

ABC/360documentaries

poor but sexy

by

Jean-Claude Kuner

Author:

Voice 1:

Voice 2:

Music Bar 25

<u>Voice 1:</u> <i>Ambire</i> , Latin, that means to ambulate, to saunter.	<u>O-Sound: Walter Jens</u> Ambire, d.h. flanieren und schweifen.
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O-Sound: Brian Eno:

That idea of systems that make themselves ...
Systems that you are not in control of. So you put a system together and then it does something beyond your prediction.

<u>Voice 1:</u> Relaxed walking about, listening and watching all around...	<u>O-Sound: Walter Jens</u> Gelassenes Umkreisen bei nach überall hin ausgerichtetem Sehen und Hören ...
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O-Sound: Brian Eno:

It acknowledges that there is a different understanding of control.

<u>Voice 1:</u> And the observer allows himself to tune in, detects the changing tonalities in the centre and at the periphery, where it blusters, drones, and roars in Berlin...	<u>O-Sound: Walter Jens</u> Und der Betrachter lässt sich einstimmen, konstatiert die wechselnden Töne im Zentrum und an der Peripherie, wo es lärmt, dröhnt und rauscht in Berlin ...
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Voice 2:

Walking around by itself is not enough. I must pursue a sort of local history, deal with the past and the future of this city, this city that is always on the go, always in the process of changing. That's what

makes it so difficult to discover, especially for someone who calls it home...

Voice 1:

Franz Hessel, A Flâneur in Berlin, 1929.

O-Sound: Brian Eno:

The more we understand about complex systems, about living systems, and systems like cities, the more we understand that actually we don't control them.

Voice 2:

Brian Eno.

Author:

A car drives through the city with a large mirror mounted on its roof. The city is reflected in it, a snippet as magical as it is fleeting.

This is part of an art project from the year 2010 by the Danish artist Olafur Eliasson, who's been living in Berlin since 1994.

The mirror as metaphor. For the spirit capable of reflection and speculation. For the inversion of inside and outside. Of reality and pretence.

The same town viewed from different sides looks altogether different and is, as it were, perspectively multiplied, claimed Leibniz, the Baroque philosopher.

Olafur Eliasson shows that one can also view something differently. In a mirror and from a different perspective. From inside and from outside.

Berlin from the perspective of expatriates.

What draws them to Berlin? What do they see? Those who only know the new Berlin after the fall of the Wall?

The city of Berlin is like a palimpsest, a piece of parchment from which the writing has been erased and written over time and time again with countless numbers of registrations and new enrolments.

Those of the Berliners, new-Berliners, immigrants and tourists.

O-Sound: Nicola

Is this your favourite café?

Eigentlich nicht.

But it's very close to my place so I was used to come here and read the paper.

My name is Nicola Vincenzoni, I come from Italy, Umbria, I am 28 years old. And I live since November in Berlin.

This is Prenzlauer Berg. I do like it because it is very international. The park is so close also. It is very important in the area. It is a meeting point and there is a market every week. And in the summer it is full of young people.

O-Sound: Kieker

As 50 % of all other people living here, I am not from Berlin. Berlin is the only city which allows a guy from the province to become the the tourist boss. This is typical for Berlin. It is very much open for newcomers.

Burkhard Kieker. I am the CEO of Berlin Tourist and Convention. A kind of Foreign Ambassador for the city.

Since 1990 Berlin is back on the map. This means Berlin is like Atlantis. Once sunk and now reemerged and on the surface. Very interesting, very new and very different from the other megacities in Europe. We promote Berlin as a mixture of adrenalin, chill out and high culture in an unique mix. Berlin is a city that virtually never sleeps. Don't try to study here, you will not succeed, because too many bars. It has an unique mix of high and subculture, highly subsidized high culture with seven symphony orchestras, the only city with three operas and 1400 events every evening, every day, the whole year round. And it is a city which you can afford. This is very special about Berlin.

Music:

Author:

I am also one of these types of Berliners.

For thirty years now.

Today, more foreigners than ever are streaming to Berlin to take up residence for a while. That's a tradition in Berlin. In 18th Century Prussia, one-fifth of the population had immigrated here. Similar to today, there were concrete economic and demographic policy interests behind it.

Voice 2:

3.5 million residents live in the capital.

Since 1990, half of the population has changed over through departure and new influx.

One-quarter of the residents have an immigrant background.

36% of children under the age of 15 in Berlin depend on public assistance.

8 million visitors will come to Berlin in 2010 alone.

Author:

Berlin has become an international city.

Particularly through the influx of creative and especially younger people from around the world and from Germany.

