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Special about the Taipei Biennial 2008
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Taipei Biennial 2008: Overview of Information

Print version

Exhibition duration: 13 September 2008 - 4 January 2009
Press preview: 11 and 12 September 2008
Opening ceremony & party: 11 September 2008

Curators: Manray Hsu and Vasif Kortun - see the curators' biographies

Artists: 47 participants - see the artists' list

Venues: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei Art Park, Taipei Brewery, Zhongxiao Xinsheng MRT Station, PDP in MRT, Taipei Arena / Taipei Screen

Organizer:

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The 6th Taipei Biennial, organised by the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, is curated by Manray Hsu (Germany/Taiwan) and Vasif Kortun (Turkey). It will take place between 13 September 2008 and 4 January 2009.

The Taipei Fine Arts Museum is the main venue established for the Taipei Biennials. This year, the event also includes projects in the Beer Brewery, on the mega-digital screen at the Taipei Arena, in Taipei Art Park, at the Zhongxiao Xincheng MRT Station, and an intervention at No.13, Qidong Street. The Biennial will employ a number of advertising boards in the city as well, spreading the exhibition throughout different neighbourhoods and bringing the project into view when least expected.

In addition, upon the invitation of the curators, the artist/activist Oliver Ressler presents an exhibition within the context of the Biennial titled "A World Where Many Worlds Fit", that is dedicated to resistance movements.

The Taipei Biennial originates from a constellation of correlated themes all connected to neo-liberal capitalist globalisation. The threads of investigation in the exhibition include urban transformation in Taiwan, circumstances for immigrant and illegal labour, mobility, borders, divided states and micro-nations, permanent war condition, ecological breakdown, global unrest, and the opportunities for change. All these threads are processed and witnessed through do-it-yourself practices, individual stories, and humour. While art does not provide answers, it has the capacity to reflect on these issues from multiple angles, to work with different forms of enquiry and determine when to focus on individual moments. As with the approach of the Biennial, no story is infinitely singular. Each area of focus is associated with many other questions, for example, the mobility of a tourist, a temporary worker, or a foreign bride are certainly not the same, not even similar. Towards this end, the Biennial has been commissioning as many new works as possible, or asking the participating artists to rethink and adapt previous projects in light of their presentation in Taipei. There will also be existing works presented in juxtaposition to the new ones. The exhibition will include thematic compilations and farcical and biting videos.

There will be performative works and interventions in the city, some of which will be documented and reconfigured in the exhibition venues. The Beer Brewery, a site that has been through an extended process of transformation from its inauguration as Taiwan's first beer factory (a production and distribution site built during the Japanese occupation), to a state monopoly that involved the privatisation, re-branding and finally relocation to a site outside of the city centre. While the factory's history can be read as a classic example of shifting states of use in any post-industrialised city in the world, the exhibition is interested in seeking the nuances and specificities found within the general. The brewery's daily operation will continue during the exhibition run, and its space will be utilised as a real place rather than an insular exhibition zone.

Parallel programming includes a conference co-presented with the Dictionary of War that takes place on October 24 and 25, 2008; a film programme related to the themes of the exhibition co-hosted by the Urban Nomad Film Festival; and in collaboration with Taipei Drift, an International Workshop for Art Academics, 2008.

By means of these projects the curators and artists will explore the diverse opportunities that this Biennial is capable of creating and responding to.

Manray Hsu and Vasif Kortun

Curators of the 6th Taipei Biennial 2008 - Biographies

Manray Hsu

Independent curator and art critic, currently living in Berlin and Taipei. His recent major exhibitions include "2000 Taipei Biennial: The Sky Is the Limit" (co-curated with Jerome Sans, Taipei Fine Arts Museum); "The Good Place: An International Cityscape Intervention" (2001, co-curated with Hongjohn Lin, Taichung City, Taiwan); "How Big Is the World?" (2002, O.K Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria; 2003 Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts); "Wayward Economy" (2005, co-curated with Maren Richter, Taipei); "Wronged Attitudes" (2006, co-curated with Maren Richter, Sparwasser HQ Berlin, Taiwan Cultural Center in Paris); "2006 Liverpool Biennial" (co-consulted/curated with Gerardo Mosquera); "Naked Life" (2006, co-curated with Maren Richter, Taipei Museum of Contemporary Art); "Cracks on the Highway" (2007, MAC Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro). Manray served as a jury member for the 49th Venice Biennale and a jury member of the Unesco Prize for the 7th Istanbul Biennial in 2001, and the 2006 Hermes Prize for Korean Contemporary Artists.

