

Press Release
Zurich, 5 June 2008

Kunsthau Zürich shows 'Shifting Identities – (Swiss) art now'

From 6 June until 31 August, the Kunsthau Zürich will be showing contemporary Swiss and international art. The exhibition will take place in the Kunsthau, at Zurich Airport, and in the centre of Zurich. The 67 pieces shown – including 29 world premieres – are devoted to issues of identity.

Evolving identities and changing values are among the focuses of young artists today. In photographs, paintings and installations, in sculptures, performances and drawings, 'Shifting Identities – (Swiss) art now' demonstrates the way contemporary art deals with the questions raised by globalization. Nationality is only one of many types of identity explored. Many of the so-called Swiss artists presented here are not Swiss at all, while some of the artists shown who do enjoy Swiss nationality actually live and work outside the country. Living and working conditions in the (art) world are flexible, and Swiss artists have become part of a trans-national system of coordinates.

The group show belongs to the Kunsthau Zürich's tradition of holding regular reviews of a given topic in contemporary art. Adducing more than 60 examples, the Kunsthau Zürich demonstrates the way a burgeoning generation of artists approaches such subjects as changing values and evolving identities: Elodie Pong, for instance, uses video to criticize traditional roles, and Loredana Sperini explores the loss of a unified self with sculptures of fragmented bodies. Adrian Paci and Ingrid Wildi, meanwhile, address political problems such as migration and religious conflicts.

A total of 29 of the works shown were created especially for the exhibition, including installations by Christian Vetter and the Frères Chapuisat, photography by Jules Spinatsch and a monumental painting on fabric by Shirana Shahbazi, to be mounted on the façade of the Kunsthau.

ART AT THE AIRPORT AND IN THE CITY OF ZURICH

'Shifting' implies change, displacement, motion, and the dissolution of established categories, all of which the exhibition takes into account by spreading beyond the boundaries of the museum to take over places of decisive significance for a globalized society.

At Zurich Airport, issues of migration and identity assume concentrated form. On 5 June 2008, Gianni Motti will offer a humorous reflection on the ubiquitous hysteria about security in a performance piece called 'Pre-Emptive Act', in which a security guard practices yoga. In addition, during the entire period of the exhibition, billboards will feature photographs showing Motti's globetrotting

assistants. And travellers doing last-minute shopping will be startled to hear Brian Eno's sound intervention 'Music for Airports' piped into airport shops. Since globalization is driven by the economy, artistic events will be held from 7 to 13 July on Bahnhofstrasse and at Paradeplatz by such figures as San Keller and Al Fahdil.

BLOGGING ON QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY

Beyond the museum and the public realm, the exhibition will also build bridges to the virtual world. At www.shifting-identities.ch, exhibition curator Mirjam Varadinis will host a discussion of identity, and visitors seeking information by way of the internet, the medium that connects everything with everything else at an ever greater pace, will be rewarded with background on the subject of the show and tips on upcoming events.

EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The first part of the exhibition, known as the 'Intro', began on 14 March and on until 8 June, features works displayed in the cabinet (Marc Bauer and Christine Abbt) and interventions in the collection by Sharyar Nashat, Isabelle Krieg, Gianni Motti, Nevin Aladag, Karin Hueber and Mircea Cantor. The accompanying series of roundtable discussions, performances and film presentations has been a rousing success, with attendance by some 300 people. Details and further events until August will be posted on the billboard in the entrance hall of the Kunsthaus and at www.shifting-identities.ch. Public guided tours can be arranged for private groups.

The exhibition catalogue (240 pages, 200 illustrations) is available for CHF 59.- at the Kunsthaus shop. It comprises essays by media studies specialist Kurt Imhof, art historians Peter J. Schneemann and Judith Welter, German studies expert Tan Wälchli, and curator Mirjam Varadinis.

The exhibition and its satellites, including interventions at the Zurich Airport, are supported by Swiss Re – Partner for contemporary art.