Music: Berlin Song 1_14

O-Sound: Sebastian

My name is Sebastian, I am 26 years old and I moved to Berlin six years ago to study and I am still a student and in my free time I am a promoter of music.

With my friend Jan I have released 3 volumes of a compilation series called Berlin Songs, that document singer and songwriter who live here.

The attitude and the approach in the Berlin music scene is still predominantly uncommercial.

The title Berlin Song is just so catchy

We have some Australian artists on the compilation. We've met Kat Frankie when she just moved to Berlin in 2005 and we became friends. She stayed here because there is a nice community that is really interested in the style of music she makes and she found a lot of nice collaborators who play music with her here.

O-Sound: Toby

Berlin stood out as something a bit more interesting ... and cheap. Living here is very cheap for a capital city. I think it is one of the last destinations in Europe where you can live so well.

My name is Toby Craig. I came to Berlin in 2007 from Perth. And I work here in the computer game industry. I am 29 years actually.

O-Sound: shows his music

O-Sound: Toby

I was studying a Bachelor of Music. I finished that, worked a little bit, saved some money, sold all my possessions and moved here. I've met my, now ex-girlfriend, here. She was from Sydney. We met by chance in Berlin. Ended up living together in Australia before we decided that we wanted to move here.

O-Sound: Hannah

At that time we were both quite young, at least I was. We wanted something a bit more ... Australia can be dull at some times, even it is a beautiful place dull is not the right word I don't want to offend anyone ... The grass is always greener on the other side.

O-Sound: shows her foto project

My name is Hannah Cheney, I am 26 years old, in Berlin since three years. I studied bachelor of business and accounting.

Still when I am here I think about going back to Australia all the time. I think I missed out a lot of things ... that was hard on me. But at the same time I am really happy to be here and I can't leave. I really can't.

Music:

O-Sound: Sommer in the car, talks about construction and traffic

Sommer Ulrickson. I don't know how to title myself. I am a director and choreographer and performer of some sorts.

I am 36, coming from California, in Berlin since 1996. The minute I arrived in Berlin, I knew that this is home. I was only supposed to stay in Germany for one year. And I never left.

Berlin for me is the most interesting mix of a really problematic past and a really exciting and enthusiastic present.

If you leave Berlin and come back something is torn down and something else built. And it is really constant. I think there has not been a time in the 11 years since I am here that there hasn't been a major part of Berlin under construction. And it's constant. That is really characteristic of Berlin, that it is not finished. That's why people like it so much.

In a way it reminds me of what maybe America felt for a lot of people, that it is a place where you can go and start something. In America I think it was more about money making possibility, and here it is more about realizing some potential of some sort. It is quite interesting the contrast that there is less funding for the arts, but actors, fashion designers, artists are still coming a lot.

O-Sound: Soho House, Chris shows and describes

Voice 2:

Thirty percent of business is in medicine and electronics, making them the largest industries in Berlin.

13% of the economy comes from the cultural and creative industries.

The forecast for 2030: Berlin as a city of intelligent production achieved through innovation and start-up companies.

Author:

The members-only club Soho House is from England. Along with its headquarters in London, they also have branches in New York and Los Angeles. Berlin's opened in April 2010.

The building near Alexander Platz is a German history lesson. Initially a department store owned by Jews, then the headquarters for the Hitler Youth from 1942–45, after the war the Politburo for the early East German state, and then, after 1989, it stood empty for years.

An architectural symbol for the changes Berlin has undergone.

The club, a signal that the city has gradually pushed its way into the league of the world-class metropolises.

O-Sound: Soho House, Chris and Jens

My name is Chris Glass, the membership manager.

My name is Jens Gmiant, the general manager of Soho House.

C: Soho House is a private members club. A community of creative individuals. Here in Berlin we also have a spa, a cinema, but essentially it is a place to get together.

J: I think there would be no other place in Germany than Berlin to do it. Because Berlin is still everyday a new defining city, developing city, it is not finished, lives from its contrasts, is very cosmopolitan – and is basically the center of the creative industry. Everybody is coming.

C: I agree. There is a very dynamic creative scene here in Berlin. Dynamic in the sense that it is very diverse. You have fashion, publishing, music, art, architecture, such a range of creative industries. That's part of what drives the city and is also the future of Berlin as well. Soho House is a brand which very much looks into the future, is based in tradition, but looks at the future. I think the world is looking at Berlin and what is happening here. It is a very young city. Reborn and full of possibilities. There is so much which can happen here.