Manray's current intellectual work focuses on cultural conditions of globalization, the relationship between aesthetics and politics, and geopolitical situations of contemporary art. In addition to exhibition, Manray often engages in collective work on workshop, conference and publication. His conference presentations include: "Biennials in Dialogue: International Symposium," (2000, Museum Fridericianum Kassel); "International Conference: 7th Istanbul International Biennial of Contemporary Art," (2001, Istanbul); "Changing: State of Affairs, 2nd International Curators Workshop," (2001, Seoul); "The First International Symposium on Contemporary Art Theory: Exchanges in Contemporary Art – Chronicles, Controversies, Bridges," (SITAC 2002, Mexico City); "Curating Now" (2003, Los Angeles Arts Exhibition); "New Media Art and New Economy" (2004, "Media on the Move" International Conference, Shi-shin University, Taipei); "Network Cosmopolitanism," (2004, Res Artis International Conference, Sydney & Melbourne); "The Possible Post-Biological Art" (2005 ARCO Forum, Madrid); "Asian Forum" (2005, Gwangju Biennale 2006); "City Breaks: Art and Culture in Times of Expediency" (Liverpool Biennial 2006); "Curating and Localities" (Taipei Biennial 2006 "Dirty Yoga" International Forum).

Vasif Kortun

Founding Director of Platform Garanti (2001-) a non-profit contemporary art institution in Istanbul, with an extensive library, documentation center, artist archives, exhibition space and an international residency program for artists, critics and curators. Under Kortun's direction, Platform Garanti has received international attention, and the programs have been reviewed like Flash Art, Contemporary, Frieze, Bidoun, Art Papers and many other international publications.

Platform Garanti was the recipient of the 50th Anniversary Special Grant of the European Cultural Foundation, and has participated in 2004 in Institution2, at Kiasma, Helsinki Museum of Contemporary Art a project devoted to the best 12 institutions in Europe. Platform has recently participated in the Site Santa Fe Biennial. Over six years of existence, Platform engaged in an extensive international lecture and conference program that included over Carlos Basualdo, Maria Lind, Hou Hanru, Chantal Mouffe, Charles Esche, Maria Hlavajova, Irit Rogoff, and organized major conferences. At the same time with Platform, Kortun was also the planner and founding director of Proje4L, Istanbul Museum of Contemporary Art between 2001-2003, where he curated seminal exhibitions of artist from Turkey. Prior to his

return to Turkey, Kortun was the first director of the Museum of the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College between 1994 and 1997. At the Center, he organized a number of projects as well as the first museum exhibitions of artists like Kara Walker, Nedko Solakov and Boris Mikhailov.

Vasif Kortun was the chief curator of the 1992 Istanbul Biennial, the first Biennial of its scale between Venice and Asia to be extensively and favorably reviewed by magazine such as ArtForum, Flash Art, Art in America, and Village Voice. He was the co-curator in 2005 of the same Biennial that is now regarded as one of the most important exhibitions in the recent years. Kortun was also one of the curators of the 24th São Paulo Biennial in 1998, Tirana Biennial, and 2nd Ceramics Biennial in Albisola (2003). He has curated the Turkish pavilions for 1994 and 1998 São Paulo Biennials and 2005 Venice Biennials. He was on the juries of the 5th Gwangju and the 48th Venice Biennials, and an advisor for the 1st Johannesburg Biennial. Kortun has been an advisor for many museums including the Walker Art Center; Museum of Modern Art, New York, VanAbbe Museum, Eindhoven; The Israel Museum amongst others.

He has curated and co-curated exhibitions at Apex Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Rome, IFA, Berlin & Stuttgart, Saitama Museum of Modern Art, and many other places. His texts have appeared in many different books, magazines and exhibition catalogs. Jahresring 51: Szene Türkei: Abseits aber Tor, a book on Turkey co-authored with Erden Kosova was published in 2004.