ARTISTS

Abdessemed, Adel. Aladag, Nevin. Althamer, Pawel and Zmijewski, Artur. Antille, Emmanuelle. Bauer, Marc (in collaboration with Christine Abbt). !Mediengruppe Bitnik. Büchel, Christoph. Burger, Stefan. Cantor, Mircea. Chieppo, David. Com&Com. Coste, Annelise. Cytter, Keren. Duyvendak, Yan. Echakhch, Latifa. Fontaine, Claire. Frères Chapuisat. Fucking Good Art. Galic, Goran / Gredig, Gian-Reto. Gastaldon, Vidya. Gatsas, Georg. Gees, Johannes. Giezendanner, Ingo aka Grrrr. Gramsma, Bob. Hominal, David. Huber.Huber. Hueber, Karin. Keller, Georg. Keller, San. Krieg, Isabelle. Leuba, Jérôme. Levin, Alon. Lippert, Beat. Liu, Jen. Manders, Mark. Mir, Aleksandra. Motti, Gianni. Nashat, Shahryar. Paci, Adrian. Perret, Mai-Thu. Pong, Elodie. Raccoursier, Anne-Julie. RELAX. Renggli, David. Rittener, Didier. Rosenkranz, Pamela. Santoro, Vittorio. Schinwald, Markus. Sehgal, Tino. Seiler, Kerim. Shahbazi, Shirana. Solakov, Nedko. Sperini, Loredana. Spinatsch, Jules. Thomas G. Van Brummelen, Lonnie. Van Lieshout, Erik. Vece, Costa. Vetter, Christian. Wekua, Andro. Wildi, Ingrid. Performance artists: Bachzetsis, Alexandra. Duyvendak, Yan. Eno, Brian. Fadhil, Al. Ratti, Christian. The Kingpins. Zorro & Bernardo.

EVENTS JUNE - AUGUST

5 June: Performance of 'Pre-Emptive Act' by Gianni Motti, from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., Zurich Airport
18 June: Performance by Zorro & Bernardo, 6.30 p.m.; roundtable discussion on the topic of 'National Identity?' with Prof. Kurt Imhof, 7 p.m., Kunsthaus Zürich
21 June: Opening of the Zürcher Festspiele, 6 p.m.; performance of 'Made in Paradise' by Yan Duyvendak & Omar Ghayatt, 6.30 p.m., Theaterhaus Gessnerallee
22 June: Tour led by Christian Ratti, 2 p.m., Kunsthaus Zürich
28 June: 'Artist and Policeman', a puppet show by San Keller, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. every hour on the full hour, Zurich Airport
3 July: Tour led by Christian Ratti followed by a lecture, 6 p.m., Kunsthaus Zürich
5 July: Ambient-music event, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Zurich Airport
6 July: 'Plane Landing', happening organized by Aleksandra Mir, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Zurich Airport
7-13 July: 'HiJack Not Hack', poster event featuring Anne-Lise Coste, Selja Kamic, Rockmaster K, Aki Müller and Slavs & Tatars, city centre
19 July: 'Artist and Policeman', a puppet show by San Keller, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. every hour on the full hour, Bahnhofstrasse/Paradeplatz; Workshop Bitniks, city centre
13 August: 24-hour performance of 'The Worker Split into Four Equal Parts' by Georg Keller, begin 7 p.m., Schauspielhaus Zürich, Stage 5
23 August: 'Artist and Policeman', a puppet show by San Keller, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. every hour on the full hour, Kunsthaus Zürich
30 August: 'F Permit', happening organized by Al Fadhil, Bahnhofstrasse/Paradeplatz
Further information at www.shifting-identities.ch

GENERAL VISITORS' INFORMATION

Kunsthhaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, 8001 Zurich, www.kunsthhaus.ch

Open: Sat, Sun, Tues 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed, Thurs, Fri 10 a.m.–8 p.m.

Holidays: 1 August 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Admission: CHF 18.- / 12.- (concessions) / CHF 14.- per head for groups of 20 or more

Advance Sales: RailAway/SBB Kombi-Ticket, with reduction on rail travel and entrance to the museum. Available at local stations and by phoning Rail Service: 0900 300 300 (CHF 1.19 per min.), group rates possible. Magasins Fnac, tel. +33 1 4157 3212, www.fnac.ch

Public Guided Tours: Sunday 11 a.m., Wednesday 6.30 p.m.

Private guided tours: apply on +41 (0)44 253 84 06 (Mon–Fri 9 a.m.–12 noon)

For further information and visual material, please contact

Kunsthhaus Zürich

Kristin Steiner, Press and Communication

kristin.steiner@kunsthhaus.ch

Tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 13