

## FOCUS ON: SOPHIE ERLUND

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**PHILIPPA:** What kind of art do you do? Could you describe your work?

**SOPHIE:** I work with sculpture and installation – sometimes in an expanded field like sound or smell. I am driven by the notion and investigation of the phenomenology of space and spatial experience as well as symbolically charged structures and situations. Using the house as a symbol for the body in different ways is a strong tendency in my work as was also seen in my steel re-bar sculptures at arteBA.



**P:** What did you first expect when you were invited to participate in u-turn/arteBA and even come to BsAs earlier to realize your work "on-site"?

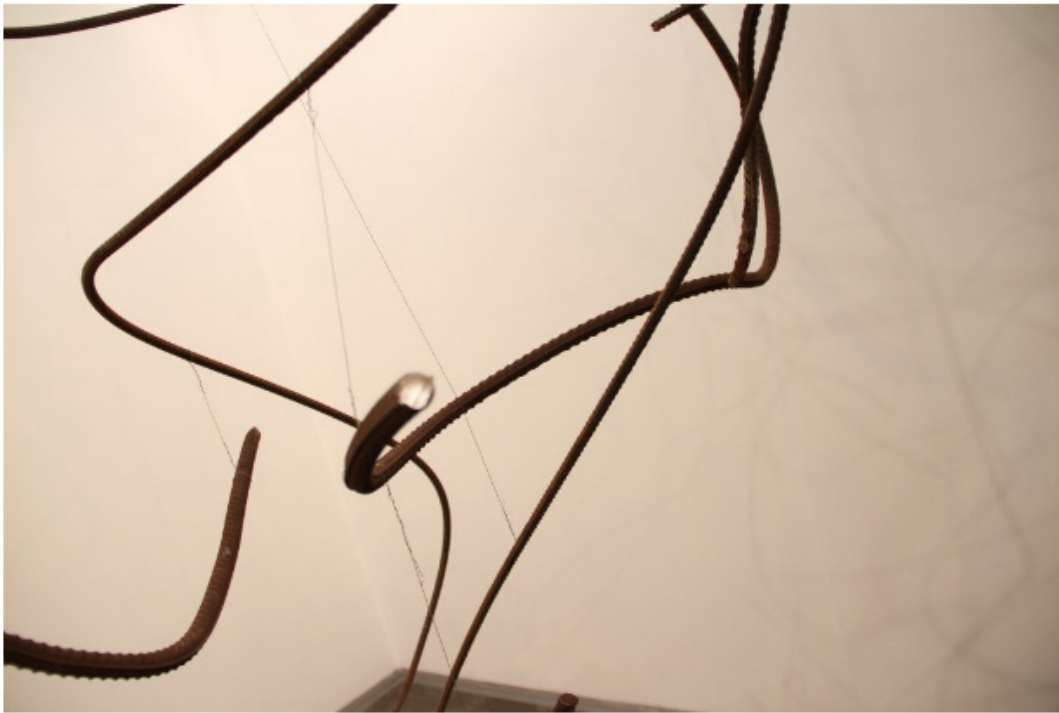
**S:** I had been curious about Buenos Aires for over 10 years and was very excited to get invited to do work for the U-turn. I knew immediately that I wanted to produce the works on-site to have time to soak up the spirit of the city and to also have the works be influenced by my experiences there.

**P:** How did it turn out? Any disappointments? Any positive surprises?

**S:** I was a bit worried about how difficult it would be for me to build the works in a country where I don't speak the language and I knew that I could not expect the working process to be as smooth as in Germany where I have my network, supplier etc. So I prepared myself well and brought a large amount of tools and materials, leaving just few things like the raw materials to be found on site. But I felt supported by the ArteBA crew and my gallerist and it all worked out well. I worked with a Russian steel worker in his rooftop metal workshop overlooking San Telmo which was an incredible experience. And it was great to meet all the other U-turn artists from around the world who spent time producing the works in Buenos Aires.

**P:** Did you have problems finding and purchasing the missing raw material you need for your art?

**S:** I really needed to find used, crumbled steel re-bar sections which turned out to be very difficult. After a few days of frustrating, fruitless searching I finally discovered a "goldmine" of sorts in the land-fill natural reserve behind Puerto Madero. I walked out there with my russian companion, a hand saw and work gloves and we salvaged several pieces of old rusty steel and carried them through town back to the work shop. It must have been a pretty funny sight and funnily enough one of the board members from the fair recognized me and the sculptures in the booth from jogging past me in the reserve and wondering what I was up to!



**P:** How did you experience the art fair and the interest for your work?

**S:** I thought it was nice and spacious, good energy and friendly. It was great to see how so many people, not just the usual art show visitors took interest in the fair. I had lots of interest in my work and felt I got great exposure for my first time appearance in a South American art context.

**P:** What did you like the most of Buenos Aires and its art scene?

**S:** It seemed like a very open and welcoming art scene which is curious about Europe and craves dialogue with the international art scene. All the collectors were so generous and shared their beautiful homes and collections with us. I met many of the local artist and everyone were so warm and open. I felt very well taken care of.

**P:** What kind of difference or similarity do you see in-between the BsAs and the Berlin art scene?

**S:** The Berlin art scene is much bigger and has over the last 10 years gotten much more competitive. I could tell that there is still an intimacy and smaller circuit feeling in BA. But the fact that they include the younger Barrio section with the artist run booths is sign a kind of inclusiveness which I loved about Berlin when I got here 10 years ago.

**P:** What stimulates your creativity? Do you rather prefer an accustomed surrounding or new places, new inspiration like you had in Buenos Aires?

**S:** I used to base a lot of my work on on-site work patterns and narratives but not so much anymore. The sculptures and installations have become more internalized and studio based and the works I made there were planned before arrival. The work follows an on-going investigation into psychological states but of course my consideration on psyche and life are influenced by my own experiences of people and places, so traveling and exposing myself to new situations is crucial.

**P:** Seeing and exhibiting your art in another context (arteBA/ other city/continent), does it add any new meaning or significance to your work?

**S:** No, not really for the art itself but it was a big experience for me personally and I made some strong important connections with a few people there which I bring with me along the road. I have travelled a lot in my life and will continue to and it is a big part of what constitutes me as a person. And I will return to Buenos Aires, I know that.

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## THE INTERVIEWEE



**SOPHIE ERLUND**, artist of PSM Gallery that participate in U-TURN Project Rooms by Mercedes Benz, 2013.

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## THE INTERVIEWER



**Philippa von Wittgenstein** was born and grew up in Munich. She went to boarding school (Salem) at the age of 16. Right after school spent time travelling in Indonesia and worked in Milan, Italy. From 2004 – 2010 studied Business & Economics in Berlin. Before and while studying she worked for various art and cultural institutions as well as in the tv and movie business (Sony BMG – Munich), Personal assistant to Adrian Piper (Berlin), Artist Pension Trust (Berlin), National Museums Berlin (Berlin), Villa Massimo (Rome), TV series "comisario Rex "(Rome).

In 2008, after living in Rome she went back to Berlin and started to work for the Italian television network

RAI as a News-Producer. She now works with arteBA Fundación, since September 2012.



**arteBA Fundación**

arteBA Foundation is a non-profit organization active since 1991 supporting artistic creation in the visual arts in Argentina, both locally and internationally.