Kortun received the 9th annual Award for Curatorial Excellence given by the Center for Curatorial Studies in 2006.

6th Taipei Biennial 2008 - List of Artists

Nevin Aladag

* 1972 Van, Turkey. Lives in Berlin, Germany.

Lara Almárcegui

* 1972 Spain. Lives in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Ziad Antar

* 1978 Saida, Lebanon; lives there and in Paris, France.

Yochai Ayrahami

* 1970 Israel; lives there.

Bbrother

* 1982. Taiwanese graffiti artist and social activist.

Matei Bejenaru

* 1963 Romania. Lives in Iasi, Romania.

Lene Berg

* 1965 Norway. Lives in New York, USA.

Roderick Buchanan

* 1965 Scotland, UK.

Che Onejoon

* 1979 Seoul, South Korea; lives there.

Chitka

Anetta Mona Chisa: * 1975 Romania.

Lucia Tkacova: * 1977 Slovakia.

Live in Prague and Bratislava, collaborating since 2000.

Burak Delier

* 1977 Adapazarı, Turkey. Lives in Istanbul, Turkey.

Democracia

Artist group founded 2006 in Madrid, Spain, by Pablo España and Iván López.

Internacional Errorista

International organisation that claims 'error' as a philosophy of life. Born 2005 from the group Etcetera, Argentina.

Didier Fiuza Faustino

* 1968 France. Lives in Paris, France, and Lisbon, Portugal.

Mieke Gerritzen

* 1962 Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Shaun Gladwell

* 1972 Sydney, Australia; lives there.

Minja Gu

* 1977 South Korea. Lives in Seoul, South Korea.

Nicoline van Harskamp

* 1975 Hazerswoude, the Netherlands. Lives in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Institute for Applied Autonomy (IAA)

Anonymous activist group, founded in 1998, USA.

Irwin

Founded in 1983 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Liu Wei

* 1965 China. Lives in Beijing, China.

Trevor Paglen

* 1975 USA. Lives in Berkeley, California, USA.

Christodoulos Panayiotou

* 1978 Limassol, Cyprus; lives there.

Mario Rizzi

* 1962 Italy. Lives in Berlin, Germany.

Katya Sander

* 1970 Copenhagen, Denmark. Lives in Berlin, Germany.

Sašo Sedlaček

* 1974 Ljubljana Slovenia; lives there.

Superflex

Founded in 1993 in Denmark.

Bert Theis

* 1952 Luxembourg. Lives in Milan, Italy.

Kuang-yu Tsui

* 1974 Taipei, Taiwan; lives there.

Nasan Tur

* 1974 Offenbach, Germany. Lives in Berlin, Germany.

Wong Hoy Cheong

* 1960 Penang, Malaysia. Lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Mali Wu

* 1957 Taiwan. Lives in Kaohsiung and Taipei, Taiwan.

Jun Yang

* 1975 Tientsin China. Lives in Vienna, Austria.

The Yes Men

Group of culture activists who practice 'Identity Correction', USA.

YU Cheng-Ta

* 1983 Taiwan.

A World Where Many Worlds Fit

Section curated by Oliver Ressler

RTMark, USA

Anti-corporate corporation launched 1995 in the USA.

Zanny Begg

* 1972 Australia. Lives in Sydney, Australia.

Christopher Delaurenti

* 1967 USA. Lives in Seattle, USA.

Noel Douglas

* 1970 Great Britain.

Etcetera, Argentina

Art collective initiated in 1997 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Fights on the streets for human rights and against social injustices.

Petra Gerschner

* 1960 Germany. Lives in Munich, Germany.

John Jordan

* 1965 France.

Oliver Ressler

* 1970 Knittelfeld, Austria. Lives in Vienna, Austria.

Allan Sekula

* 1951 Erie, USA. Lives in Los Angeles, USA.

Gregory Sholette

* 1956 USA. Lives in New York, USA.

Nuria Vila + Marcelo Expósito

Nuria Vila: * 1976 in Spain. Lives in Barcelona, Spain and Caracas, Venezuela.

Marcelo Expósito: * 1966 Spain. Lives in Barcelona, Spain.

Dmitry Vilensky

* 1964 Russia. Lives in Berlin, Germany and St. Petersburg, Russia.

Press information provided by the organizers.