



Central Asia at the 54th International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

4 June–27 November 2011

Lingua Franca/Франк тили

Pavilion Opening

2nd of June, 2011, 15:00

Venue:

Palazzo Malipiero, San Marco 3199 – 3201

Artists:

Natalia Andrianova, Said Atabekov, Artyom Ernst, Galim Madanov and Zauresh Terekbay, Yerbossyn Meldibekov, Alexander Nikolaev, Marat Raiymkulov, Aleksey Rumyantsev and Alla Rumyantseva, Adis Seitaliev

Curators:

Boris Chukhovich, Georgy Mamedov, Oksana Shatalova

Commissioners:

Asel Akmatova, Andris Brinkmanis

The exhibit of the Central Asia pavilion **Lingua Franca/Франк тили** presenting works of eleven artists from four countries of the region is a comprehensive study of contemporary artistic practices as a kind of lingua franca – language of global communication. The exhibit's curators propose two approaches deconstructing one another. The first one inspired and motivated by the practices of the early 20th century avant-garde that viewed creation of universal means of communication amongst its major aspirations, presents art works and projects as individual artistic strategies to convert the local issues and contexts into universally comprehensive visual language. These approaches, presented in the exhibit's major section, *Lingua Franca. Experiences of Universal*, involve atomization and miscegenation, language of metaphors and archetypes, tracing back to avant-garde, as well as a strategy that appeals to the universality of unformulated order, which was marked in the exhibit as l'innommable.

Lingua franca inspires the metaphor of overall language, but historically and in contemporary practice it remains the language of Franks (Франк тили, if translated into Turkic languages of Central Asia), foreigners, others, aliens. This aspect of arts, taken as a model for universal communication, is explored in another section of the exhibition - *Франк тили. Foreign Affairs*. Projects that built up this part of the exhibit reveal unobvious or sometimes just unnoticed expressions of power, hegemony and domination that run through languages, arts, media and situations that claim to be universal and comprehensive.

Special Events

The Desert of Forbidden Art

Screening of the film and Q&A with the authors, Amanda Pope and Tchavdar Georgiev

1st of June, 2011, 18:30

Venue:

Auditorium Santa Margherita, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Dorsoduro 3246 – 30123

Special event of the Central Asia Pavilion in 2011 is a presentation of the new documentary by LA based cinematographers Amanda Pope and Tchavdar Georgiev **The Desert of Forbidden Art** (2010). This event is a result of cooperation between Central Asia Pavilion, authors of the film and departments of Università Ca' Foscari Venezia - CSAR (Center for Russian Studies) and Ca Foscari Cinema. The *Desert of Forbidden Art* features Nukus Museum of Fine Arts in Karakalpak Republic of Uzbekistan, which is a unique collection of Russian and Central Asian avant-garde art, founded by outstanding enthusiast Igor Savitsky. He pretends to buy state-approved art but instead daringly rescues 40,000 forbidden fellow artist's works and creates a museum in the desert of Uzbekistan, far from the watchful eyes of the KGB. Though a penniless artist himself, he cajoles the cash to pay for the art from the same authorities who are banning it. Savitsky amasses an eclectic mix of Russian Avant-Garde art. But his greatest discovery is an unknown school of artists who settle in Central Asia after the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Ben Kingsley, Sally Field and Ed Asner voice the diaries and letters of Savitsky and the artists. Intercut with recollections of the artists' children and rare archival footage, the film takes us on a dramatic journey of sacrifice for the sake of creative freedom.

Discussion

4th of June, 2011, 14:00

Venue:

Central Asia Pavilion, Palazzo Malipiero, San Marco 3199 – 3201

The etymology of the term Lingua Franca derives from the name of the historical, mixed language, which developed through trade contacts between Europe, North Africa and Asia. Lingua Franca is an Italian translation of the Arabic expression 'Frankish language', because starting with the crusades the Arabs called all Europeans 'Franks'. Today this term defines languages of multiethnic communication, or in a broader sense – any semiotic system serving the function of multinational or multicultural communication. Contemporary art might also be considered as such a contact language, whose universal ambitions have been proven by multiple international forums.

Is the communicative potential of art universal? How does *local* transform into *global*? Does the language of art distinguish between native speakers and novice, teachers and learners? These and other aspects of 'art as a language of intercultural communication' are explored in the exhibition project of the Central Asia Pavilion and are brought for open discussion with international artists, curators and researchers in this special event.



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