

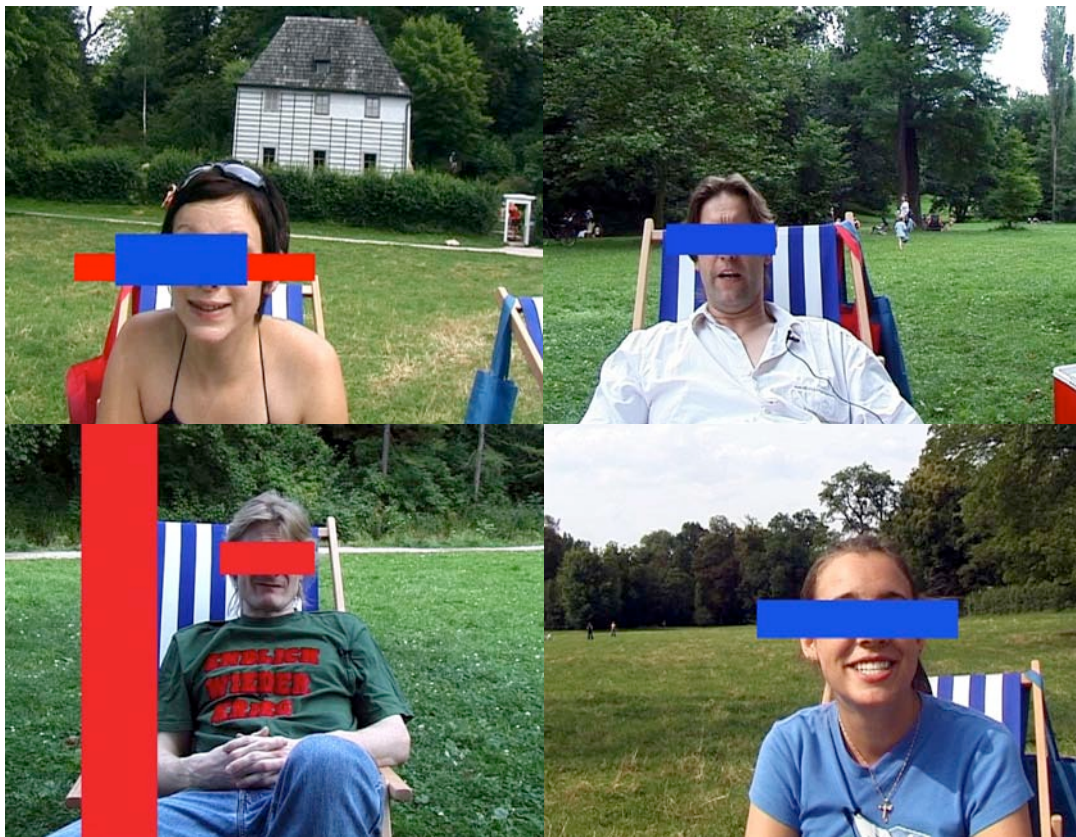


Constitutional Overhaul Bureau, 2004, Weimar City Park. Top: Approaching passers-by in the park and inviting them to take part in the project. Above: Scenes from the open-air bureau of the project.

