



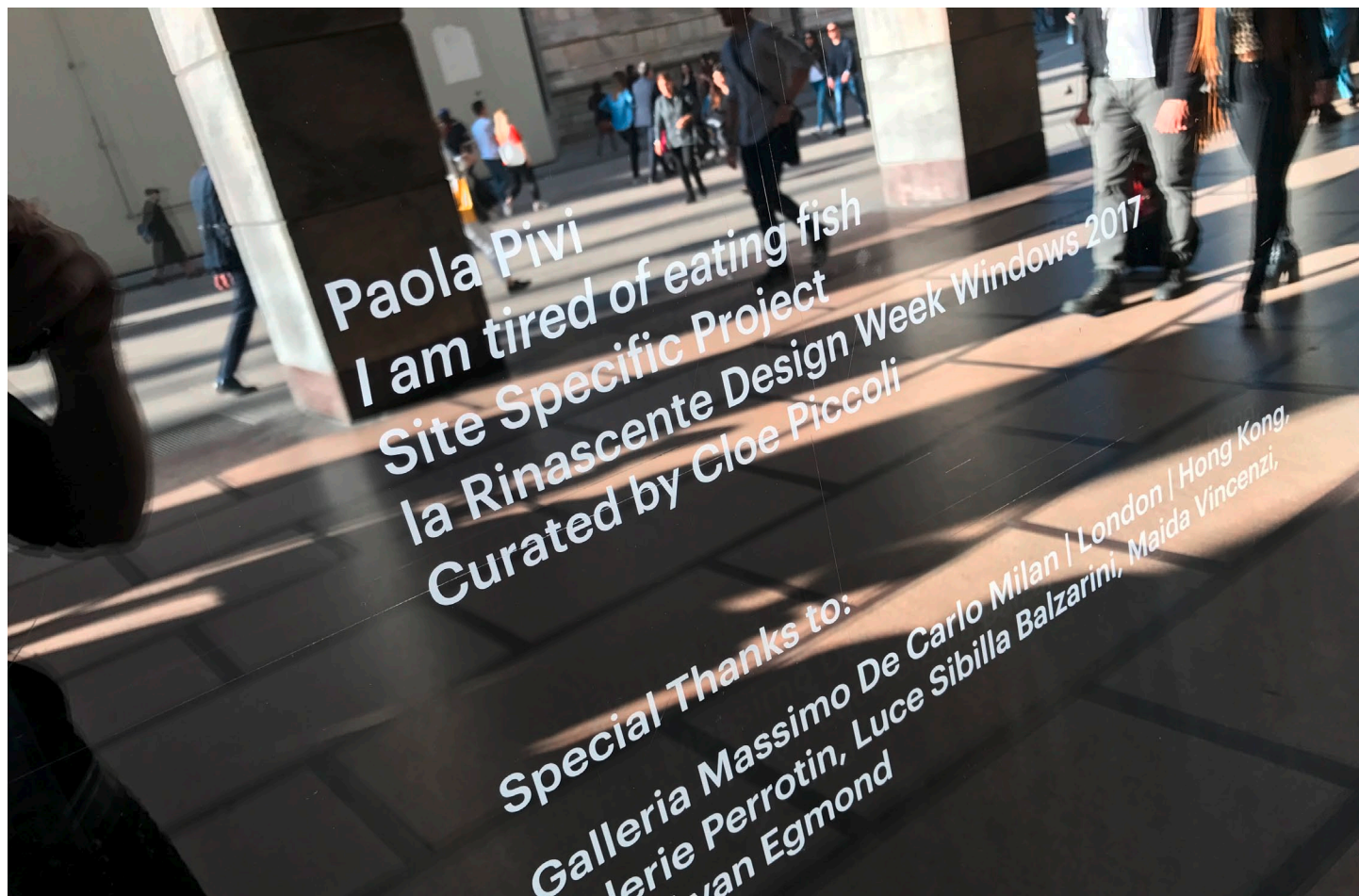
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VTV Magazine

June 2017

Cover: Flavio Favelli: Senso 80. Art Installation at Albergo Diurno Venezia in Milan, Italy.

Photos: Lee Sharrock / Didier Leroi | www.didier-leroi.com / Geoff Gilmore / Karolina Zupan-Rupp



Paola Pivi / Franco Mazzucchelli / Xavier Veilhan / Tehching Hsieh / Venice Art Biennale 2017 / Henny Jolzer





Paola Pivi

I am tired of eating fish
La Rinascente
Piazza Duomo, Milano

Within the framework of la Rinascente's series of commissions for the Piazza Duomo windows of its department store in Milan (Italy), the Italian artist Paola Pivi conceived a site-specific installation titled "I am tired of eating fish". The main protagonists of the installation are feathered polar bears which Paola Pivi shows in different situations and postures that show references to art, to design, to lifestyles and to free time, to nature and to work. Curated by Cloe Piccoli, the installation has been unveiled on the occasion of Miart 2017 art fair in Milan.

Interview with Paola Pivi, Milan (Italy), March 29, 2017

<http://vernissage.tv/2017/04/10/paola-pivi-i-am-tired-of-eating-fish-la-rinascente-milan-italy/> --

Transcript

Paola Pivi:

This is my exhibition at la Rinascente, there are 8 windows on the street, where we are is very important I wish that you turn the camera and look at this amazing art that we have in front, which is the Duomo. I think because the Milan people are so... you know under... they would never praise themselves. That's why this building is not that famous worldwide like other Italian buildings but actually I think it could be one of the most beautiful in my opinion.

I moved to Alaska in 2006 and bears just completely invaded my life because we are we are surrounded by them in Alaska.

