



Castles



Morning Coffee



Malecon



Betzenberg

CityX

The Archive of Insights

by
Doris Graf

Studio:
Max-Planck-Str. 44-46
D-70736 Fellbach

www.dorisgraf.de
dodograf@web.de
0049 (0)151-40442299

The City as a Collective Self-Portrait

A Quest for Traces

What defines a city? Is it the architecture, the history, or the administration? For Doris Graf, the answer lies deeper - in the invisible emotional connections people forge with their living environment. With her long-term project CityX, she has developed a method that goes far beyond traditional urban representation: a participatory mapping of identity.

City Portrait in Pictograms



„CityX - Eu, Rio“, 2012/13 / Exhibition Städtische Galerie Bietigheim-Bissingen, 2025/26



„CityX - Eu, Salvador“, „Eu, Maputo“, „Ben, Istanbul“ / Exhibition Städtische Galerie Bietigheim-Bissingen, 2025/26



„CityX - Signs of Stuttgart“ / Exhibition Städtische Galerie Ostfildern, 2020



„CityX - Eu, Rio“, drawing action CRIO Biennale Rio de Janeiro, 2012



2012 CRIO Biennale Rio de Janeiro:

Initiated in 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, CityX has made its mark in 18 cities globally, from Europe and Asia Minor to Africa and across the Americas. The project's distinctive feature is the co-creation of a new urban iconography with the public. Initially, citizens are prompted to depict their view of the city on a specific template; drawing skills are non-essential. Subsequently, the artist categorizes these images by theme and distills them into a city portrait of pictograms - composed of simple forms that reflect the essence of the people's original sketches.

The Drawing as a Seismograph of Visual Anthropology

With CityX, Doris Graf has established a new form of urban representation. Here, drawing is more than just a creative tool—it functions as an active means of communication and knowledge generation. The artist is convinced that drawing connects us all; it is a universal language that makes even complex topics playfully accessible.

Doris Graf utilizes the medium of drawing as a research-oriented instrument of Visual Anthropology. In the process of „Social Urban Sculpture,“ residents become more than just participants- they become co-creators of a collective archive of knowledge.

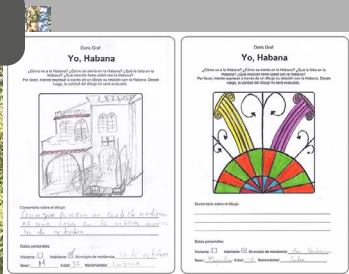


CityX: Who are we? What connects you to your city?

These questions are at the heart of CityX.



„CityX - Yo, Habana“, drawing action Havana, 2016, Cuba



Old Town

2016/19 CityX in Havana, Cuba



Capitol

IT Specialist

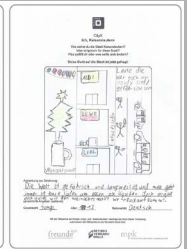
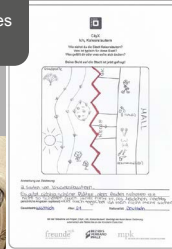
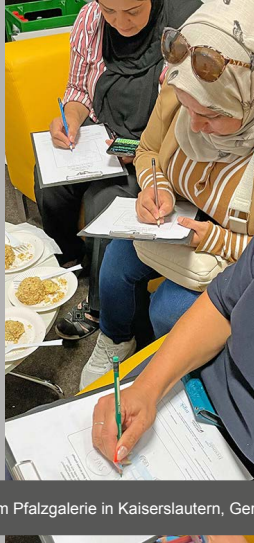
I Love Havana

13th Havana Biennale, Gallery Frida Kahlo
Exhibition „CityX - Yo, Habana“, 2019

Psychogeographic Protocols

When people intuitively draw their connection to their city, they create more than mere sketches - they produce psychogeographic protocols.

„CityX - Ich, Kaiserslautern“, drawing action in Kaiserslautern, 2024



2024/26 CityX with the Museum Pfalzgalerie in Kaiserslautern, Germany

Trouble Point

Visual Resonance of a Society

In an era of increasing individualization, Doris Graf poses the question of what we share. Her artistic analysis is a search for visual resonance within a society.



Big Points

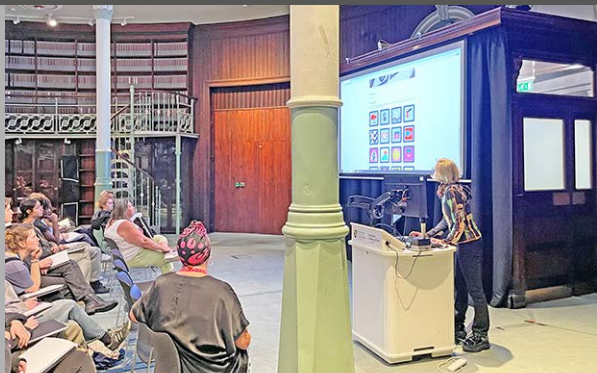
Betzenberg

Denkmal

Brennpunkt

mpk, Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern
Exhibition „CityX - Ich, Kaiserslautern“, 2024/26

„Drawing is taking a line for a walk.“ - Paul Klee



„CityX - Me, Swansea“, drawing action Swansea, 2024, UK



2024/25 CityX in Swansea, UK / Elysium Gallery Swansea



Me, Swansea

Capricious

A History of Insights

While classical art history often treats the city as a static object of observation (the „view“), Doris Graf establishes a history of insights with CityX. Her pictograms are encoded knowledge - a distillate that perceives urban space as a field of constant social negotiation.



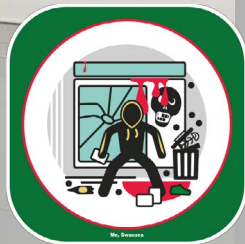
Capricious



Castles



Sunset Surf



Bad Behavior



The city portrait becomes an archive of knowledge



The city portrait becomes an archive of knowledge, revealing cognitive and emotional insights that statistics could hardly capture. Thus, CityX is more than an art project; it is an ongoing exploration of identity, proving that drawing is a universal language. It is capable of answering even the most complex questions of home and belonging in a way that is playful, democratic, and yet profound.





Stuttgart unter 21

The fact that the „Pictogram-Identity“ method extends far beyond purely geographical city portraits is demonstrated by thematic projects such as „Me, Quarantine“ or „Women in Mining.“ Here, the principle of artistic participation is applied to profound social experiences or specific life environments.

A particularly exciting focus is set by the project „Stuttgart unter 21“: While CityX usually encompasses the entire urban community, this concept was radically sharpened to reflect the perspective of the younger generation. The youth's viewpoint takes center stage. Consequently, the pictograms become an exclusive visual manifesto of those who will inhabit and shape the Stuttgart of tomorrow for the longest time.

Drawing is the most immediate form of communication. Far from perfection, every stroke reveals an individual perspective. In the sum of these thousands of lines, an authentic, democratic image of our time emerges - unvarnished, honest, and deeply human. Whether focusing on cities, social groups, or global themes - CityX and the resulting Pictogram-Identity make collective visions visible.

I am excited to start the next chapter together with you.

Doris Graf

Artist | Visual Researcher



dodograf@web.de
www.dorisgraf.de

www.dorisgraf.de



Drawing action „CityX - Ben, Istanbul“ 2019, Istanbul, Türkiye

**From View to Insight –
Art created from the heart of society.**