O-Sound: Soho House, Chris shows and describes the Politbüro

O-Sound: Kieker

I have to admit that we are surprised about the development of our city. After the 90ies which were very difficult in Berlin, people now

recognize that the city has found its middle. Many things have helped us, especially the soccer championship in 2006 where the world learned that the Germans don't go to the basement when they want to laugh, that Germans can party, and that obviously this country has changed a lot.

A very strong influence had the tv pictures of 1989 when the wall came down. This has been the symbol for the end of the cold war. With Berliners tearing down the wall.

Music:

Author:

Somehow the 2006 World Cup changed everything.

The colourful image of hospitable Germans, welcoming an international audience with open arms, who were finally allowed to show pride and wave their national flag without feeling guilty about it, really catapulted them beyond their sinister Nazi past and the grey and somewhat narrow-minded and stuffy old West Germany.

In the nineties it was unclear where the journey would lead. Back then many feared that moving the capital from Bonn back to Berlin and the arrival of big business would cause Berlin to lose its special qualities.

Twenty years later – as a resurrected city and after a protracted phase of reconstruction – Berlin has returned to its old strengths: Being a special city that is as different from the rest of the country as New York is to the United States.

O-Sound: Ming Wong: Petra von Kant

O-Sound: Ming Wong

I have a theory about why it is so good for me in Berlin and for a lot of people. Being open is one way of putting it, but also people generally have more time. Which means they can be more generous with the time for others. People are a lot more laid back, relaxed in the sense that there is not such a strict hierarchy that you get in other cities.

I am Ming Wong, here in my studio, I am an artist, originally from Singapur. I lived in London for 10 years. I visited a friend here in Berlin and I fell in love with the city immediatly and than I moved to Berlin three years ago.

This is your working studio? so it is rather big?

This studio is the biggest studio I have ever had. But this is Berlin.

It seemed to have a lot more space and I felt somehow freer to move around and there seemed to be a lot of young energy happening. I am not under pressure to earn money to make a living. Somehow money stretches a little further in Berlin and that frees up some time. So I think it is also about having enough time.

When I came to Berlin I looked at Fassbinders films and reinterpreted some of his films where I played all the roles myself. That was more a personal journey where I was grappling with my dislocation from abroad to Berlin.

O-Sound: Ming Wong shows his last work

Music: Berlin Songs 2_12

O-Sound: Sebastian

Clémence Freschard, it's called the Berlin Tune and it describes the situation around Kottbusser Tor where she lives. The whole poor & sexy myth is always there

O-Sound: Stéphane

I had my first flat here near Oranienstrasse. We are sitting in front of SO36, which was in the 90ies a very important place for techno music. One of the qualities of the party business in Berlin is to move and find new locations.

I am Stéphane Hugel, 39, French. I came to Berlin in 1996 to study German and art history.

The feeling of a very special energy in the city attracts me and attracts me nowadays.

How much did it change?

Oh, it changed very much. Sometimes I have the feeling that 2,3,4 different Berlins have passed by in all these 15 years. In the 90ies it was a very different ambience, it was the techno times, more of an utopia. Because of the new political situation Germany was very open to new things. And also investors had many plans for it. But it developed in a very different way. We don't live in the city which people thought about in the 90ies. It evolves slower and in its own way. Maybe in a more sane way.

O-Sound: Laurie Anderson, installation and quote/construction sounds 1996

My preference is to be with people who also don't know the answers to things.

Author:

In the years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, it really drove you insane. Berlin was one giant construction site. The eastern part of the city was ramshackle and what once used to be the busiest plaza in Europe, the Potsdamer Platz, you could only find rabbits hopping about.

Then came the construction boom.

Giant investors divvied up the fallow parcels among themselves and on Europe's largest construction site built a global business centre within a few years. The construction site became a tourist attraction and, in 1996, the venue for the international sound-art festival **sonambiente**, attracting artists like Brian Eno and Laurie Anderson.

At that time, in the middle of construction, the distinguished urbanist Dieter Hofmann-Axthelm, who was born in Berlin in 1940, didn't believe that this location had a future. He, like many others, was wrong in his prognoses for the future.

<p><u>Voice 1:</u></p> <p>As someone who was born and raised</p>	<p><u>O-Sound: Hofmann-Axthelm</u></p> <p>Als jemand, der in dieser Stadt seit Geburt drin ist, sehe ich das sehr gelassen. Berlin ist schon öfter</p>
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in this city, I'm not too worried about it. Berlin has been dumped on before. From above and sometimes even from below. So it's completely open as to how this battle will end.