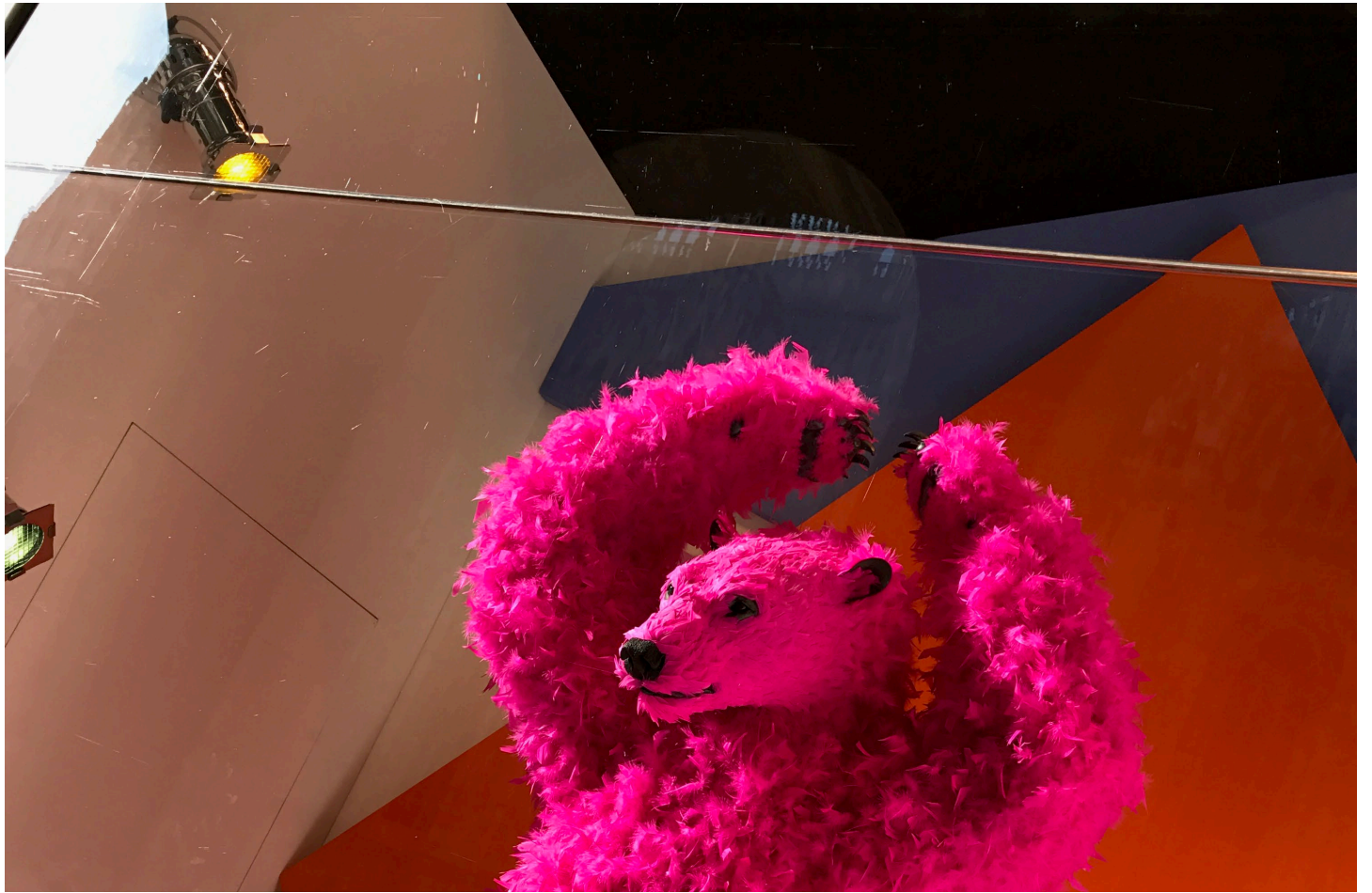


It's just very basic, simple, it's their land, you know, if I were to be a guest in somebody's house for years and years and years, I'd definitely have a strong, you know, like an osmosis into, to what I do.

