Crisis of sensibility, empathy and contemporary art (Geneva, 2 Sep 23)

Geneva, Sep 02, 2023

Cerise Dumont

For its second edition, the Biennial of Art and Urban Nature (re)connecting.earth (02) - Beyond Water is organising a symposium about the relationships between contemporary art and environment in the context of a crisis of sensibility, the importance of empathy and the necessity to reconnecting with the earth.

Crisis of sensibility, empathy and contemporary art: reconnecting with the earth

This interdisciplinary symposium bringing together representatives from the arts and sciences offers a discursive platform to examine the futures that lie ahead as a result of climate change, and to explore the following questions: What role do emotions play in a process of action and transformation of our relationship with the world, or even "a crisis of sensitivity" predicted by Baptiste Morizot? How do practices such as eco-fiction, artivism, documentary or performance art manage to convey these other possible futures beyond the art world? Are these works confined to institutions and biennials, or do they also have a place in the art market? How do these artistic practices differ from other forms of debate? What artistic strategies are used? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what questions do these artwork raise?
The guest speakers will present their knowledge in 10-minute talks, giving an overview of their areas of research and modelisation and illustrating their points with examples. At a subsequent round table, the interfaces and questions will be discussed and exchanged with audience participation.

For many people, the effects of global warming are still a long way off. There is little discussion of the fact that the decisions we have made - or failed to make - over the last 40 years will have profound consequences for centuries to come. Since the 1960s, many artists have been questioning human interaction with nature. For specialists such as György Kepes, researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), art has a real social and ecological responsibility. Since creativity and sensitivity make artists particularly aware of the need for ecological balance and greater social action, do they have the power - and the duty - to act as social and environmental educators, particularly through interdisciplinary cooperation with scientists?

The context of the second reconnecting.earth biennial also provides an opportunity to reflect on more abstract questions, at a cognitive level that complements the very concrete questions posed by the first discussion panel. For example, what if we could stop CO2 emissions now? What if we could achieve climate neutrality (Net Zero) within a national framework?

On a larger scale, the (re)connecting.earth (02) - Beyond Water edition promises an immersive and sensitive experience for all those interested in art and the environment. By presenting works created by artists sensitive to environmental issues, this Biennial of Art and Urban Nature highlights the diversity of urban ecosystems and the richness of contemporary artistic production linked to the environment. It explores the potential of art to draw attention to the rest of the living world, and invites us to imagine, listen to and visualise it.
This year's Biennial will focus on the theme of water and biodiversity in Lake Geneva. Works of art created by 32 artists from Switzerland and abroad will be presented in the open air on the banks of Lake Geneva from September 1st to October 1st 2023.

Program
September 2nd - Pavillon Plantamour de La Libellule, 112 Rue de Lausanne, 1202 Genève

10.00 Welcome

10.30 - 11.30 : Crisis of sensibility, empathy and contemporary art: reconnecting with the earth [French]
With Roberta Colombo Dougoud (curator - Musée d'ethnographie de Genève), Lauranne Germond (curator and director of the COAL association) and Uriel Orlow (artist)
Moderation by PD Dr. Ursula Ströbele (Study Center for Modern and Contemporary Art, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich) and Bernard Vienat (artistic director - art-werk)

11:45 - 12:45 : The memory of Venice [English]
With Christina Hemauer & Roman Keller (artists), Sébastien Castelltort (professor - Geneva University) and Anne Chapuis (mediation manager - PROTECT)

14:00 - 19:00 : Visit of the biennial and meeting with various artists

19:30 : Performance
Philippe Constantin (artist)

20:00 - 21:30 : Lights in the night: making the invisible visible [French]
With Pascal Moeschler (biologist, hydrogeologist and head of the Swiss Coordination Centre for the Study and Protection of Bats), Eric Achkar (engineer, president of the Geneva Astronomical Society) and David Bärtschi (biologist and co-founder of the association La Libellule)
Moderation by Cerise Dumont (research associate for art-werk)

Artist List
Maria Thereza Alves Caroline Bachmann Flurina Badel & Jérémie Sarbach Mauren Brodbeck Seba Calfuqueo Luis & Gabo Camnitzer Gabo Camnitzer & Lluís Alexandre Casanovas Blanco Julian Charrière Collectif Tchan-Zâca Mark Dion Andreas Greiner & Takafumi Tsukamoto Valérie Favre Anne-Laure Franchette & Manon Briod Anne-Laure Franchette & Géraldine Honauer Marie Griesmar Hans Haacke Christina Hemauer & Roman Keller Monica Ursina Jäger Alexandre Joly Diana Lelonek Diana Lelonek & Denim Szram Antje Majewski Adrien Missika Lucie Morat Ma Neveu Uriel Orlow Carmen Perrin Som Supaparinya Raul Walch Pinar Yoldas Zheng Bo Curated by Bernard Viena

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