



Mandy Schoene-Salter: Paste-up in Nuremberg, Germany, 2014

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

continued

MANDY SCHOENE-SALTER

Mandy Schoene-Salter works as a project manager on community art projects. She is an interdisciplinary artist with her main focus on photography and has exhibited in numerous exhibitions in Germany and Australia, from Fotoszene Cologne to the Sydney Fringe Festival.

Born in Dresden, then East Germany, Mandy's family left the east and experienced what it is like to be a refugee in her own country. In 2002 Mandy arrived in Australia to start a new life with her Australian husband. Recently she returned to Germany for nine months with her young

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family and took part in a group show 'Dicht & Locker' at the K4 Nuremberg, produced a street art mural and taught a kids street art workshop at Aktive Spielhaus, an organisation run by the City of Nuremberg.

Mandy says: 'Street Art is a great way to engage young people and teach them an alternative to illegal tagging.'

Paste-up art is an innovative form of street art, which involves an artist making their work on varying sizes of paper and then pasting it onto almost any surface with non-toxic glue. It combines the decorative colour, design and permanence of the mural with the immediacy and style of graffiti. Sometimes it is ephemeral and sometimes permanent. There is a growing interest in this type of public art, which relates to graffiti but has strong design elements, combining photography and stencil art often with a social message.

'I've often thought that the traditional ways in which photography is presented can be limiting, so I decided to take it a step further and get it onto the streets using paper and glue,' explains Mandy.

Paste-up installations are designed for indoor and outdoor spaces, whether houses, cafes, offices or festivals. Since the artworks are predominantly photographs they can be on any theme. For interior commissions the image is printed onto self-adhesive fabric so that it can be removed or relocated easily.

In Mandy's latest work in Nuremberg, she designed and installed a mural for a round advertising pole which consisted of a two-layered stencil as a background pattern with paste-up photographs on top.

Top: Paste-up, Nuremberg, 2014
Right: The Seed 1, installation, Sydney
North Sydney Art Prize





In her two site-specific installations in Sydney entitled 'The Seed', Mandy wanted to reference the fragility of the environment and chose seeds as her theme since they are the starting point of plant life and encapsulate everything needed to grow a mature plant. The works were installed on a series of steps where the artwork could only be seen from a particular angle, and on two fence panels with a child blowing the head of a dandelion with the words 'I don't want to protect the environment, I want to create a world where the environment doesn't need protecting!'

The paste-ups are impermanent. Being made of paper and out in the elements they age, weather, disintegrate and eventually disappear completely. This natural process of disintegration is an important aspect of Mandy's work.

'As we become familiar and used to artworks and murals they start to become invisible anyway. My paste-ups are only there for a short time and once they're gone something new will appear to replace them, just like the cycle of life.'

Mandy runs street art projects with a public outcome and photography workshops. Her community art projects frequently have a school or child-centred approach. In her recent workshop in Germany Mandy

showed children how they could convert photographs of themselves into images for paste-ups.

Photography is Mandy's first love and a series of works entitled *Degradation & Reflection* was exhibited in 2013 at Western Plains Cultural Centre in Dubbo and at Salamanca Arts Centre in Hobart. With each image in effect a time capsule, these photographs depicted decay using the technique of reflection or mirrored images—for instance, showing a burned out house or an abandoned bus.

In her exhibition entitled *Beneath the Surface* in 2011, Mandy asked the question 'How much can a face tell about a person?' She photographed women who had lived through abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, death in the family, drugs or disability, showing one common theme: the will to reclaim their lives after hardship. Photographic portraits will also feature in *Heads in the Clouds*, Mandy's coming exhibition on banners in Katoomba Street in the Blue Mountains.

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This page, The Seed 2, installation, Sydney
 Opposite top: Paste-ups made with children in Nuremberg, 2014
 Opposite below: Generation Z