I think that, at the moment, what's being dumped from above will be difficult for the city to swallow, it will take fifty years before it's been assimilated. All that global stuff that has absolutely nothing to do with Berlin. Potsdamer Platz, what Sony or Mercedes Benz dreamed up. Those are things that absolutely do not fit with Berlin, that were created on the moon and then carried here with helicopters.

All the new things being built are undifferentiated monolithic blocks. Only offices. And then, at the periphery, much too far away, only apartments. That's the normal line that's accepted internationally, taking everything apart in gigantic, undifferentiated suburbs and inside the struggle of the globalised, capital interests for the centre city, who has the say there and who earns money on the whole thing.

But you have to trust that such a city has possibilities to react. A city isn't a politician or an architect who sits at a table and says: I'm going to do this differently. Rather, a city's reaction is more diffuse.

Today, where a city is only built by and for investors, the populace can only express itself through destruction, rejection, or conversion.

zugeschüttet worden. Von oben und teilweise auch von unten. Also das ist völlig offen, wie der Kampf ausgeht. Ich glaube, dass das, was im Augenblick von oben hinein geschüttet wird, zwar schwer zu verdauen sein wird für die Stadt, da wird sie 50 Jahre dran zu tun haben, bis sie das assimiliert hat. Dieses ganze globale Zeugs, was überhaupt nichts mit der Stadt zu tun hat. Potsdamerplatz, was sich Sony da ausdenkt oder Mercedes-Benz. Das sind Sachen, die überhaupt nicht zur Stadt passen, die auf dem Mond fabriziert worden sind und dann mit dem Hubschrauben hier reingetragen werden.

Alles, was neu gebaut wird, sind undifferenzierte, monolitische Blöcke. Nur Büro. Und dann wird am Rande, viel zu weit weg, nur Wohnen gebaut. Das ist die übliche Linie, die international läuft, auseinander nehmen, in riesige undifferenzierte Vorstädte und innen der Kampf der globalisierten, kapitalen Interessen um die Innenstadt, wer da eigentlich das Sagen hat und das Geld verdient. Aber man muss so einer Stadt Reaktionsmöglichkeiten zutrauen. Eine Stadt ist kein Politiker und kein Architekt, der sich an den Tisch setzt und sagt: ich mache das jetzt anders. Sondern Stadt reagiert diffus.

Heute, wo Stadt nur noch von Investoren gebaut wird, kann sich die Bevölkerung eigentlich nur über Zerstörung, Ablehnung oder Umnutzung ausdrücken.

O-Sound: Kieker

When the wall came down in 1989 all Berliners including me said: ok, that's it we are back on the scene, world look at us. And we were so wrong. You couldn't imagine how wrong we were, because this was a severely wounded city. Berlin had to be reconstructed. Berlin was destroyed 60% in WW II and due to the division of the city through the Berlin Wall many things hadn't been rebuild. So for 10 years Berlin was a big construction site. Nothing had been planned after reunification. There was no marketing master mind, it was a chaotic process. This is not finished but the big wave is over and if you look over here to the Potsdamerplatz it's a complete new borough, people live there, people like it, you have theatres, musicals, the Berlinale film festival ... But than when Berlin was rebuild and was still a safe haven for bohemians it took some more years for the world to rediscover Berlin.

Author:

Economically, before 1989, both East and West Berlin were being kept alive artificially. There were subsidies for people moving to West Berlin, companies were supported with tax breaks. Until 1995. After that, the de-industrialisation of Berlin started. Now there were other, more profitable locations.

Voice 2:

16% unemployment. Germany's highest, and double the country's average.

Every fifth person is at risk of poverty.

One-third of children are dependent upon public assistance.

The city has debts totalling 30 billion euro.

Music: Berlin Songs 2_16

O-Sound: Sebastian

Jakob Dobers. Jakob is a very important figure in the Berlin LoFi-singer-songwriter world. It's about the going-out phenomenon in Berlin which is very different to how it is done in other cities. It is definitively a lot longer and has its dark sides. It's a nice commentary on the whole myth and mythology of the night life.

O-Sound: Ming Wong

I was warned before I came here about the Berlin trap. Some artists come to Berlin and they hang out, they chill out, they party and they don't make any work. Life is so easy to get by. They just hang out in cafés all day and let the time pass. After three years of being here I also was seeing with my own eyes how seductive that Berlin trap can be. Not just for visitors but also for people who live here. Somehow Berlin draws people from all around Germany and the world who are looking for a certain kind of lifestyle where they can live from day to day and not have any responsibility for the future. Just party as hard as they want to. They might think they are living in Neverland.

