

OLAF NICOLAI

Giro, 2015

For the duration of the Biennale Arte 2015: performative action and installation on the roof of the German Pavilion.

Lucarne, 2015

Industrial roof window with motor, wood and white glass, 100 x 120 cm

For the duration of the Biennale Arte, three people will reside on the roof of the German Pavilion. There, unseen by visitors, they will carry out a mysterious task, a shadow economy under the glaring sun. The actors will only be visible from time to time, when they step towards the edge of the roof to throw boomerangs. They are in search of a suitable trajectory, the ideal form for their flying objects. They produce the boomerangs in a workshop, the vague contours of which can be discerned only from a distance.

GIRO derives its tension from this dialectic interaction between the exposure and concealment of the actors, from the functionality of their activity and the aesthetic dimension of their choreography. The archaic gesture of throwing goes hand in hand with a public display of the possibility of failure. Nicolai's action is also a meditation on forms of economy – the artistic artefacts that are produced as part of the action escape the fate of being immediately transformed into profitable art objects. Instead, a number of the finished articles finds its way to street hawkers each week, another of the town's shadow economies. Olaf Nicolai has had an industrial roof hatch installed on the first floor of the pavilion. One of its purposes is to provide ventilation, but it also directs the eyes of the visitor upwards, attracting attention to what is happening on the roof.

CV

Olaf Nicolai, born 1962, lives and works as an artist in Berlin. He has developed a range of interdisciplinary projects that question the elemental experience of space, time, and physicality. Whether it be in a science-fiction novel, a piece of music, or the processes of industrial arts and crafts, Nicolai acts as a go-between, mediating between a given space and conceptual forms to tackle questions of social behaviour in the zone of tension between concrete experience and abstract contextualization. By working with repetition and sequencing, he develops his own representational critique and gives visibility to unfamiliar contexts. He combines the production of artificial landscapes, archival memory, craft practices, and fictional scenarios with quotidian constellations, and, in so doing, highlights the variability of our conception of nature.

Nicolai is Professor for Sculpture and Fundamentals of Three-dimensional Design at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München.

His work was recently seen in: *Anticipation 4*, Fondation Lafayette, Paris (2014); *Le pigment de la lumière*, interior design for the new Gropius and Moholy-Nagy Masters' Houses, Bauhaus Dessau (2014); *Innere Stimme*, Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (2013); *Escalier du Chant*, Musée du Louvre, Paris (2013). He took part in the Biennale di Venezia in 2001 and 2005 and in documenta X (1997).

Further information and images on www.deutscher-pavillon.org and in the catalogue.