la Biennale di Venezia

56. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

SUSTAINABLE IDENTITIES

SZILÁRD CSEKE

at the Biennale Arte 2015

Szilárd Cseke:
SUSTAINABLE IDENTITIES

The exhibition title 'Sustainable Identities' reflects on how the key concepts of our world have been reduced to catchy slogans. The curatorial concept builds on the space of the hungarian pavilion in Venice and Cseke's mobile objects.
The focus of the installation is the cognitive space created by motion and electronics.

The structure of the installation space consists of three units of artworks. The wall-to-wall **foil tubes** contain moving balls propelled by fans. Their intersecting routes create a network, which provides an opportunity to reinterpret personal identities on a global basis. They draw attention to the limits, the interdependency and the determined nature of the ego and various directions of thought. Szilárd Cseke's work thus situates individual, local viewpoints in a global system of interrelationships, making both the local and the global levels visible simultaneously.

In addition, the installation includes a breathing **foil cushion** that creates the impression of a 'centre' that maintains the system as it continuously inflates and deflates. In contrast with its material it has an organic feel, and with its stable position it stands as a counterpoint to the dynamic and mechanic web of identity shifts. It raises the question: what significances do the breathing mechanisms of our current environment bear for us?

As part of the curatorial concept, the experience begins with a **sound installation** by media designer Ábris Gryllus, who was brought in on the project by Cseke and German. The sounds of the continuously moving balls can be heard in the 'noise space' of the installation that is optically separated from the other artworks on display.

The **inner courtyard** of the pavilion will be transformed into an experimental space, where visitors may express their views on the themes of identity and sustainability.

„Art exhibitions like Sustainable Identities represent the "other" par excellence. As critique of power, Cseke's installations offer the possibility to create space to contemplate and remind us that we are travelers: Like the moving balls propelled by fans in Cseke's wall-to-wall foil, we travel between different groups and self-identifications."

– Daniela Gottschlich

„Cseke connects a relatively high degree of abstraction and the playful components of kinetic objects with the additional meaning evoked by the titles. He builds on a specific tradition within kinetic art which uses the poetry and dynamism of movable parts in mobiles and environments in order to create "images of thought" for complex social, economic or ecological processes.

(…) In a ceaseless toing and froing of tailwind and headwind or moved in hopeless circulation, the small plastic balls in his installations stand for the tireless commuter (Commuting Tendencies, 2012) or the agent of alleged progress on the way (Illusion of Progress, 2012). As early as 1994, Cseke presented a version (Message) with a ball moving in a foil tube that spanned the whole exhibition space in the Barcsay Hall of the Budapest University of Fine Arts. Like a group of emigrants, the balls rush through a bricolage course made of household waste (We are moving abroad, 2013), or installed on a table of plexiglass and metal plates (Good Shepherd, 2013) equipped with neon lights for potential permanent use - fully in line with Jean Tinguely's motto of kinetic art: "Immobility does not exist" (Manifesto For Statics, 1959)."

– Fritz Emslander

„Cseke's constructions exhibited in the Hungarian pavilion, including the sound of fans and the resonances of a sound installation, as well as the new art video on the website, cannot provide naïve, didactic, conclusive answers and solutions. Rather they remain associative artworks and spaces. They can only subtly suggest that rigidly formulated identities that exclude others and disregard the fragility of our environment will in all likelihood be unsustainable in the future."

– Kinga German

Szilárd Cseke

(born in Pápa, Hungary) lives and works in Budapest.

Having finished his Master's degree in painting, Cseke graduated from the University of Pécs in 1995. He began to create mobile objects in the mid-90s. His works demonstrate social and economic processes, with particular emphasis on the themes of migration and the search for identity. He has garnered an array of awards, including the Munkácsy Prize in 2014 and the Derkovits Scholarship in 1997.

Cseke has had numerous solo and group exhibitions in the most prestigious Hungarian institutions, such as the Kiscell Museum, the Kunsthalle and the Ludwig Museum in Budapest. His works have been exhibited in several galleries, museums and international art fairs abroad, and they can also be found in well-known private and public collections.

Deep Look, 2012, 184X95 cm, tires, polystyrene balls, electric fans, fluorescent tube, electric control
Courtesy: Ani Molnár Gallery Budapest

SUSTAINABLE IDENTITIES – The Catalogue

Ed. by. Kinga German, with Welcoming Thoughts by Monika Balatoni and essays by Fritz Emslander, Julia Fabényi, Kinga German, Albert-László Barabási, Andrea B. Braidt, Ferenc Erős,Péter Álmos, Gábor Ébli, Felix Ekardt, Tom Bieling, Paul Ekins, Sebastian Baden, Daniela Gottschlich and the artists/designers Attila Cosovan, Anna Baróthy, Janka Csernák, Tamás Waliczky, András Visky and János Lackfi.

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Working on the exhibition catalogue, a regrettably unrealised plan of Walter Benjamin was at the back of our minds, namely the periodical he envisioned entitled *Angelus Novus*, in which various ideas would have found a place.[1]
For this reason experts who have been invited have contributed texts stemming from their diverse creative and scientific backgrounds about the subject of sustainability and identity. These constitute *raw materials*, which assert and validate the present while also gesturing to the future.

1 He announced his plan to launch a periodical in 1922. See Benjamn, Walter: Gesammelte Schriften [Collected Works]. Edited by Theodor W. Adorno and Scholem Gershom, Frankfurt am Main 1972-1989, Vol. 2, p. 241-242.