Music and Sound:

O-Sound: Toby

Berlin was not good to your relationship?
Unfortunately not, no! I think moving is stressful for a relationship. But I wouldn't blame oh, it's hard! I don't know how to blame Berlin it certainly influenced it. This is a city sometimes it can be a city of excess. You can do anything you want here. Maybe that gets to some people

O-Sound Hannah:

We didn't survive. That was the sad thing. And my fault. Absolutely.

O-Sound: Toby

If you want to get into that club culture and you get too deep into it than you find yourself out every night. Burning the candles on both ends.

O-Sound Hannah:

I'd rather not talk about it. (laughs) To be honest! (laughs)

O-Sound: Toby

I think coming from Perth to such a big city with so many possibilities is also a bit daunting.

O-Sound Hannah:

It was a hard time. I think more for him. But that didn't work. And ... things happen for a reason.

O-Sound: Toby

I think we just grew apart. Coincidentally she is still in Berlin as well living here. We stayed true to the city, we loved it and that is why we are here.

O-Sound Hannah:

We decided to stay! And we are still here! (laughs)

O-Sound: Toby

I guess we just grew apart ... I think we lived here for almost a year before we actually split up. So

O-Sound Hannah:

And I still can't imagine leaving now.

Music and Sound:

O-Sound Hannah:

I feel like I am drifting in the wind here still. And that is a hard thing to give up. I feel very individual and spontaneous. I am sure I could go back and get a great job, buy a house and probably get married and have children and all that, which a lot of my friends in Australia are doing right now. When I see that and know that this is waiting for me of course you want to keep floating in the wind for a bit longer (laughs). I really don't have a plan. I take each year as it comes

O-Sound Bitwig:

There is this idea that all the people which don't know what to do with their lives, they can continue to not decide what they want to do with their lives in Berlin. In London, no. In Munich, no, You have to make a decision. Here you don't have to. That has something nice to it because our society is so geared at making a career.

I had friends who survived on ten gigs a year as musicians and baking bread and selling bread at private parties for 5-6 years. They would live on a couple of hundred Euros per month.

Music:

O-Sound Bitwig:

Placidus Schelbert, from Switzerland.

Pedro Sara from Buenos Aires.

Nick Allen, from the island of Guernsey.

Klaus Johannsen, from Sweden.

Volker Schuhmacher, from near Paderborn.

Author:

Bitwig is just one of many start-up companies for software development in Berlin. Education, technology, the creative and service sectors, those are the areas that those in charge, among them Harald Wolf, Berlin Senator for Economics, see as driving Berlin's economic future.

Voice 1:

When I speak with investors that are interested in Berlin as a business location, the internationality of Berlin always plays a very important role. That Berlin has an image of being open to the world, that there are so many people who speak foreign languages, that the city is very tolerant is a very decisive factor.

Naturally there are immense problems. There is an incredible amount of people who've come here as labour migrants, or as refugees, who are socially ostracised, who don't have jobs, who then, to a certain extent, have withdrawn into their cultural or religious corners, and whose children haven't gone to school or didn't get good marks. There are only two solutions for this: education and integration through employment.

But when I'm talking about the future of the city: we have not only intellectuals and highly qualified people here, we also have a large

O-Sound: Wolf/2030:

Wenn ich mit Investoren, die am Wirtschaftsstandort Berlin interessiert sind, rede, dann spielt für die immer die Internationalität der Stadt Berlin eine ganz wichtige Rolle. Dass Berlin ein weltoffenes Image hat, dass hier so viele fremdsprachige Menschen leben, dass es eine hohe Toleranz in dieser Stadt gibt, ist ein ganz entscheidender Faktor.

Natürlich gibt es immense Probleme. Es gibt unheimlich viele Menschen, die als Arbeitsmigranten hergekommen sind oder als Flüchtlinge, die in einer sozial ausgegrenzten Situation leben, die keine Arbeit haben, die sich dann teilweise in ihre kulturellen oder religiösen Nischen zurückgezogen haben und deren Kinder keinen oder einen nur sehr schlechten Schulabschluss haben. Da gibt es nur zwei Lösungen: Bildung und Integration durch Arbeit.

Aber wenn ich über die Zukunft der Stadt diskutiere: wir haben hier nicht nur Intellektuelle und Hochqualifizierte in dieser Stadt, wir haben auch eine ganze Menge Menschen mit schlechter

number of people with a poor educational background, and what are their perspectives? We would rightly be criticised if our policies only had an effect in the areas of sciences and high-tech. But that has a multiplier effect. When we have companies that grow and are successful in Berlin, these companies need logistics, transportation, and other service industries. We thus also create additional jobs.	Schulausbildung, was ist die Perspektive für die? Man würde uns zu Recht kritisieren, wenn unsere Politik nur Auswirkungen hätte für den Bereich Wissenschaft und Hightech. Aber das hat ja Multiplikatoren-Wirkung. Wenn wir Unternehmen haben, die in Berlin wachsen und erfolgreich sind, brauchen diese Unternehmen Logistik, Transport, und andere Dienstleistungen. Wir schaffen damit zusätzliche Arbeitsplätze.
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Author:

Berlin is a mecca for people who love electronic music. Techno and Minimal Techno are characteristic of the Berlin sound.

