

German Pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2015

Museum Folkwang



“Resistant Images in Times of Digital Overexposure”

The curator Florian Ebner, in collaboration with Museum Folkwang and ifa, presents his concept for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2015.

Participating artists: Olaf Nicolai, Hito Steyerl, Tobias Zielony and the artist duo Jasmina Metwaly / Philip Rizk

Essen, 24. 10. 2014 – From May 2015, the German Pavilion at the 56th International Art Exhibition, Venice Biennale will be transformed into a setting that focuses on the presence of images in contemporary life. The exhibition encourages its visitors to reflect upon the material and political nature of images in the digital age, in a globalised world. With this emphasis in mind, the curator Florian Ebner issued an invitation to the artists *Olaf Nicolai*, *Hito Steyerl* and *Tobias Zielony*, who live and work in Berlin, and the Cairo-based artist duo *Jasmina Metwaly / Philip Rizk*. Thus, a constellation of artists with extremely different biographies and artistic approaches will be moving into the pavilion.

Olaf Nicolai is a sculptor, conceptual and media artist who grew up in the GDR, and eludes any form of stylistic labelling. *Hito Steyerl* has made an international name for herself as a filmmaker, video artist and controversial authoress on the concept of the documentary, whilst *Tobias Zielony* has gained his reputation in the field of broader, artistic-reflexive documentary photography. The joint work of the artist *Jasmina Metwaly* and the author and filmmaker *Philip Rizk* brings an artistic position to the pavilion whose origins lie outside of the realms of the established western art market.

Starting out from four aspects and ideas – migrating images, participation of the actors, light as an elementary image carrier and the roof as a place of freedom – a contextual and formal force field will be established, from which this pavilion will derive its tension. Classical questions of representation – the balance of power between subject and object, the old asymmetry between photographer and model – will pose themselves in a new way in the light of the digital images. A contemporary understanding of the “photographic” element as a central position of documentary work is open for discussion. All works of art will be created especially for the German Pavilion, and shown there for the first time.

During the past twenty-five years, the German Pavilion at the International Art Exhibition Biennale di Venezia has repeatedly understood itself as a place for the asking of questions, for the deconstruction of German identities. The building itself has become a direct point of

reference, a place for artistic, sometimes mythical or ironic archeological work on the concept inherent in the name borne by the art temple: *Germania*. Like the contribution to the Art Biennale in 2013, the coming German Pavilion modifies the classical concept of the national pavilion, opening itself up to a global perspective as regards content.

The ifa (Institute for International Cultural Relations) which functions as the coordinator of the German contribution to the Venice Biennale on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office, succeeded in gaining the Sparkassen-Kulturfonds of the German Savings Banks Association (DSGV) as the main sponsor of the German Pavilion for the second time in succession.

The Biennale will open at the beginning of May next year. *The opening of the German Pavilion will take place on Thursday, 7 May 2015.*

Please note: A presentation of the pavilion, together with the artists, will be held in Berlin at the beginning of February 2015. Notification of the exact date and location will be given in good time.

For further information, please see <http://www.ifa.de/kunst/biennalen.html> or <http://www.ifa.de/en/visual-arts/biennials.html>

Best Regards

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