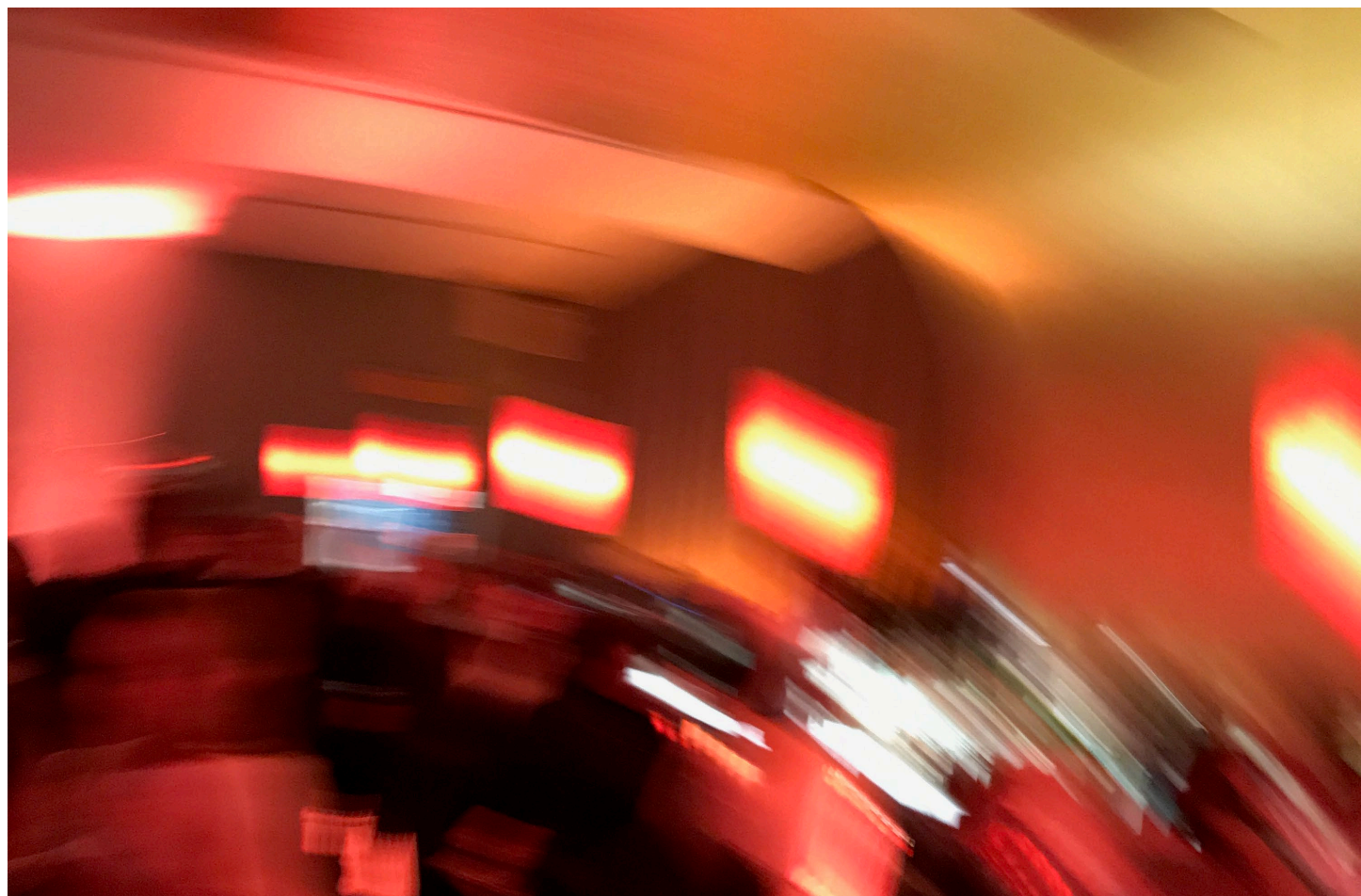
I woke up to the fact that all of us have a strong relationship with the animals, you know, it's just so basic, we did before for a very long time and even though today we can avoid it, it's in our... it's in the way we are built, so it is there even if you don't have pets. You know, the one thing that always strikes me is that if there is an animal in front of your view it's impossible not to have a reaction an instinctive reaction of fear, happiness, attraction, you know, to find the animal beautiful or repulsive or scary, you know, think of spiders, snakes and the power of that, it's very deep. So when I show animals, this relationship comes to the surface again.

Well, I guess that, you know, could also be the power of the art that it's very deep communication, I mean, I don't mean deep, I mean, effective communication. What I do is just what instinctively comes natural for me to do. Just to do, do, do, do, do, do do do, you know, always the best I can. It's very much for myself. Then of course I absolutely need to have an interaction with other people, so I wished for them to see it. Look at this, I got thousands of people are looking at this, this is like an overdose. So this is the... but I don't look for this, I look for doing my art, this is a need, like a step two, like, almost like a, not an addiction, and it's not that fundamental to the art, you know, art is also art for those artists who might not have a chance to show it yet, but it's a very, very strong need, like we need to breathe, drink, talk or...











Franco
Mazzucchelli

Riappropriazione
Converso
Milan, Italy



Riappropriazione, presented by Converso, is an art installation at the church San Paolo Converso in Milan, Italy, that totally covers the inside of the church. Since the early 1970s the Italian artist Franco Mazzuchelli has created environmental installations, in which inflatable volumes of joined sheets of polyethylene are made walkable and livable. Depending on whether they are mounted in private interiors or outdoors, Mazzucchelli's installations are called Sostituzioni (substitutions) or Riappropriazioni (re-appropriations). Both are intended to alter the perception of a familiar space.



Franco Mazzucchelli (Milan, 1939) lives in Milan. He was professor of Techniques of Sculpture at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, in Milan. His works have been shown in historical exhibitions, including "Volterra '73" (1973), the 15th Milan Triennale (1973), the 37th Venice Biennale (1976) and the 11th Rome Quadrennial (1986).

The church of San Paolo Converso is a converted church in the historic center of Milan. Since 2014 it is the headquarter of CLS architects. The architects use the church also for exhibitions, installations and events related to the art and design world.



Franco Mazzucchelli: Riappropriazione. Converso at the church San Paolo Converso in Milan, Italy. March 31, 2017. The installation was on view from 26 February to 1 April 2017.

<http://vernissage.tv/2017/04/19/franco-mazzucchelli-riappropriazione/> --















Xavier Veilhan

Studio Venezia
French Pavilion
Venice Art Biennale 2017

Interview with Xavier Veilhan

Studio Venezia, French Pavilion, Giardini, Venice Art Biennale 2017. May 9, 2017

<http://vernissage.tv/2017/05/24/xavier-veilhan-studio-venezia-french-pavilion-venice-art-biennale-2017/> --

The first title for the show was "Musical Merzbau" and we changed it because the show is now a traveling show, so it's called "Studio Venezia" and it will be called "Studio Lisboa" and "Studio Buenos Aires" next year and the idea behind it is to invite a great group of... a great amount of musicians to use the recording studio as a platform to record like in a proper studio but the studio itself is also a sculpture so it's an architectural installation.

Well I made several experiences with musicians but I wanted to develop this and focus on the very moment where the music is appearing so not... not the music as we know it, all the data, all that we are carrying around on our phones or in our cars and in the city, but more the moment before it is really appearing as something that will be memorized. So the studio is a proper place for this experience because it's, it's the very delicate moment where the musicians are invited to produce something, but they also can fail and they can take a chance, so I'm interested in inviting people to share this moment of fragility and I wanted really also with this environment to get something very soft and very not into something loud or something impressive, but more something delicate and fragile.

I try to keep the relationship to music as an amateur, so for me it's very important to have this love relation to music that is not into the making but into the enjoying the music. So I am not a real connoisseur but I am... I am interested in



music because also it's a symmetrical relation to visual art and what music can provide is different from what visual art can provide and there is a sense of time and chronology in both visual art and music that is very different but that is like complementary.

