re-engage with different situations.

Among her various curatorial project are "Employment", group exhibition, 2003/ 4, Czech Republic; 'Under Construction' workshop, Mayrau

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Miners' Museum, Czech Republic, 2004; "Art Interventions: Between Town and villages", 2006, Majdanpek, Serbia, "Art Interventions: The Return of the Gastarbajters", Kučevo, Serbia, 2007, Požarevac, Serbia, 2008; "Art Interventions: Sex in Transition", Kučevo, Serbia, 2008;

Her exhibitions include: "Adama" group exhibition, Israel Museum, 1998-99; "Mapping space" group exhibition, Klenova Gallery, Czech Republic, 2002; "The Fold", solo exhibition, Prague, Czech Republic, 2003; 'Noina Barka', solo exhibition, Belgrade and Novi Sad, Serbia, 2006; 'Mi smo (se) navikli', [We Have Gotten (Ourselves) Used to] solo exhibition, Kragujevac, Serbia, 2007

This interview, conducted by Gert Röhrborn, took place in association with the Citizens of Europe OpenFora, a group of debates among like-informed, not essentially like-minded, people about issues of contemporary life, business and politics in European societies, including external relations and global affairs. [Visit the website](#) for more information about Citizens of Europe and OpenFora.

You have been active in the Balkans for some years now. This region is not only a specific case in the transformation process you have referred to, but also, if I may say so, a place where the whole puzzle of the human condition – complex processes of cultural fusion which bring along misunderstandings, intolerance and a history of violence – seems to be in disorder beyond comprehension. It must be frustrating to work there at the grassroots as a civic activist. What attracted you to the place, and why are you still there?

I went there for personal reasons in the first place. The crucial point exactly is why I stayed. I was born in Israel which is a highly politicized zone. After living in Prague for 5 years, I was just bored. As simple as that. Don't get me wrong, Prague is a beautiful place; but in terms of NGO work and art, there is absolutely nothing happening there, just because they do not have considerable problems with transformation any more. It's just like any other western country now. Serbia offers quite a different picture. Everywhere you put your finger, you discover a challenge. In Eastern Serbia, where I live, economic depression meets a confusing topography of conflict. The traditional mining businesses have been closed down, so unemployment is extremely high and people have given themselves over to a certain kind of poverty culture. To the west you have Bosnia and Croatia, a region which, though far from being resolved, is a post-conflict zone. In the south it borders to Kosovo, which still is a conflict zone. You cannot find a more problematic place in Europe.

