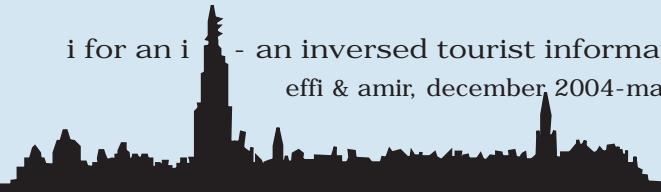


i for an i

- an inversed tourist information service

effi & amir, december 2004-march 2005, Bern, Switzerland



From October 2004 to March 2005 we were artists in residence at PROGR- zentrum für kulturproduktion, in Bern, Switzerland. This was the starting point and immediate context of this project which accompanied most of our stay and structured, arbitrarily, our encounter with the city of Bern.

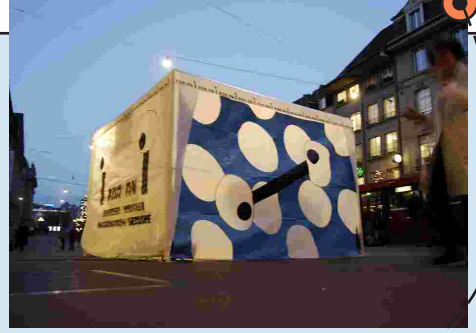
In the background of this project lays our preoccupation with our status as foreigners (having left our homeland 4 years ago), with the somewhat absurd attempt to "fit in" in a strange environment, and with our questions and doubts regarding the role of the artist - who is assumed to see things differently, to represent an alternative, an otherness.



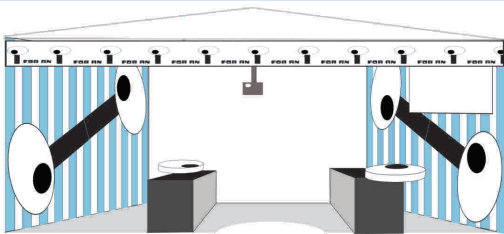
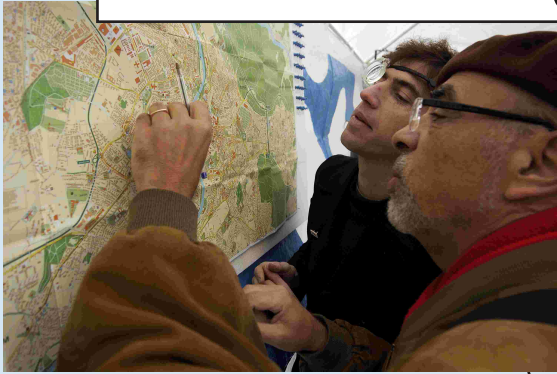
"i for an i" inverts the "tourist information" institute and creates an alternative, personal and bilateral process, where the foreigner becomes the host, and the local- the visitor. "i for an i" offers a different model of city exploration, with an emphasize on intimacy and exchange of view points (the insider's and the outsider's).

As intimacy with a place is built on anecdotes and personal incidents we, the foreigners, would nourish on the memory of those who already acquired this intimacy, while in return we would offer them our own impressions and interpretations. The inversion of the touristic experience runs through the different stages of the project; the tourist is the one who opens the "service", the visited sites have personal importance and not a public/historic/representative one, and the souvenirs are unique and not generalized.

in december, we opened the "i for an i" information stand at Kornahusplatz, a central location in Bern.



We collected recommendations from 34 passers-by, who were asked to fill up a form where they described their selected site and their relation to it. We urged the info-givers to tell us about places, which are personally meaningful to them.

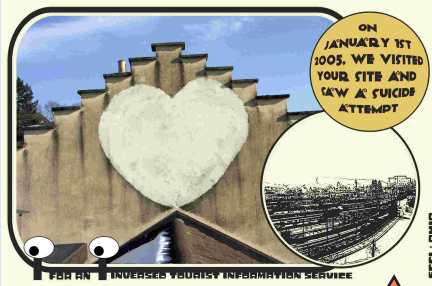
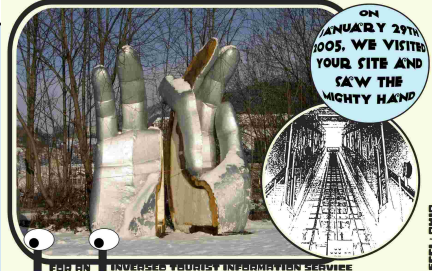


After filling the form and marking the place on the map, the info-giver was photographed with us, as our souvenir of their visit to our 'territory'.



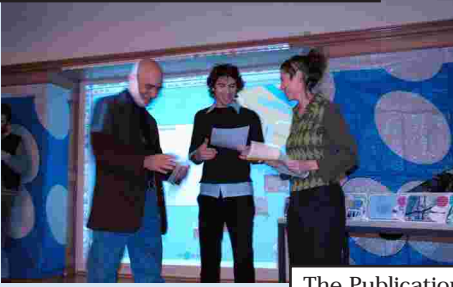
In the following weeks, our city strolls were dictated by the 34 sites. We visited them several times, taking photos, recording sounds and video impressions. We informed the info-givers about our visits and encouraged them to tell us more about the places.

During this process we produced 34 unique and personal souvenirs for the info-givers.



On March 11th, the info-givers were invited to the ceremonial closing event at the PROGR. They all received their souvenirs and a publication summarizing the project was offered to the general public.

souvenirs (24, 21)



The Publication includes a city map and a CD Rom. The city map is limited to the city of Bern as we knew it, and it indicates the 34 locations with related images and comments.



The CD constructs a more spatial experience and includes more photos, sounds, short animations and videos, which reflects our own now-acquired relation to the places.



"fitting in" site 18



"fitting in" site 26