"This kind of "engineering aesthetic" helps us understand that Knowledge and the Arts are not just parts of identity, and they contribute not just to development, but also to sustainability."
– Julia Fabényi

"I would mention the identity of the East European artist, which is endorsed by some, declined by others. While most museums in this region turned their back on Eastern Europe in the aftermath of the fall of the Wall and aimed to highlight the historical and cultural ties their countries had to Western Europe, the past decade has born witness to the rediscovery by some institutions of the art of Eastern Europe as a common ground for the region".
– Gábor Ébli

"Intersex and trans, bi, gay and lesbian, all at once, one after the other or none of it. Gender identities have a history. They mark us, they guide us, they help us make sense of the world – of one another and of ourselves".
– Andrea B. Braidt

"In the discourse of identity politics, post-traumatic "symptoms" are not end points of a process; rather, they create only a starting point for elaborating a narrative model in which "symptoms" are organised into stories, and, as part of these stories, they participate in the process of public remembering, discussing and witnessing."
– Ferenc Erős

"We cannot pass in silence over the fact that there is a strong stigmatization of psychiatric patients, resulting in a social identity built on stereotypical patterns which overwrites personal identity as a forced role. (…) In Europe, in a social system based on personal identity, this paradox is unsustainable."
– Péter Álmos

"Yet, predictability also indicates that by allowing unsupervised access to our records, we are not only surrendering our past– and for most of us who have little to hide, this may not appear to be a big deal–but we are revealing our future as well."

– Albert László Barabási

"(…) liberties must be interpreted unambiguously so as to include the elementary physical conditions of freedom – thus, not only a right to social welfare, but also to the existence of a relatively stable resource base and a corresponding global climate."

– Felix Ekardt

"However, it will only be successful in persuading the private sector to invest in creating a green economy if its policies have credibility and command confidence that the Government will support, maintaining this agenda in the long term."

– Paul Ekins

"Thus, the era of 1968 was revolutionary not only in terms of politics, but also in terms of technology and ecological awareness."

– Sebastian Baden

"Design plays a fundamental role in developing, understanding and sustaining identitites. And so it is often (if not generally) responsible for social and cultural inclusion or exclusion."

– Tom Bieling

"Designcommunication = communication integrated in development (progress). This is my guiding thread (or cliché) as a designer."

– Attila Cosovan

www.sustainableidentities.com

About the Hungarian Pavilion

Hungary had already participated in the international Venice Biennale in 1895 and had received its independent pavilion in 1909 created by Géza Maróti (1875-1941), architect and sculptor. Maróti also designed exhibition pavilions for International Exhibitions and Fairs (Milano and Torino), and had pursued intensive international activities (Mexico City, Detroit), despite that, he died at the end of his careerpath, unemployed.

The Hungarian exhibition- pavilion, located in the Giardini area, the famous gardens in the east of Venice, included mosaics realised by Miksa Róth (1865-1944), based on drawings by Aladár Körösfői-Kriesch (1863-1920). After World War II, the pavilion was severely damaged and closed down for restoration. As a result, in 1948, the exhibition was set up in a different location. Partially reconstructed by Ágost Benkhard (1882-1961), the Hungarian Pavilion was reopened to the public in 1958. It since has hosted artists like Andreas Fogarasi, who has won the Golden Lion for best National Participation and is currently, the home of artist Szilárd Cseke's project *Sustainable Identities*.

Ludwig Museum — Museum of Contemporary Art

is Hungary's first museum engaged in exclusively collecting contemporary art. The collection comprised of around 600 pieces including regional, as well as, prominent international and Hungarian artworks was founded by Peter and Irene Ludwig's donations in 1989. The Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation, based in Aachen, created by the couple, continually supports the museum's international purchases and professional programs to this day.

Ludwig Museum in Budapest ceaselessly strains after further developing the social ratification of contemporary art by the means of curatorial trainings, museum education, museum related research, residence programs as well as contemporary art events.

During its 25 year history the Ludwig Museum has organized as many as 200 exhibitions, which not only brought world famous stars of contemporary art to the Hungarian public but the collection based exhibitions founded on scientific research help significantly in understanding the complexity of nowadays visual culture, by showcasing its most exciting trends.

http://www.ludwigmuseum.hu

The **Office of the National Commissioner** has been coordinating the participations in the Venice Art Biennale 2015 as the organizational unit of the Contemporary Art Museum, Ludwig Museum since 2014.

http://www.velenceibiennale.com

Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest

The Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest (MOME) is Hungary's leading institution of higher education in art and design. Its spirit is rooted just as much in its more than 135-year-old past as in its passion for innovation and openness towards the world. The university's educational structure comprises the fields of design, architecture, media arts and theoretical studies with courses offered for nearly a thousand students year-by-year.

From here Moholy-Nagy László, eponym of the university, had taken off to world fame, and it is here that Ernő Rubik created the Rubik's cube.

mome.hu | facebook.com/momebudapest

Biennale Arte 2015: Students of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest took part in the visual arrangement of the inner courtyard in the Hungarian Pavilion.

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OF HUMAN CAPACITIES

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www.ludwigmuseum.hu

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MOHOLY-NAGY MŰVÉSZETI EGYETEM
MOHOLY-NAGY UNIVERSITY OF ART AND DESIGN BUDAPEST

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