Yeah, it's a probably... the main difference, is sensation and I'm interested in the music because it's more physical and it gives an approach that is obviously intellectual everything is going through the brain, but it's also physical in terms of it can make you dance or cry or adding goose bumps or..., so I try to bring this level of emotion into art, into visual art.

Well, we worked with an acoustician, Pierre Hugonnet on designing the spaces so that they are very different from each other, so for example there is the big large room that is fairly bright and that is more adapt to people singing for example and when, when the... studio two is more devoted to louder instruments like horns or like drums and then there is the green room, where we are actually that is both where the instruments are stored, but also where the musician can rest and where I have my desk where I can host the different musicians, but also work on my other projects, because I will be here for the whole duration of the show, which is 7 months.

We started with the... with Christian Marclay, who is one of the two curators with Lionel Bovier and we talked a lot about what could be integrated in terms of direction and then we hired three other programmers from Venice but in very different fields, so we have a Baroque music, classical music, but also we have experimental Jazz and Electronics and Pop, so what I was interested in is not to represent everything in music but more to have a different approach but the feeling that



they share, that all the musicians share is more the sense of curiosity and an interest into sound as a material, as a base of any work in music, so it's not about melody or text it's more about textures for example.

Probably Hip-Hop... but I'm listening to a wide range of different music and I'm interested in the duration also, so for example I love to listen to very long pieces like Brian Eno "Thursday Afternoon", for example, that is a 1 hour, so it's 60 minutes and it's very strange because I also like to listen to The Ramones for a song that is one minute and 20.

Yes, I also listen to a lot of classical music but that is mostly a hundred years old I would say, so at the beginning of the last century I'm very interested into classical music and french music specially.

Well, first the Merzbau was the origin of a certain conception of art that could be something global that the people could enter in and not only a sculpture that you could go around but the sculpture that could be around you and I'm interested in this period in the history, like, for the music, and from the Russian Revolution I would say to the forties, to the Second World War I'm especially interested in architecture, music, but also sculpture and so it was a very intense time for creativity I think, but what I'm interested in is how we can link a certain feeling of modernity of today with this original feeling for modernity. So, of course we can't be naive about it and there's a lot of Utopia that we can't deal with any more, but there is a certain strength that was behind, for example the Russian Revolution and Constructivism and Suprematism or the Futurists in Italy that I'm very interested in.







