THEA
TRVM
ORBIS
MMXVII

la Biennale di Venezia

57. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

PAVILION OF RUSSIA
AT THE 57ᵗʰ INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION – LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

THEATRUM ORBIS

COMMISSIONED AND CURATED BY SEMYON MIKHAILOVSKY

13 MAY TO 26 NOVEMBER 2017
OFFICIAL INAUGURATION CEREMONY 3PM, 10 MAY

Theatrum Orbis, a new exhibition conceived and created for the Russian Pavilion at the 57ᵗʰ Venice Biennale, features artists Grisha Bruskin, Recycle Group and Sasha Pirogova alongside contemporary Russian composers.

The exhibition title – translated as 'Theatre of the World' - takes its name from Abraham Ortelius' atlas published in Antwerp in 1570. Marking an epoch in the history of cartography, it was the first modern atlas to unite knowledge and experience across science and culture accumulated during the Age of Discovery.

Theatrical in its concept and form, the exhibition includes sculpture, installation, video and sound across three emotively connected parts. Visitors follow a narrative throughout the pavilion, first encountering Bruskin's installation of figurative white sculptures; then, on descending the stairs and passing through a labyrinth, further rooms contain works by Recycle Group and Pirogova. While Bruskin represents a long-established generation of Russian artists, Recycle Group and Pirogova come from a new post-digital era engaged with technology.

Music and sound plays a very important role in the exhibition, with specially written scores by Dimitri Kourdlianski, Peter Aidu and Konstantin Dudakov-Kashuro. For the first time sound is not constrained by the walls of the pavilion, but is taken out into the Giardini, establishing a dialogue with the viewer through Dmitri Kourliandski's sound performance "Commedia delle arti".

Part 1: Scene Change
Artist: Grisha Bruskin
Co-Curators: Giuseppe Barbieri, Silvia Burini

Grisha Bruskin's installation *Scene Change*, is as implacably regulated as the wheels of a universal clockwork, where two reciprocally remote historical times, Antiquity and Modernity, meet and clash in a series of eloquent images according to the ancient rules of the "art of memory". This uncanny landscape, marked by tens and tens of figures, represents the contradictory nature of power, incarnated by a mechanised hybrid: the two-headed bird. Dolls, dummies, hybrids and androids give shape to the threat of international terrorism, while soldiers with binoculars, drones and archaic idols equipped with antennae and radars pursue the idea of a "transparent" world where they can monitor and spy on human masses. From the ancient "art of memory" – a millenary process of

organisation of different languages, Bruskin took up the ambition to create a Magnum Opus, to melt our contemporary age in the crucible of a timeless alchemist.

Part 2: Blocked Content
Artists: Recycle Group
Co-Curator: Ekaterina Shcherbakova

In Blocked Content, Recycle Group create an absurdist image of artificial intelligence as an authority on ethical standards to play with the phenomenon of virtual reality and social media. In an exploration of immortality in contemporary society, 'saints' of the web are granted eternal life and 'sinners' – including spammers, virus retailers and fake-celebrities – are punished. An epiphany about life and death in the virtual realm, the installation takes inspiration from Dante's 9th Circle of Hell. Featuring scenes of Hell, the installation shows profiles frozen in a vacuum, without likes and reposts and unable to return to life, only fully visible through a virtual reality app that will be downloaded to visitors' mobile devices.

Part 3: Garden
Artist: Sasha Pirogova

Video artist Pirogova focuses on motion and its capacities by exploring the territory between theatre, ritual, performance and dance to transform rational movements into metaphors. Garden is a performative video telling a story of eternal life, death and immortality expressed through notions of darkness and light. Darkness is not meant as a horrifying matter, but as a lack of light, which in turn means it has the potential to be enlightened and the human being is a source of light.

Sound Pavilion: Commedia delle arti
Composer: Dmitri Kourliandski

Commedia delle arti is a new work from contemporary composer Kourliandski consisting of an interactive and performative sound installation. From the façade of the building plays Commedia dell'ascolto recorded by leading Russian musicians. At the entrance to the Pavilion, visitors can pick-up 'score-instructions' that can be followed to create a dialogue between the artist, visitor and outside world.

About the Russian Pavilion

The Russian Pavilion in the Giardini in Venice was designed by Alexei Shchusev and ceremonially opened by Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna of Russia in 1914. Russian artists have been participating in the Biennale from the first Venice Exhibition of 1895 and since, over 800 Russian artists have participated from leading names like Repin, Malevich and Kabakov to emerging artists. Semyon Mikhailovsky was appointed Commissioner of the Russian Pavilion at the art and architecture Venice Biennales in 2016 and will hold the post until 2021. The Russian Pavilion is supported by the Ministry of Culture of Russia and ROSIZO. The core funding for the project comes from private sponsorship.

www.ruspavilion.com
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#TheatrumOrbis #RussianPavilion2017 #GrishaBruskin #RecycleGroup #SashaPirogovaArt

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