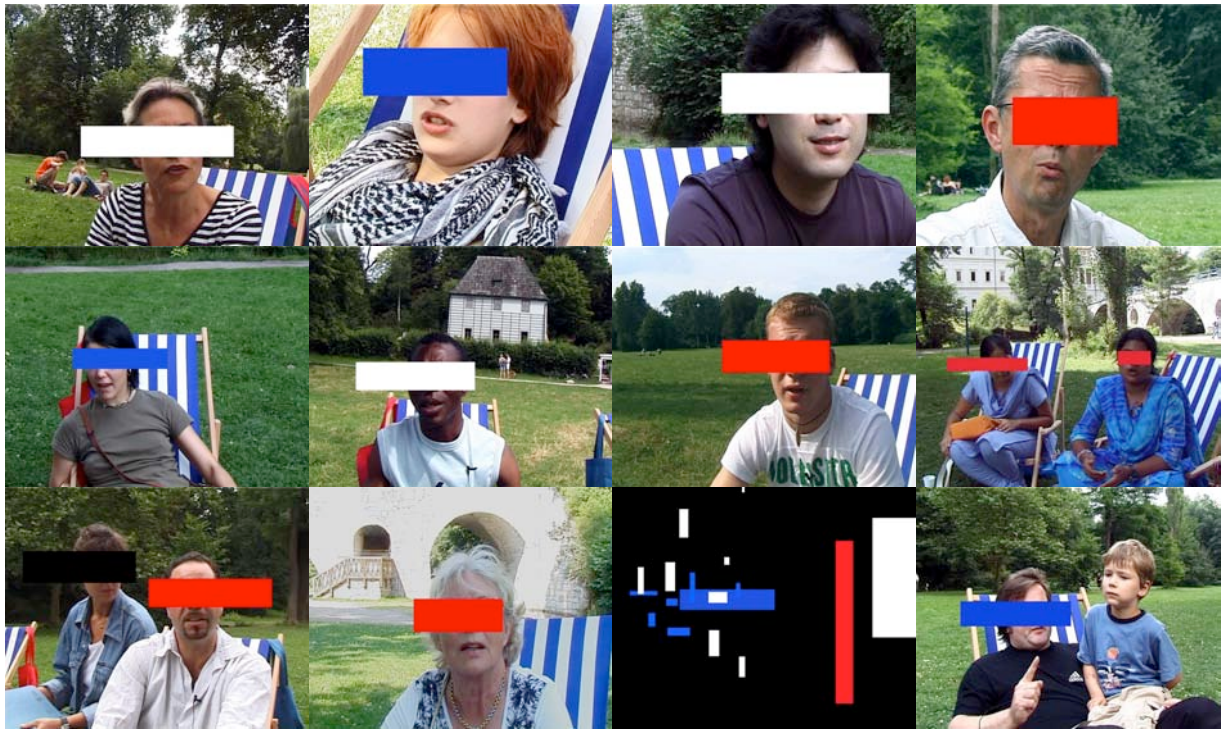
CONSTITUTIONAL OVERHAUL BUREAU / VERFASSUNGSKORREKTURBÜRO

One-Week Action by Kristina Leko in the City Park of Weimar 2004

During a week in July 2004, in the city park of Weimar, I was approaching passers-by offering them a bowl of nice candies, and asking them to help me “save the world” by improving the US Constitution. I would explain that the US Constitution is very old and needs refreshing, and that I personally think people all around the world should have the right to vote in the US elections. People reacted mostly laughing, but some of them took part in the project. All together over a hundred people visited my open air Constitutional Overhaul Bureau. Some of them wrote their suggestions in my project-book. In my open-air office there were copies of different constitutions that one could read and compare. If one didn't want to spend too much time on reading and writing, one could give his/her short video statement, and address American people and/or American politicians. During that week, 38 messages for American politicians were recorded. I promised to print the new version of the Constitution and send the DVDs to selected politicians, which I will do in the further development of the project.



Addressing the Americans, Part One, 2004/05, stills from the video.



Addressing the Americans, Part One, 2004/05, stills from the video.

The people you will see in this video wanted to share their thoughts with an American audience. I promised them to mail the DVDs to a selection of US politicians.

As I encountered people being afraid to record their video statements, I had to offer to edit the video in a way that would protect their identities. Approximately 20 % of the participants thought putting masks on their faces was not a necessity. 80 % wanted their identity protected.

As I was recording the statements of people talking in their mother languages, I realized that, although I might not speak that language, I was able to understand what the person was saying, and which political opinion he/she was representing.

This made me decide not to subtitle the video, but to kindly ask you, dear audience, to make an extremely valuable effort and try to understand the language you do not understand.

(Text from the flyer in the installation room; appears also in the video.)



Addressing the Americans, Part One, 2004/05, installation view, ACC Galerie Weimar, 2005.

Two-channel video installation: one channel features non-European languages with sound present in the room, the other projection features statements in English and German with sound on head-phones. Within this room, the audience was invited to print out their own "improved" version of the U.S. Constitution.