Tehching Hsieh

Doing Time

Taiwan Pavilion

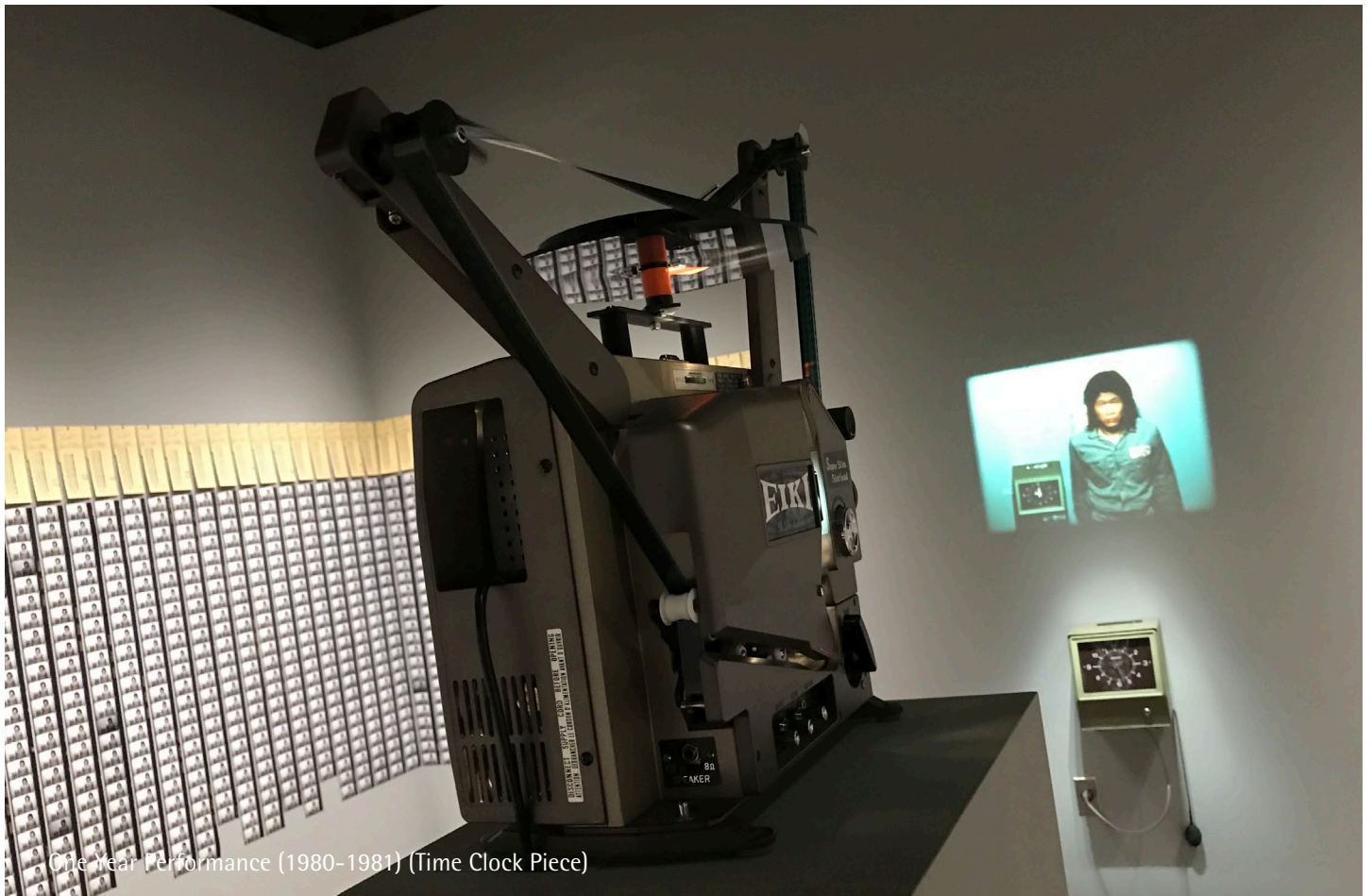
Venice Art Biennale 2017

Jump. Performance on Camera, Taipei, 1973



Tehching Hsieh: Doing Time at the Taiwan Pavilion of the Venice Art Biennale 2017 is one of the most remarkable exhibitions of the 57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. Curated by Adrian Heathfield and organized by the Taipei Fine Arts Museum of Taiwan, the show introduces the visitor to the work of Tehching Hsieh, who in the late 1970s and early 1980s carried out five separate yearlong performances that were unprecedented in terms of their use of physical difficulty over extreme durations.

The exhibition "Doing Time" at Venezia's Palazzo delle Prigioni presents two of Tehching Hsieh's One Year Performances together for



the first time: Hsieh's "Time Clock Piece" and his "Outdoor Piece" and also three of Tehching Hsieh's previously unseen works. This video provides you with an exhibition walk-through and with excerpts of the interviews with the artist Tehching Hsieh and the curator of the exhibition Adrian Heathfield.

Tehching Hsieh realized six durational performance pieces completed between 1978 and 2000. Five One Year Performances and a Thirteen Year Plan. In the Cage Piece (1978-1979) the artist locked himself in an 11.5-by-9-by-8-foot (3.5 by 2.7 by 2.4 m) wooden cage, furnished only with a wash basin, lights, a pail, and a single bed. During the year, he did not allow himself to talk, to read, to write, or



to listen to radio and TV. In the Time Clock Piece (1980-1981) Tehching Hsieh punched a time clock every hour on the hour. Each time he punched the clock, he took a single picture of himself, which together yield a 6-minute movie. In the Outdoor Piece (1981-1982) the artist spent one year outside, not entering buildings or shelter of any sort, including cars, trains, airplanes, boats, or tents. In the Rope Piece (1983-1984) Tehching Hsieh and Linda Montano spent one year between 4 July 1983 and 4 July 1984 tied to each other with an 8-foot-long (2.4 m) rope. They had to stay in the same room and were not allowed to touch each other. In the No Art Piece (1985-1986) Tehching Hsieh stayed away from art, that is did not create any art, didn't talk about art, didn't look at anything related to art. Tehching



One Year Performance (1981-1982) (Outdoor Piece)

Hsieh's thirteen Year Plan (1986-1999) consisted in Hsieh making art, but not showing it from 31 December 1986 until 31 December 1999.

Tehching Hsieh: Doing Time / Taiwan Pavilion, Venice Art Biennale 2017. Exhibition walkthrough and interviews with Tehching Hsieh and Adrian Heathfield, Venice (Italy), May 11, 2017.

<http://vernissage.tv/2017/05/26/tehching-hsieh-doing-time-taiwan-pavilion-venice-art-biennale-2017/> --

One Year Performance (1980-1981) (Time Clock Piece)

April 11, 1980

STATEMENT

I, Sam Hsieh, plan to do a one year performance piece.

I shall punch a TIME CLOCK in my studio every hour on the hour for one year.

I shall immediately leave my Time Clock room, each time after I punch the Time Clock.

The performance shall begin on April 11, 1980 at 7 P.M. and continue until April 11, 1981 at 6 P.M.

Sam Hsieh

Sam Hsieh

One Year Performance (1980-1981) (Time Clock Piece)

ONE YEAR PERFORMANCE
by **SAM HSIEH**

Open to public on dates circled from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

1980 to 1981

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

1980 to 1981

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

on dates circled from 11:00

1980 to 1981

Calendar

APR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

MAY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

JUNE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

JULY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

AUG 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SEPT 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

OCT 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

NOV 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

DEC 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

JAN 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

FEB 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

MAR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

APR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

CON ST. 25





Viva Arte Viva

War, Peace, Politics, Power
examined through Art
at the 57th Biennale di
Venezia

Viva Arte Viva: War, Peace, Politics, Power examined through Art at the 57th Biennale di Venezia

Words and Photos by Lee Sharrock

Curated by the Pompidou Centre's Christine Macel and featuring 86 national participations in the historic Pavilions of the Giardini, the former shipyards and armories of the Arsenale, and dotted around the floating city, the 57th Biennale dell'arte takes over Venice until 27 November.

Titled 'Viva Arte Viva' ('Long Live Art'), 120 artists from 51 countries participate in the 57th International art exhibition, making it truly global and featuring a pluralism of artistic voices which is its signature. Three countries are participating for the first time: Nigeria, Kiribati, and Antigua & Barbuda, while Malta returns to Venice Biennale after a 17-year hiatus, with an intriguing multi-disciplinary exhibition "Homo Melitensis: An Incomplete Inventory in 19 Chapters".

Paolo Baratta, President of La Biennale di Venezia explains: "This year's Biennale is dedicated to celebrating, and almost giving thanks for, the very existence of art and artists, whose worlds expand our perspective and the space of our existence."

Curator Christine Macel describes the philosophy behind 'Viva Arte Viva': "Today, in a world full of conflicts and shocks, art bears witness to the most precious part of what makes us human. Art is the ultimate ground for reflection, individual expression, freedom, and for fundamental questions. Art is the last bastion, a garden to cultivate above and beyond trends



Grisha Bruskin, Russian Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

and personal interests. It stands as an unequivocal alternative to individualism and indifference. The role, the voice and the responsibility of the artist are more crucial than ever before within the framework of contemporary debates. It is in and through these individual initiatives that the world of tomorrow takes shape, which though surely uncertain, is often best intuited by artists than others."

