

11. OSTRALE – Biennale

vom 28.07. – 01.10.2017

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The „11th International Exhibition for Contemporary Art OSTRALE – Biennale“ unites the works of young, still unknown artists with those of already established, worldwide representatives of all artistic categories in Dresden from 28th of July to 1st of October 2017. In 2016 artists from 70 nations had applied for participation. In the end more than 1.000 pieces of nearly 200 artists out of 40 nations were shown on an exhibition space of more than 20.000 square meters.

OSTRALE - Biennale

OSTRALE – Biennale ist the third biggest exhibition for contemporary Art in Germany. It is a non-commercial exhibition which gives us the freedom to discuss socially relevant topics apart from market developments. With guiding principles like peaceful coexistence, acceptance of the unknown/ foreign, respectful interaction with each other, religious diversity, internationality, OSTRALE is a decisive counterpart to the Pegida – movement as well as the related, mostly negative media coverage about Dresden/ Saxony. There is a close cooperation with Dresden institutions, collectors and galleries, that are involved in contemporary Art as well as international curators, biennals and cultural institutions. These long-standing partnerships result in international exhibition possibilities and European Art tours. Furthermore we are in close contact with Saxonian schools, that use OSTRALE for educational purposes (5500 pupils/ students in 2016)

Accompanying to the exhibition we offer an extensive framework program (music, dance, performance, etc.). The barrier-free infrastructure, an app for blind and deaf visitors and workshops with special target group participation enable a social-cultural participation.

„re_form“

By definition a reform is a systematic and non-violent change of existing conditions without ignoring the essential intellectual and cultural foundations. The aim of a reform is improvement. Contemporary Art can ask questions and generate solution approaches in a necessary re_form-process. The guiding theme „re_form“ deals especially with the question of organised change of existing cultural policy and cultural systems in Europe, Germany and particularly in our town, that is preparing to apply as „European Capital of Culture 2025“.

1. Ideas for a re_form concerning ourselves

By switching from an annual exhibition to a Biennale-concept OSTRALE itself is in a state of re_form. Furthermore, the special exhibition space of OSTRALE in the heritage protected buildings of the outstanding architect Hans Erlwein have to be rehabilitated after the exhibition in order to enable a further use.

2. re_form in Art

re_form is a basic element of Art and essential feature of creativity and artistic work. The pieces of Art function as mediators. Unlike the times of the Avantgardes it seems today that statements of novelty in Art are mostly based on rediscovery and forerunnership. What moves artists to turn increasingly to role models and how do the associated homages, references, quotations and appropriations reveal in the respective piece of Art? Which prospects emerge for the future from studying the past?

3. re_form: A question of identity

The 11th edition of OSTRALE will take up an essential topic of the European Capitals of Culture: We raise the questions about human identity and new spaces in light of the refugee and migration movements in past and present, an amplified tendency toward nationalism as well as the dissolution of

the European community of values (e.g. „Brexit“). Could Art in its materiality be a bridge between different identities, that overlap but don't merge?

Outlook 2017

- New invitation process
- Development of new European partnerships (cooperation projects)
- Support of new EU projects and European exchange
- School programs in light of artistic mediation and education policy
- Artist in Residency programs
- Discussions, expert panels

Further topics that move us in 2017

A) Theory of the „creative class“

If cities brand themselves as creative, economic growth will follow. This was stated by Richard Florida. The American economist saw a correlation between the economical strength of an urban region and the relation between highly industrialized workers, artists, musicians and homosexual people. Florida's theory found its way into urbanism and city planning. But: Who will profit from the generated prosperity? Frequently „creative professional groups“ form a complete city zone and make it more attractive just to watch a following, ruthless economic takeover!

B) A pilgrim's path to Art or why opening urban spaces is so important

Travelling to Art places, especially if they are out-of-town and in relatively unknown areas, can touch, amuse, influence or even change humans as strongly as Art itself. The journey creates new ways of thinking. It is important to show Art even on hard-to-reach locations. The involved voyage is a meaningful effort, physically and mentally.

C) re_form & reformation, Luther, Reformer, 500 years

The placarding of the 95 propositions 500 years ago paved the way for a new and free, independent thinking and the freedom of conscience concerning faith and Christian doctrine. The human being has a free will – especially making separate choices concerning religious matters. What do we think about this issue today?