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Sound installation at Collegium Hungaricum Berlin in commemoration of "Kristallnacht" (2008)

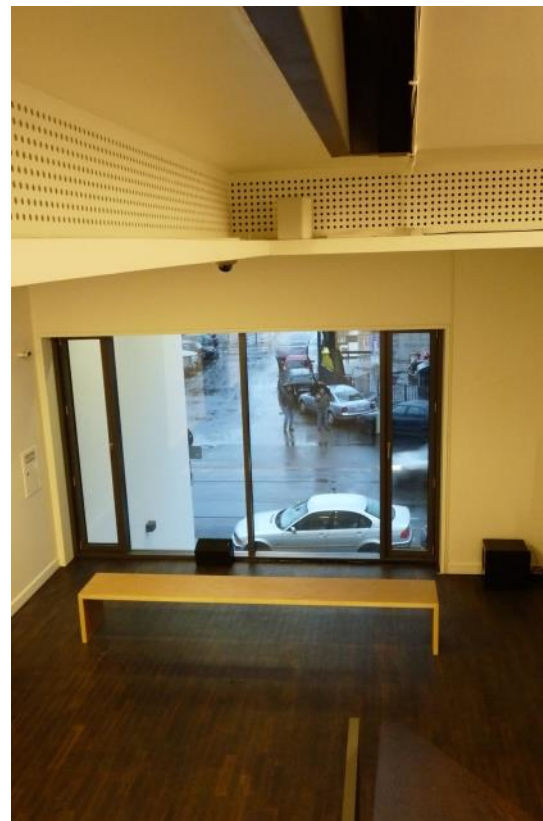
Based on the belief that the persecution of the Jews and the Holocaust cannot be represented in narrative accounts, and that an atmospheric or illustrative approach to the pogrom of November 9th, 1938 results in the trivialization of this genocide and injures the dignity of its victims, we have created a sound installation which conceptually focuses on empty space, that the extermination of Jews and other groups has left in the life of European nations.

Day/Interior

The sound installation in the interior of the Collegium Hungaricum Berlin consists of two parts: one two-channel installation in the south window of the stairway of the ground floor and a six-channel installation directly on the stairs on the first, second, and third floors.

Through the south window located directly at the entrance on the first floor, there is a view onto Dorotheenstraße. The street noises can be heard through loudspeakers. From this sound material, one to three narrow frequency bands are filtered out. An acoustic void is produced, alluding to the evictions and attrition of the Holocaust. The frequency bands change over time. They are based on an extremely slowed-down counterpoint study by Arnold Schönberg written in exile in California on November 10th, 1938, the so-called "Kristallnachtfuge".

In the staircase area, on the other hand, precisely those frequency bands can be heard that had been filtered out downstairs. The first voice is projected on the first floor, the second on the second floor, and the third on the third floor. The filters in this section of the installation are as carefully tuned as those at the south window on the first floor so that the disembodied parts sound like sinus-tones. The location of these sounds cannot be traced. In relation to the ongoing street sounds, they become articulated and modulate in volume. The transitions and interactions between the three voices/levels are observed by the visitors while they move through the stairway.



## Night/Exterior

Outside we create empty space in a visual way. On the levels of the second and third floors on the south façade of the Collegium Hungaricum Berlin, there is a large panoramic window which can be used as a video screen via a reverse projection. Here a live video signal will be transmitted, which comes from a camera, which is directed out of a window on the north face of the building, towards a row of houses on Bauhofstrasse. This produces a visual opening on the south façade, which enables the viewer to look through and into the building.

