

Stefan Marx, 16 Hintergleisflächen  
U-Bahnhof Hansaplatz / GROTTO  
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GROTTO is a new project curated by Leonie Herweg. One that changes the view of everyday life a little, introducing a slight - in the best sense of the word - inconsistency into a strictly timed day. It is an offer.

We go underground every day, we rush down the stairs, the warm wind of the approaching subway blows our hair away, like Beyoncé's when she's on stage and a huge fan in front of her causes her hair to swirl dramatically. Our fan is the subway. We have "Beautiful Nightmares", which may yet become a "Sweet Dream". Maybe the man with the fanny pack is an inspector or a crack dealer. Since the introduction of the Deutschlandticket, we will probably never know. One almost mourns the thrill of constantly weighing things up until you got too old for fare evasion and preferred to pull out a ticket that you folded up into small rolls in your coat pocket. And then forgot about it, only to be reminded of its existence again after washing.

What you quickly forget when you're being chauffeured around the city by the subway is that the subway stations have been around for quite a while. They are therefore always connected with a story. Hansaplatz subway station was built at the end of the 1950s as part of the "Interbau" building exhibition together with the Hansaviertel district. After the World War II, the aim was to bring more attention back to Berlin. Because, hard to imagine today, after the war hardly anyone was interested in Berlin, which lay like an island in the middle of the territory of the GDR. So an entire building exhibition was stomped out of the ground, as a result of which the Hansaviertel and the Hansaplatz subway station were built.

Today, black and white posters with wafting letters can be seen where there are normally advertisements for razors that can be used to shave your head particularly quickly and offer those waiting a brief moment of distraction. Stefan Marx has translated scraps of conversation, sentences that can be read quite functionally en passant, excerpts from song lyrics into various languages and applied them to the advertising spaces. Instead of advertisements in garish colors and with pithy slogans, which are designed to attract the attention of those waiting, it now reads "I'm here to sing you songs" in Ukrainian, "Listen to the Rain" in Vietnamese or "Thank you for Waiting" in Japanese.

There are 16 posters in total and none of them advertise anything in particular. They are there, perhaps as the starting point of a chain of associations, as a brief interruption, as a visualization of what otherwise just blows by quickly. But perhaps also as the treasure that one often suspects and sometimes keeps in the grotto. The daily descent into the underground is thus given the opportunity to become a treasure hunt. To discover something wondrous or to think: "Goodbye Wrong Plans". From now on only right plans and you rush on through the tunnel.

Text by Laura Helena Wurth