



“Just like us” accompanies the everyday life and political struggle of people living on a trailer site in the city of Hamburg, Germany, over a period of nearly three years.

Just like us

A little wood ducks between high-rise buildings and an industrial zone next to a buzzing road.

Hidden under the trees something is reminding of gingerbread houses. Only on a closer look you can make out trailers which have been converted, decorated and extended.

The trailer site named “Henriette” in the German city of Hamburg is a fragile idyll, because permanent living in a trailer is forbidden by law. Nevertheless some 2000 people are living in spots like this.

For years they have been fighting for political acceptance and a legal framing, but the government has not shown much cooperation.

The Documentary “just like us” accompanies five inhabitants of “Henriette” from autumn 2003 until spring 2006: Marion, a native French women with her daughter Swani, Fiti, a female student of arts, Milena and

Phillip students of alternative medicine and the young social activist Leo. We experience the announced eviction of their trailer site which is only stopped in the last moment.

We watch creative political demonstrations as well as touching personal experiences like the birth of Marion’s second child.

“Just like us” gives an intimate portrait of people who choose to live different.

Their dream of a simple life in a like-minded group is not to have without the permanent threat of eviction and the need to fight against it. The contrast between the often idyllic everyday life and the heated political conflict is transformed into a characteristic visual language which opens up unknown urban spaces.

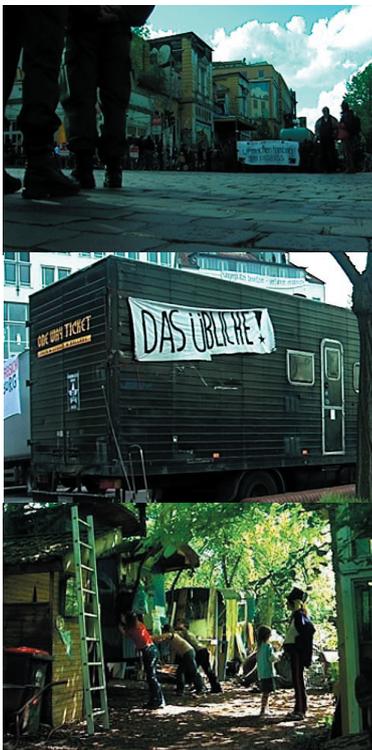




Directors Statement

I have always been fascinated by people who decided to live different, especially when they are willing to fight for their ideas of living. This is the reason why I was present with my camera when the trailer site "Bambule" in Hamburg (Germany) was evicted in 2002. I witnessed police intervention of incredible brutality against a group of young people who defended their space stubbornly but absolute non violently. During the next weeks, the daily conflicts became the biggest political demonstrations the city had seen for years. In the end, Hamburg's right-wing senator for domestic affairs had to resign. What can be so provoking for the government about living on a trailer

site? Why are two dozens young people treated like enemies of the state, while they are only asking for a place where they can live in their trailers and make their dream of an independent life on their own authority come true. I had to watch how women with small children were deprived of all their belongings. They were not even allowed to get the most necessary things like nappies or dummies out of their trailers and had to camp on the road in the midst of a cold winter day. Not to mention being observed, fingerprinted and photographed or even arrested, which is kind of a sad routine for those people. If they are ready to cope with all these repression what is it that makes living in a trailer so precious to them? Especially as everybody I met there could easily find some nice people to share a flat or could even afford an own apartment. I got curious to learn more about everyday life on a trailer site, about the dreams and hopes that are expected to come true in this way of living.



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