Indeed, many themes running through the art on display in the Giardini reinforce Christian Marcel's message of the connection between artists and the world they live in. Much of the art on display here is a response to topics dominating world affairs; wars, global migration and the resulting refugee crisis, and the environment.

Dominating the Giardini are the old colonial powers including Russia, France, Britain and Germany, yet while the British Pavilion features 'Folly' by Phyllida Barlow (a perfect title to describe the silliness of the giant toilet rolls and coloured boulders jammed into the Pavilion) the Russian and German Pavilions feature artists who have taken very seriously the responsibility of filling the hallowed structures of these historic buildings with art that reflects and examines life.

Germany won the Golden Lion for Best National participation for Anne Imhof's exhibition 'Faust', curated by Susanne Pfeffer, which features a 5 hour long performance designed to push visitors to the Pavilion to a state of anxiety. Imhof's intervention blocks the front entrance of the Pavilion, which was erected during the Nazi era, and features a raised glass floor which black-clad performers crouch under and prowl over, accompanied by a gothic soundtrack, growling Doberman guard-dogs and anti-riot wire fences.



Phyllida Barlow, British Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

The claustrophobic exhibition could be a comment on the Berlin Wall erected in 1961 to separate East from West Germany, or the barbed wire wall erected to prevent refugees crossing into Hungary at the height of the migrant crisis in 2016, or even the wall that President Trump threatens to erect between Mexico and the USA.

Representing the USA, Mark Bradford also chooses to subvert the neoclassical design of his native country's Pavilion which is emulated in the design of the White House, inviting visitors to begin their journey through a side door, effectively the servants' entrance, where they are confronted by a bulbous sculpture hanging from the ceiling and forcing them onto the periphery of the space – a metaphor for the collapse of the social centre which has marginalised people around the world.

As well as marginalisation, Bradford's exhibition 'Tomorrow is another day', examines the unfulfilled social promises of US Presidents, and references the Black Lives Matter movement in his video art 'Niagara', showing a former neighbour walking away from the camera with a swagger that defies the ever present threat of violence, and reflects the artist's own pride in being a homosexual black man. In his large-scale canvases, Bradford utilises the unusual material of permanent wave endpapers and hair dye used in hair salons, to depict labour and the intimacy of the hairdressers where he used to work alongside his mother.

Questions of American culture and the marginalisation of minorities and outsiders are also examined in the Korean Pavilion by artist Cody Choi, in his site-specific installation 'Venetian Rhapsody – The Power of Bluff', featuring a vast neon sign that dominates the otherwise sedate skyline of the Giardini. A wry take on a Venetian desert Motel, the sign proclaims



Anne Imhof, German Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

'Welcome. Pole Dance. Free Video. TV. Free narcissistic people disorder. Free peep show. Major credit cards. Free orgasm.

Choi's enormous Las Vegas-style neon is like a shining beacon of Western hedonism in the desert of the Giardini, quite apt for the Biennale, where during the open days when wealthy art tourists flock to Venice for the Vernissage days, and the Bacchanalian excesses of the contemporary art world are on full display.

Choi comments with the installation on his experience of American culture after arriving in the US from Korea, where his family settled in East LA where immigrant Mexicans formed the majority of the population. He admits that he struggled with whether to accept the invitation to represent Korea at the Biennale, because of his notion of the Biennale as an event where art and capitalism converge in the tourist hotspot of Venice. He says: "My work in the 2017 Korean Pavilion suggests that Casino capitalism signals the death of art, but also presages a new kind of hope for its resurrection, in the era of speculation and excess. Venice has been a tourist city that has inspired grandiose dreams for many artists. It seems to me those who take part in the Venice Biennale are lured and swayed by the city's glittering image. Perhaps, I am not an exception."

Also in the Korean Pavilion is a captivating installation by Lee Wan, titled 'Proper Time: Though the Dreams Revolve with the Moon', it features a small white walled room with a communist style sculpture of a faceless family as the centrepiece. The walls are covered in circular white clocks – each emitting a monologue of the person whose name is inscribed on the clock. The Korean Pavilion is curated by Lee Dae-Hyung, who is known globally for his Korean Eye series of exhibitions



Cody Choi, Korean Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

at the Saatchi Gallery in London, and his choice of artists seeks to identify the role of art and artists in an increasingly unstable world.

In the Central Pavilion of the Giardini, the environment, immigration and the global refugee crisis is addressed in a more practical way with Olafur Eliasson's refugee project 'Green Light', in collaboration with the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary. Eliasson explains: "Green light is an act of welcoming, addressed both to those who have fled hardship and instability in their home countries and to the residents of the cities receiving them." The shared learning concept involves a workshop in the central pavilion where visitors and collectors can pay 250 Euros for a green light lamp built by refugees from recycled materials to a design by Eliasson. The money raised benefits two NGO's working with refugees.

Eliasson comments: "I am very pleased to be able to present the project at the biennale arte 2017. To me, going to the biennale has always been about going deeper into reality, not about exiting reality. Mass displacement and migration are core challenges in the world today, affecting millions of people around the globe. Green light displays a modest strategy for addressing the challenges and responsibilities arising from the current situation, and shines a light on the value of collaborative work and thinking."

Coupled with economic migration, war is the main reason for the refugee crisis that has dominated headlines for the past couple of years, and in the Russian Pavilion two very different artists comment on the new world order in diverse ways with 'Theatrum Orbis'. The titled of the exhibition commissioned and curated by Semyon Mikhailovsky translates to 'The-



Olafur Eliasson, Central Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

atre of the World', taking its origins from the first modern atlas, created by Abraham Ortelius during the Age of discovery.

Grisha Bruskin's theatrical installation dominates the first floor of the Russian Pavilion and features video, sound and sculpture referencing antiquity and modernity. An army of white hybrid figures including dolls, dummies, androids and 2-headed birds are amplified in shadow on the walls, and combined with a menacing soundscape, explore ideas of international terrorism, Big Brother, the surveillance society and the gradual reconfiguring of the world map and old world order, through political power plays and wars between the traditional nation states. The inclusion of figures from antiquity references man's seemingly insatiable desire to wage war on fellow man through the ages up to the present day, with figures such as Putin and Assad staking claim on territories.

