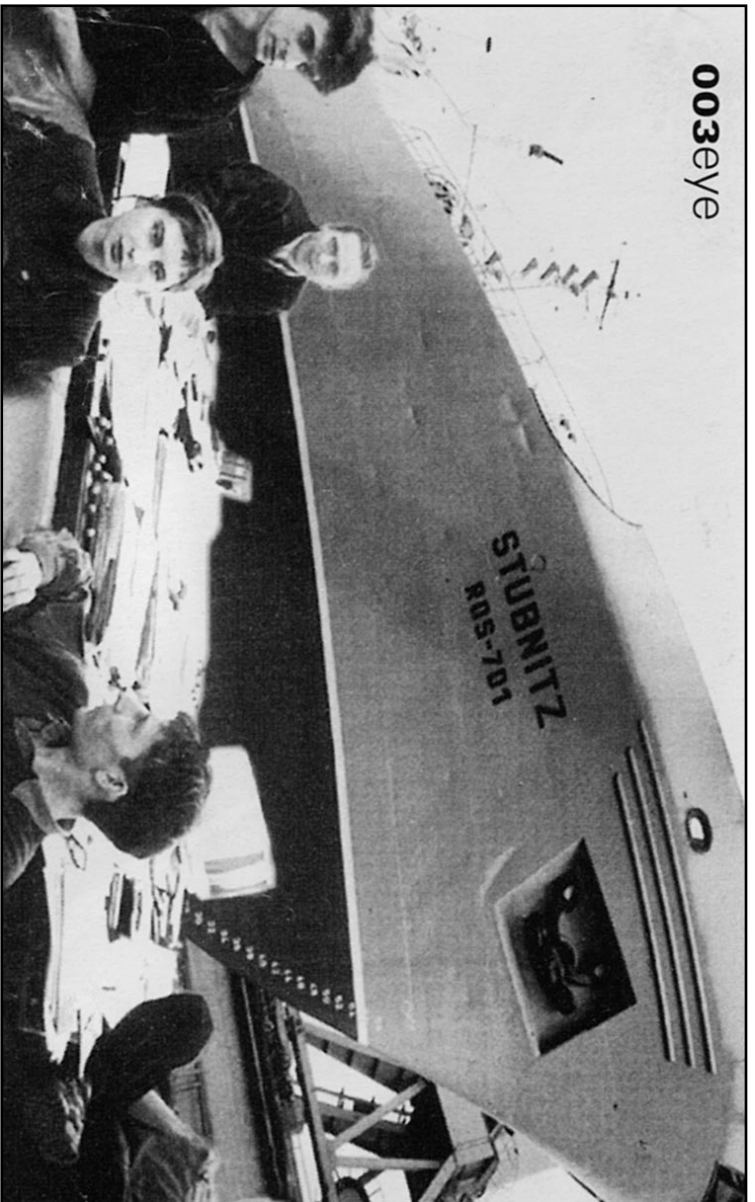


003eye



cultural transport

At first glance there's little to distinguish it from any old fishing trawler but emblazoned across the starboard side lies the clue - a huge slogan 'Kunst:raum.schiff' - directly translates as art:space.ship. Evidence that its fishing days have long since passed lies in the hold which has been converted into a series of well equipped studios and workshops. Its cavernous loading bay meanwhile has been stripped back to the metal hull to form a beautiful performance space capped by a bullet-proof skylight. Visitors to the upstairs bar grab a bird's eye perspective of events down below or groove to what one resident DJ terms as 'ship hop', his own brand of hip hop brewed on board. It's been a long haul for the

MS Stubnitz. In its days as a fishing trawler with the former East German fleet, its area of action took it from Greenland to the Falklands. Then, with the break up of the Soviet Union the fleet was disbanded and the Stubnitz was left rusting in its berth in the Baltic port of Rostock. That was until Bio and a small group of designers came across it. They saw its potential, bought it for scrap and started the lengthy process of converting it into the art ship that it is today. "Funding the travels of the MS Stubnitz is no mean feat," explains crew member Coost. "It costs £2000 a day at sea. But the ship's mobility adds a very important dimension to our original concept." By establishing



cultural links between different regions and by inviting all cultures on board, the Stubnitz becomes not only a purpose built 'empty vessel' for artists to experiment with but also places the tools at their disposal so that they can get on with it, even in transit. With a visit to Hamburg planned for the end of May and a further trip to the European City of Culture Rotterdam in 2001, in the near future, a lot more people will be jumping on board. "The ship is a cultural object in itself, as well as the work inside, it represents a symbol of autonomy and freedom." **ANDREW GASTON**

MS Stubnitz will be in Hamburg on 31 May - June 2 or click on to www.stubnitz.com