



la Biennale di Venezia

56. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

Damir Očko
Pavilion of Croatia

Palazzo Pisani
S. Marina
Cannaregio, 6103/A
30 121 Venezia

May 9
November 22 2015
10 am – 6 pm

Opening:
May 7 at 6 pm

Press release

Pavilion of Croatia at the 56th International Art Exhibition
la Biennale di Venezia

With the support of:
- Ministry of Culture
of the Republic
of Croatia
- Croatia House
Foundation
- Tiziana Di Caro
Gallery, Naples

Damir Očko has been selected by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia to participate at the 56th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia with a project entitled “Studies on Shivering : The Third Degree”, curated by Marc Bembekoff.

The space where Damir Očko’s artistic practice enfolds is at the junction between poetical and political. The questions of the human body and the exploration of the physical realities of the body, as a social or political subject, have been the core of his most recent work.

The project conceived for the Pavilion of Croatia expands the poetics of Damir Očko’s last two films, *TK* (2014) and *The Third Degree* (2015). Both films question the social constraints imposed to the body as a physical and social entity. Evoking moments of passage and transition zones, such approach reveals the underlying violence of today’s globalized world. In *TK*, an 8-part poem visually unfolds through a montage of intertwining shots of shivering bodies and scenes of an old man suffering from Parkinson’s disease. This man tirelessly attempts to write a sentence which begins; “In Tranquility...” In *The Third Degree*, almost abstract close-up shots of burnt skin are filmed and edited with images reflecting the crew while filming. The set, made from an installation of broken mirrors, shows what is usually hidden from sight and thus integrates the viewer into the artistic development.

If these two films are the foundations of the project, the display held in Palazzo Pisani S. Marina develops their issues and therefore echoes a form of violence brought by the instability between the apparent state of tranquility and a lurking constant pressure. Combining both intellectual and emotional experiences for the audience, a tipping point is created, which invites the viewers to make them conscious of their role within the artistic process. In showing internal structures of the making of art in order to analyze this relation between the subject, the audience and the artist, Damir Očko is interested in creating a rhetoric, a mechanism that reinforces our position as both witnesses and actors of today’s complex world.

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Biographies

Artist

Damir Očko (b. 1977, lives and works in Zagreb) is one of the most prominent Croatian artists of his generation. His videos, films, poetry and works on paper have been exhibited recently in Temple Bar Gallery in Dublin (2014), KM – Künstlerhaus Halle für Kunst & Medien in Graz (2014), Yvon Lambert gallery in Paris (2013), Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2012), Galleria Tiziana Di Caro in Salerno (2012), Kunsthalle Dusseldorf (2011). He participated to numerous collective exhibitions with institutions such as MUDAM Luxembourg, FRAC Le Plateau in Paris, Kunsthalle Wien, Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb among others. His works are part of many public and private collections around the world.

Curator

Marc Bembekoff is currently Director of Centre d'art contemporain La Halle des bouchers in Vienne (Isère, France). He previously served as curator at Palais de Tokyo (2011-13) and Musée Rodin (2009-10), assistant curator at Frac Champagne-Ardenne (2007-09) and film assistant curator at Centre Pompidou (1999-2003). As an independent curator, he organized numerous exhibitions including projects with the collective Le Bureau/. He has contributed to several monographic publications and exhibition catalogues. Since 2013, he's been part of the artistic Board of Flag-France Foundation (Paris).