The music industry nowadays is an important part of the creative economy.

O-Sound Bitwig:

Placidus: I think the music industry, specially music software industry has quite a history in Berlin. Software has become very important in music making over the last 20 years. And Berlin is part of that success story. There are now two really big companies based in Berlin which are very strong worldwide.

Pedro: Music culture, Techno, exists in Berlin.

Volker: Electronic music is really big in Berlin.

Nick: A hip city is good for a company on the long run, but as a start-up ... we already met in Ableton, we were already together. But as we grow we are looking for new talents it is obviously helpful that the city attracts artistic people.

Volker: It is also good for finding employees.

Claas: And it also tends to be that people from our field come by Berlin once in awhile and you get the opportunity to meet people in your own town, because there are just visiting.

Placidus: The city shifts towards a service society. In other parts of Germany it happend much earlier. Here there was the wall. Than it came down and a lot of things collapsed. Berlin was in a weaker position economically. This was one effort they made instead of trying

to get big companies moving here they also decided to try to seed the market and help new projects, starting in Berlin.

Nick: And it also is that the artistic and creative people who tend to not have a lot of money, so they flock to these places and they become these meccas of creativity

Music: Bar 25

Author:

Every weekend young people surge into Berlin from all corners of Europe. They're called the "Easy-Jet-Set" after the low-cost airline, Easyjet. Cheap-rate partying and drinking. And you can do it around the clock, as there are no specified closing times in Berlin and never have been.

In certain neighbourhoods these youths have become a real nuisance.

Music: BerlinSong 3_17

O-Sound: Sebastian

Flipflop Song by an artist called D. Cooper who is originally from East-Fresia in North Germany. The song is maybe against the new influx of internationals coming into Berlin who really only come here because it is cheap and he criticizes that in the song.

Berlin has to pay attention that it doesn't become a overrun city which only gets consumed like a all-you-can-eat-buffet. I think Berlin still has a very distinct spirit and it is important to keep that alive.

Author:

The term "precariat" is another contemporary neologism that applies to Berlin. It describes a new social group, that of the unprotected workers and unemployed, living on the fringes of existence. Well-educated young people without jobs.

Music and Sound:

O-Sound Nicola:

This summer above all I had this feeling that Berlin could be the city of young precarious people of Europe that come here to enjoy the

nightlife, the bars and everything, in a real massive dimension. It was really something which made me think about the possibility that Berlin could be in the European system at the moment, where it is not giving jobs to a lot of young people who are actually prepared for the job market, but can not find anything, that Berlin is maybe the playground for this whole precarious generation of all Europe.

Author:

On the bridge connecting Berlin's Kreuzberg and Friedrichshain neighbourhoods, you can see a constant stream of young people at every hour of the day and night going out to party. Occasionally there are spontaneous music jams there.

It's two in the morning. The sounds of two electric guitarists from Japan and the US serenade the partygoers as they tumble out of the city trains.

O-Sound Night Guitars:

Music: Berlin Songs 3_2

Author:

Since the wall came down many have lost the Berlin they knew. The East remained the capital, but lost its country. The West lost its island character, where, as the East Berlin author Heiner Müller once said, all the points of the compass pointed to the east, and won its freedom from the wall surrounding it.

The East Berliners were much less well prepared for Berlin's dramatic transformation into a cosmopolitan metropolis than the West Berliners were. In East Germany "The International" only referred to their sister socialist countries. And they weren't even allowed to travel to most of them.

Since 1990, half of Berlin's population has changed over in its entirety. 1.6 million people left – and moved here. The East Berliners were overrun while the West Berliners simply retreated to their old established neighbourhoods.

Visitors probably don't even notice the differences between East and West after twenty years.

For the new arrivals, East and West is history at any rate.

O-Sound: Toby

I think there is no need to separate it these days. That politics is a dinosaur now. It's totally gone.

Author:

But long-time residents of Berlin are still not completely over the reunification. There are still remains of the Wall in their heads and in the institutions.

The West Berliner stays in the West, the East Berliner in the East.

But that doesn't affect the young visitors. Hip is currently located in the former East: in Friedrichshain, Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg.