On the lower level the Recycle Group and Sasha Pirogova use a virtual reality app that visitors can download to their smartphones, to explore the immorality of contemporary society and the surveillance culture of the digital age.

In the Japanese Pavilion, questions of war and its effect on humanity are also addressed in Takahiro Iwaskai's powerful yet delicate installation 'Turned upside down, It's a Forest'. Opened by the Japanese Minister of Culture, curator Meruro Washida, and artist Takahiro Iwasaki, the Minister addressed a packed inauguration ceremony at the entrance of the Pavilion, and invited people to explore the installation which features a central sculpture in the upper gallery, through which visitors can poke their heads from the gallery below, appearing as surreal floating heads in the middle of a sculpted mountain of clothes.



Takahiro Iwaskai, Japan Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

Born in Hiroshima where he is still based, Iwasaki's practice is heavily influenced by the tragic history of his birthplace, which was instantly annihilated by the atomic bomb before his lifetime. In the Japanese Pavilion Iwasaki presents artfully arranged piles of clothes, bin bags and household objects, from which exquisitely crafted sculptures of buildings and cranes emerge. The delicacy of his handiwork merges micro and macro, a metaphor for the power of the miniscule atoms, which destroyed the city of Hiroshima in the guise of an atomic bomb.

Curator Iwasaki commented: "Iwasaki's works through the perspective of Hiroshima as a city in a rural area that had once been destroyed by the atomic bomb, question the attitudes of Japanese people towards science and technology and the way in which we confront nature."

Perpetual war through the generations and the quest for peace, runs through the Hungarian Pavilion's offering 'Peace on Earth', a concept by artist Gyula Varnai examining the viability of Utopias from the 60s and 70s through to the virtual cyber-wars of the present day. The exhibition opens with 'Neon Peace', a huge neon version of the peace symbol which adorned the top of the building in Dunaujvaros between 1958 to the early 1990s, and was meant to herald the universal utopia of the Cold War: world Peace. This contemporary reworking of the symbol is a comment on the struggle between world powers Europe, the US, Russia and China, and the ongoing desire for the elusive concept of peace.

'Rainbow', a simple but beautiful rainbow arches gracefully across a white wall of the Pavilion, is made up of 8,000 vintage pin badges from a wide range of organizations, cities, movement, events and companies of the 60s and 70s, arranged in



Gyula Varnai, Hungarian Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

the spectrum of the rainbow. A metaphor for the unfulfilled vision of a peaceful future envisaged during the Cold War.

Outside the hallowed Pavilions of the Giardini and Arsenale, there is an abundance of standout public art gracing the Palazzi along the Canale Grande, free, democratic art 'en plein air' for everyone, not just art-world insiders, to see.

Lorenzo Quinn's 'mani giganti' (giant hands) amusingly appear to hold up the Ca'Sagredo on the Grand Canal, but there is a more serious message here of the omnipresent rising waters caused by climate change, which threaten to sink the legendary city of Venice. One of the most powerful messages here at the Biennale, particularly potent at a time when President Trump has tipped the balance against fighting global warming by withdrawing from the Paris climate deal, to universal dismay.

Artist Shezad Dawood also examines environmental issues in 'Leviathan', a 10 part film cycle unfolding over 3 years, which looks at pressing issues that dominate contemporary society such as marine welfare, migrant sea crossings and psychological trauma, and how they interconnect. For this British Council exhibition at Palazzina Canonica (the former headquarters of Marine Sciences on the waterfront) and Fabbrica Fortuny, curated by Alfredo Cramerotti, the artist collaborated with marine biologists, oceanographers and neurologists. Dawood presents an imaginary dystopian future populated by survivors of a cataclysmic solar event: "The World was ending as it had been doing for millennia".

Off the beaten track of the main Giardini and Arsenale hubs are some hidden gems, such as the Armenian and Tibetan Pa-



Lorenzo Quinn: Mani Giganti. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

vilions tucked away in the beautiful Palazzo Zenobio in Dorsoduro. Jean Boghossian's visceral exhibition for the Armenian Pavilion, curated by Bruno Corà, art critic and president of Burri Foundation, is inspired by the island of San Lazzaro in Venice where old major Armenian manuscripts are presented in their museum, transmitting the culture to future generations. Titled 'Fiamma Inestinguibile', the exhibition features Boghossian's signature works using the flame of a blowtorch as a 'paintbrush', and uses burning books as a metaphor for the destruction of knowledge over the ages throughout successive wars. This spiritual exhibition subtly references the Lebanese civil war and the Armenian genocide, using books as a testament to war and conflict.

The highlight of the Tibetan Pavilion curated by Luco Pietro Acquati is Robert Gligorov's haunting installation 'Atman' (from the Sanskrit for essence/ breath) in the scented rose garden hidden behind the Palazzo. The artist has reclaimed the symbol of the swastika, originally a Tibetan symbol of peace, from the misappropriation in war-time by the Nazis, and inscribed a series of Swastika sculptures with the names of Tibetan monks.

There are also 23 collateral events scattered around the city including 'The Golden Tower', an eye-catching Post-humus work by James Lee Byars, an artist who lived on and off in Venice during his lifetime. The tower erected in Campo San Vio (Dorsoduro) is an artistic indulgence that could surely only fit in here, alongside the opulent craftsmanship of the Palazzi that grace the Canale Grande, leading up to Piazza San Marco where the Basilica di San Marco, a status symbol of 11th Century Venetian wealth and power - the ultimate in Italo-Byzantine architecture, with gold ground mosaics which give it the nickname 'Chiesa d'Oro' (Church of Gold). In front of the gardens of Palazzo Franchetti is Belgian Artist Koen



Robert Gligorov, Tibetan Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

Vanmechelen's giant bird foot and egg, the piece de resistance of the 'Glasstress' exhibition, which has been a highlight peripheral event of the Biennale since 2009 and fuses the traditional glass craftsmanship of Murano with concepts of contemporary artists.

