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25th June: towards destabilisation and welcome

Posted by [rajni shah](#) on June 25, 2008 at 1:40am

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My language is allowed to become dented and elevated by the idiolect of every person I meet

I am writing from Switzerland! I'm at the wonderful [Belluard Bollwerk](#) festival in Fribourg, and we've just opened the 'mis-information office' which will provide a hub for the festival and from where a whole number of fascinating projects will emerge. Mine, of course, has to do with presents, les cadeaux, the idea of making [small altars](#) across the town which are composed of the wishes and dreams of its inhabitants. Then there's an [island](#), three metres off the ground outside the train station, where people can sit and celebrate and meet, visible but private on a green mound in the middle of shops and transport, a pause in the middle of the normal rhythms; there's a [tourist train](#) that goes off-track, around industrial estates and lesser-seen parts of this fairytale town; there are small boxes that have landed in neighbourhoods, invitations to shelter, express, declare; the list goes on, including [wrights and sites'](#) own wonderfully sideways and intelligent commentaries on the whole project (they co-commissioned the works), and it's all set within this tiny multi-lingual place where the conversations slip in and out of german, english, french and swiss-german, where everybody is always translating and listening out for each other, where stability is a little impossible. I have been reminded of why I love multi-lingual cultures, where there can be no pretence or claim of the solidity of language. In this landscape, these interventions also seem more at home, translations of what it might mean to be somewhere, viewpoints from within another structure of thinking, of speaking, of listening. Now I must leave you and prepare for my first workshop, on the island, in broken french which will be met with patience and willingness and taken in all directions. Tomorrow I hope I shall be able to write again, I have so much more to say before the end of June.

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