Berlin is one city in their eyes.

O-Sound Michael Roes:

Michael Roes, writer, filmmaker and living in Berlin.

These people who migrated to Berlin have always been the majority. Berlin is a very young city and has exploded in the beginning of the 20th century. Compared to Paris or Rome it is a very young capital.

I am living in Berlin more than 30 years. I think I am the typical Berliner.

Voice 1:

M: The Berliners, the original inhabitants, they're slowly disappearing. Mitte is international, Prenzlauer Berg. But actual Berliners, they're guests in their own city. And they're increasingly retreating to the outer districts and the old neighbourhoods.

O-Sound Kainz/Meinetsberger:

M: Die Berliner, die Ureinwohner, die verschwinden langsam. Mitte ist international, Prenzlauerberg. Aber der eigentliche Berliner, der ist Gast in der eigenen Stadt. Und verzieht sich immer mehr in seine Aussenbezirke und seine alten Kieze.

Author:

Andreas Meintesberger and Peter Kainz were left over on the gigantic area that was the former East German state broadcaster. The sound engineers founded a privately run sound studio there in the nineties.

<u>Voice 1:</u> But the Berliners that put up with all of that for 50 years after the war, they aren't so present for me anymore.	<u>O-Sound Kainz/Meinetsberger:</u> Aber der Berliner, der das alles erduldet hat 50 Jahre durch den Krieg, der ist für mich nicht mehr so präsent.
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O-Sound Michael Roes:

This city has changed every decade its face. And not just in the last 20 years.

<u>Voice 1:</u> M: We're not really shocked by it. Perhaps a bit alienated occasionally. <u>Voice 2:</u> K: It's not as if we're only ever pining for the olden days. I'm glad that those times are over.	<u>O-Sound Kainz/Meinetsberger:</u> M: Wir sind da nicht geschockt. Aber ein bisschen befremdet manchmal. K: Es ist nicht so, dass man jetzt immer nur die alten Zeiten sich herbei sehnt. Ich bin froh, dass diese Zeiten nicht mehr da sind.
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O-Sound Michael Roes:

When I came there was still the wall.

<u>Voice 1:</u> M: But considering what's going on with real estate...now we're back to the Berliners... The Berliners cannot afford their apartments in Prenzlauer Berg any more, the Berliners are being forced out to the city's periphery. And there are whole areas	<u>O-Sound Kainz/Meinetsberger:</u> M: Aber was die Immobiliengeschichte angeht da kommen wir wieder auf den Berliner Der Berliner kann sich die Wohnung im Prenzlauerberg nicht leisten, der Berliner drängt sich immer weiter weg. Und es gibt schon
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where you cannot find any original residents any more. Prenzlauer Berg has exchanged almost 80% of its residents, and the trend continues...it's a bit strange.	ganze Gebiete, die fast ohne Ureinwohner sind. Prenzlauerberg hat fast 80% der Bevölkerung ausgewechselt und das geht ja so weiter ... das ist ein bisschen komisch.
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O-Sound Michael Roes:

I came to Berlin in 1979. It was an island of anarchy. But after the unification it has changed. It became capital again. Politicians, businessmen, all these people moved in again. But on the other hand it also became more open, because it became attractive for a lot of foreigners. And now it is a very cosmopolitan city. More than it has been before.

O-Sound Nicola on the street:

What does it say?

Capitalism destroys and kills and normalizes. Yeah, that is one of the occupied houses in the street. There are still organizing partys, exhibitions right now they can still coexist in the same street ... but sooner or later they couldn't. Because there is a lot of speculation in this area and the prizes of appartments are rising and rising. Now the Bio-Shop open 24 hours and the occupied houses are neighbours and they both contribute to the atmosphere of this area, but sooner or later they can't live together anymore.

Music and Sound:

O-Sound Kieker:

Our mayor said: Berlin is poor but sexy.

O-Sound Sommer:

Pure but sexy. Pure or poor?

Music and O-Sound: and some more poor but sexy-statements

O-Sound Nicola on the street, entering the house:

They live in number 89, this is very symbolic. So I like it.

A very Ostberlin flat.

Which means?

You will see: painted walls with colours, old wooden floor, and everything is a little bit old and not so fancy

O-Sound: Ming Wong

Now they just want to make it sexy. And fix the poor a bit. Now there is a lot of gentrification happening. You see area changing very quickly. Even in the last 2 years since I am here. People are moving to Berlin from all over the world. Berlin is becoming the mecca for creative people. That is very unique right now in the world. It has this very strong draw for artists. I don't think you see that mix so much in other cities.

