LAURA HORELLI

Mika Hannula
SOME of us begin by focussing on the smallest detail, via which the whole wide world can be opened and addressed. Others start off with the big picture and then narrow it down, editing a huge theme towards the human scale. It is fair to say that Laura Horelli’s strategy belongs to the latter category – she is not afraid of big issues such as globalisation, collective identity and immigration. Although well aware that she doesn’t know enough about these overtly complex themes, she is close enough to the dilemmas to trust her interpretation of them.

Horelli has recently finished 712 interviews, a long-term project dealing directly with immigration, integration or the lack of it. She has worked on the 16-minute video-loop installation with two adjacent projections since 2003 when, on a residency at Rooseum, Malmö, she took part in ‘In 2052 Malmö is no longer Swedish’, a project presented as a part of the 2005 exhibition ‘Whatever Happened to Social Democracy’. However, Horelli’s interest in the topic began in 2001, when she asked all kinds of ethnic and cultural organisations and groups active around the Frankfurt area to represent themselves, to explain who they are and what they do, and collated her findings in a booklet.

In Malmö, a post-industrial multicultural city in southern Sweden, a city with a lot of immigration but also strong financial support from the state, Horelli wanted to find a personal way of dealing with this big issue in this particular location. From the end result, it all seems so simple, yet the process is interesting.
It is a constant search for a balance between personal involvement, while at the same time articulating a version that opens up, and does not only endlessly refer to itself or other works of art. It is a balance that can only be kept in sight while continuing the search.