Damien Hirst's huge Carrera marble sculpture 'The Fate of a Banished Man', featuring a serpent attacking a horserider, dominates the Punta della Dogana, standing guard outside his mammoth exhibition 'Treasures from the wreck of the Unbelievable', a fabricated booty of dazzling antiquities and sculpture salvaged from a mythical shipwreck, and owned by a mythical collector. Reportedly with production costs of more than £50 million, the exhibition stretches across the Canale Grande to Billionaire art collector and Christie's owner Francois Pinault's Palazzo Fortuny.

The Hirst exhibition and the Golden Tower comment on the opulent history of Venice as a major financial and maritime power in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. While there is no irony in the gilded lives of the Uber-rich art lovers who flock to Venice for the Biennale, parking their Super-Yachts on the grand canal near the Giardini, and disembarking to sip bellinis and snap up eye-wateringly expensive contemporary art which only they can afford. For them the world keeps turning and they continue on the contemporary art world merry-go-round of Biennales, auctions and Art Fairs, perhaps not aware of the core concept of 'Viva Arte Viva' – that artists exist not to provide them with an aesthetic commodity that can be bought and sold in the manner of gold or oil, but to offer invaluable insight, comment and visual interpretation of some of the more unsavory issues that continue to dominate society and plague humanity. Long Live Art indeed.



Damien Hirst, Punta della Dogana. Photo: Lee Sharrock.

For VernissageTV's complete video coverage of the Venice Biennale, visit:

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Jean Boghossian, Armenian Pavilion. Photo: Lee Sharrock.



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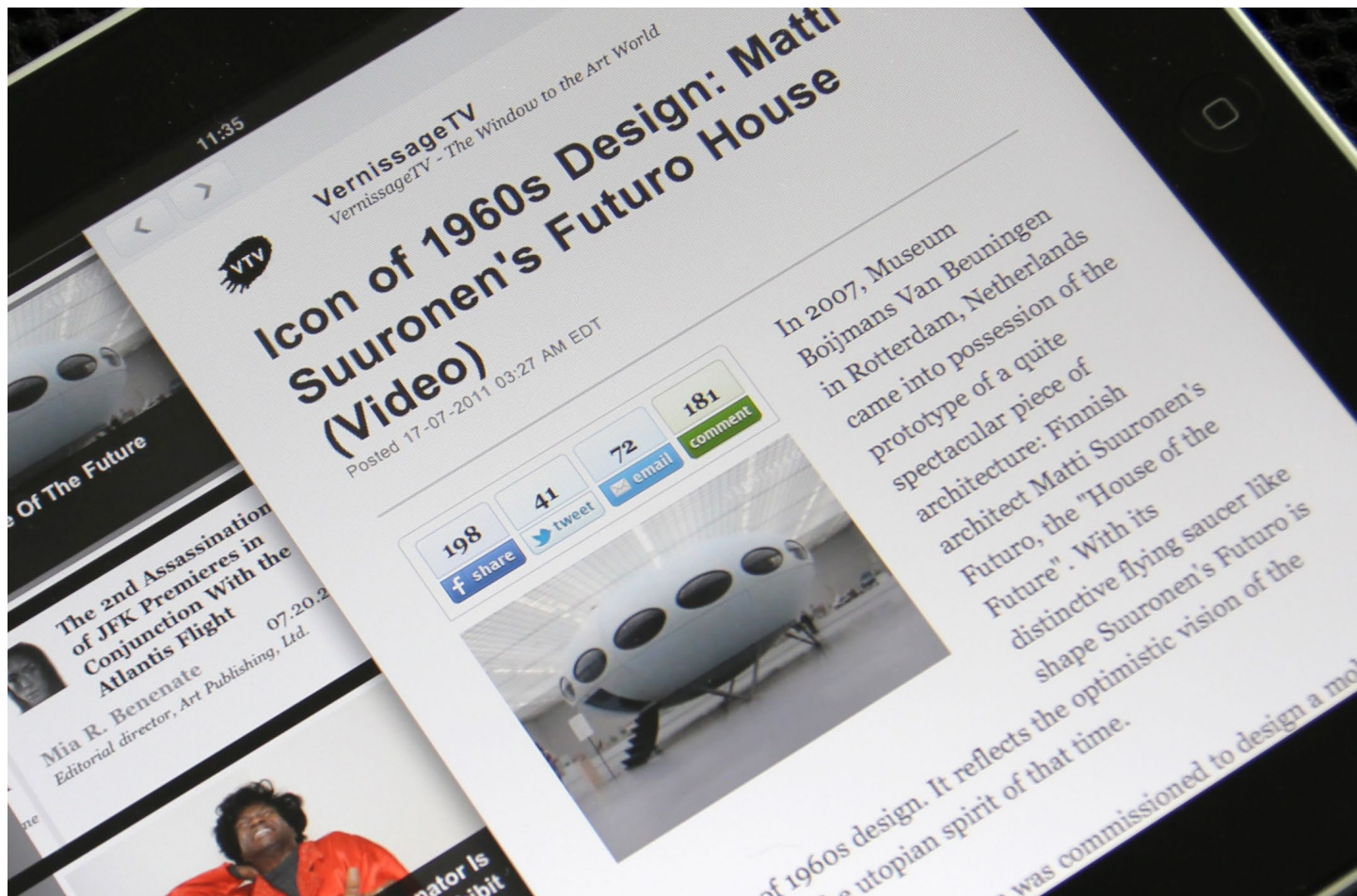
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VTV Magazine Number 39, June 2017

VernissageTV / Totentanz 14 / 4051 Basel

Switzerland / contact@vernissage.tv

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