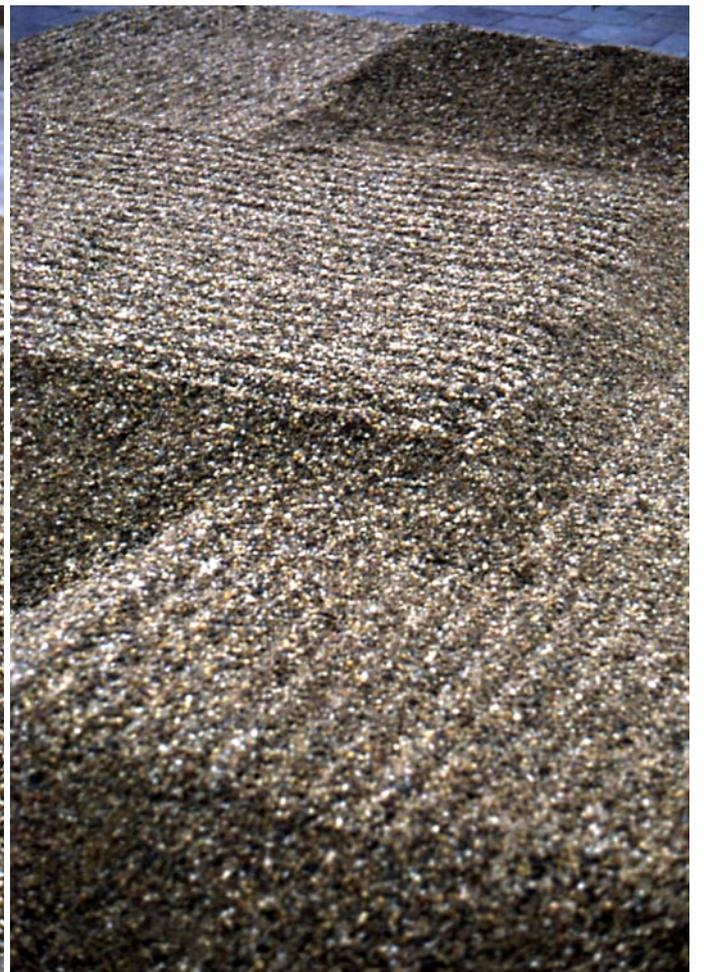




**Mark**  
temporary installation  
Alexanderplatz, Berlin-Mitte, 1998

*Temporäre Gärten, 1998*

One of the most important aspects of urbanity is the adoption of space through the urbanites. In Berlin sand and gravel are ubiquitous materials of the current construction activities. Sand piles are among the first advertisements of changes to come. It is at the same time a material of strong haptical qualities and seductive to play. Formed through erosion, it continues to erode and to be transported furtheron. In this way sand may be seen as expression of change. It is also the typical ground material of the wider Berlin region, the Mark Brandenburg. What could an urban garden in Berlin be? The project is an attempt at defining this with banal and ordinary material of a sand-pile. From the pure form of a cone it becomes a dynamic element in the city. Change is initiated through the passers-by: they play, touch, vandalize, acknowledge or disagree. A rake is used to continually establish a communicative state of the gravel pile. Over four days a game between the gardener and the passers-by takes place which engages the latter in interaction with their place. The visual pun with the associative imagery of the japanese zen-gardens helps to make the site understood as an urban garden which might trigger an appropriative view on the open space of the city.



## Jimmie Durham

*Between the Furniture and the Building (Between a Rock and a Hard Place)*  
*Zwischen Mobiliar und Haus (Im Gestein der Zwickmühle)*



Jimie Durham

*Between the Furniture and the Building*

p.102 ff

(...)

The other reason I'm telling about my work in Pori is to introduce the work of a German architect named Thilo Folkerts. His specialty is landscapes in cities. He has a moveable rock garden that is a mound of gravel (of a mass equalling about four normal human bodies, , guess). It does not really look like rocks, nor yet sand, but more fluid than either. Thilo places this mound wherever seems suitable to him and when he has time shapes and textures it with a rake, after the fashion of Japanese rock gardens. It can change shape and mood in minutes. He has a collection of sand piles and rock piles. But just the fotos of them, as he discovers them on his perambulations through Berlin. His „favorite sand piles“, he calls them. These are often crowded or „leaning“ next to the wall of a building; sometimes, also, on the curb of a street, spilling onto the sidewalk and into the street. No boundaries, no shape, but un-deniable, and accidentally charming non-objects.

I love the work, but I also like that he perceives it as a garden and not (or not necessarily) art. Oh, I wish I had thought of these gravel mounds! But I would want to bring the gravel pile specifically into art, into the „art spaces“. If I made a large pile of very clean, and aesthetically pleasing gravel stones that partially covered the reception desk and chair, or the catalogues table of a museum, wouldn't that look good? And the small stones would be inadvertently scattered by clumsy feet. One stone might come to rest next to Mario Merz's igloo, one might go PING! against some giant steel sculpture and lie there awaiting its next collaborative move.

Having written the word „collaborative“, I see there may be a possibility that Thilo would do a collaborative work with me. Or I could maybe rent one of his gardens.

I might at the same time try making some anti- Thilo Folkerts. Suppose I mixed the gravel with cement and poured it into a mound partially covering the reception desk and table? I could call it „Thilo's Petrified Garden“.

(...)