O-Sound: Sommer

Poor people generally include lots of artists. Poor and sexy fits together. For me that is not a contradiction. It sort of makes sense. Because you need to be creative and make the best of what you have.

O-Sound: Toby

It refers to this bohemian lifestyle that you find generally among the young hipsters and arty people that are here I guess. I think the lifestyle is great and it fits that term.

O-Sound Nicola:

I am not sure if this will remain like this for a longer time. Berlin is probably becoming richer or at least less cheap. But it is still sexy
(laughs)

O-Sound Soho House:

I have a challenge with poor but sexy for a couple of different reasons. Poor is how you look at it. I think the city is rich. Resources are people or things. There might not be Euros here like there are in Munich or Hamburg, but there are other resources. Berlin is wealthy in many ways. And sexy! Poor and sexy is fun and gives a character to Berlin, but it also limits the perspective. There is wealthy and not so sexy, and there is wealthy and sexy, there is a variety of things here. And that for me is the richness and that at the end contradicts this idea of poor and sexy. There is an extreme richness here. In that there are great people here, and great things to do and a great life to live here in Berlin.

O-Sound Bitwig:

I won't cry if Berlin changes. Berlin will change, because ten years ago Berlin was much more special than it is now, at least the neighbourhood where I live. But Berlin still is a very unusual city. But compared to ten years ago it is less unusual. But the substance, the potential of the city is incredible. The size ... it is a huge city and only 3.5 millions inhabitants

spread out. So it is not as densely populated. There are just so many corners in the city that are amazing.

O-Sound Kieker:

Our mayor said: Berlin is poor but sexy. I think that is changing. The poorness is vanishing. There are a lot of people living on the basis of social welfare right now. But Berlin is changing. We also have a lot of companies, I would name them brain companies, with scientists who want to develop something. They come to Berlin because they can find an affordable living here, which you can't find in Frankfurt or Hamburg, because they are very expensive cities.

Tourism right now is the biggest single factor in the economy. In Berlin we have 1.3 million paid jobs, about 300 000 of them are in tourism or in the convention industry. And tourism counts for 9 billion Euros turnover per year. We have 20 million overnights this year. That is exactly doubled in ten years. And we don't know where it is going in the future. This makes us number 3 in Europe. Number one of course is London, number 2 Paris, and then Berlin. Unbelievable! And we have no explanation for it!

Music and Sound:

Author:

One-quarter of Berlin's population has an immigrant background. Integration is a long slow haul. It's a big problem for the future of the city. On the one hand Berlin is dependent upon foreigners moving here, well-educated employees, on the other hand, due to social problems there are poorly educated children of foreign workers as a problem on the domestic front. And worries about ghettos forming.

Poverty, unemployment, the gradual ageing of the population, hip Berlin visitors aren't worried about all of that. They're just here for a visit. For a day or several years.

O-Sound: Sebastian

The city has become what it maybe was in the 1920-ies, this really cosmopolitan place that attracts a lot of people not only because of the cheap living costs but because it maybe is an island where a lot of things are still allowed that are not allowed in a lot of major European

cities. I think a lot of people who are just passing through, internationales living in Berlin, don't really understand that it is not only a structural thing but also a very political thing. There are so many leftwing initiatives in Berlin fighting for a certain right of living and against gentrification, against the development of certain areas

O-Sound Nicola:

Berlin I think is very representative of what Europe at the moment is. It's the idea of a European community sharing lifestyle, sharing common language or multiple languages to communicate. And I think in Berlin it is kind of realized. That you can already observe. For that reason I think Berlin is expressive of the times we are living in. My generation is the generation who during the studies at the university started to spend 6 months or a year abroad to experience life in another country.

O-Sound Kieker:

When I was a student you could do Interrail, you could buy a cheap ticket for the train and travel through Europe. This has been changed into interfly with low cost. Because Berlin and other cities are so easily accessible there is a huge exchange of young European guys and girls moving from Paris to Bilbao, from Bilbao to Berlin, from Berlin to London. For me this is the best thing you can do for European integration.

O-Sound Nicola:

I think we feel now more European and less linked to our home community and home country than before. I.e. as an Italian I feel more connected to the rest of Europe if I live here than when I live in my country, in Rome. Berlin in that sense is kind of avantgarde. One of the places where it is best realized.

O-Sound Kieker:

If you want it or not Berlin is moved back by the people living here or visiting us to its old role, which is centuries old, Berlin is the melting pot between East and West. The old middle Europe which has been divided by the iron curtain for decades is coming back.

If you want to see how the European Union is working and how close the people are, just come to Berlin!