

Helmhaus Zürich

18 May to 17 June 2018

refaire le monde * EX-POSITION * Gianni Motti

refaire le monde: Helmhaus Zürich undertakes to refashion the world in a trilogy of exhibitions. That means treading a stony path between the exhibitions *POSITION* and *PROPOSITION*, as well as overcoming a painful barrier: *refaire le monde * EX-POSITION* brings the public space into the hallowed halls of the museum, as boundless as it is confined, creating an unforgettable social experience for visitors.

The first exhibition in the *refaire le monde* trilogy was *POSITION* (9 March to 6 May); a veritable rollercoaster of political and aesthetic art, in which we found ourselves stumbling blindly through the global history of our own contemporaneity. How far and yet how near, for instance, is Africa. No matter how openly and candidly the horrors of the Central African Republic may have been portrayed in Heidi Specogna's film *Cahier Africain*, the land itself, one of the poorest in the world, remained distant. Until, that is, we found ourselves on a tram in wealthy Zurich, sitting right next to somebody who had escaped those very same horrors. Raphael Perret's project involving the people housed in the Hall 9 refugee transit accommodation in Zurich-Oerlikon gives those people a voice. And so the local and the global become inextricably entwined. Like art and politics. All art is political – even the supposedly apolitical. The same goes for the cultural genres of music, film and fine arts, as showcased in *refaire le monde * POSITION*. Following on from this, the sequel *refaire le monde * PROPOSITION* (opening 20 September 2018) presents a whole new raft of ideas.

Between the two, like a hinge – hard and metallic – lies the exhibition *refaire le monde * EX-POSITION*, by an artist well known for his political and performative concepts. Gianni Motti (*1958) grew up in Italy and has made Geneva his home. His exhibitions are events that project provocative images into our world, in ways we can neither anticipate nor pre-empt. They thrive on the element of surprise and have a lasting resonance. The works presented by Motti at Helmhaus follow in the tradition of radical artistic positions that address and question the very notion of exhibitions and the venues that host them. During the Iraq War, Daniele Buetti transformed the Helmhaus into a veritable scene of catastrophe. Asia Andzejka Naveen invited a group of eleven people to live for weeks in the Helmhaus. And Santiago Sierra barricaded the institution – during the Manifesta.Biennial, no less.

Gianni Motti's concepts for Helmhaus, and for the city of Zurich as a whole, are very much in the tradition of the kind of hard-hitting and accessible experiences of social critique that have

made their mark on the history of art and exhibitions. Together with Christoph Büchel, he once pushed the Helmhaus – and the entire political establishment of Zurich – to its limits, with the 2002 exhibition *Capital Affair*. For this, the two artists concealed a cheque in the amount of 50,000 Swiss francs, equivalent to the entire exhibition budget, somewhere in the empty rooms of the Helmhaus. That cheque is still hidden although the exhibition was called off at the time. Now, Motti returns to the Helmhaus, 50 years after the 1968 revolts, with works that bring the street right into the building and confront us up close and personal with the boundaries that exist.

Events (for dates and details, see enclosed invitation card)

The programme of events accompanying the exhibition includes some of today's leading intellectuals. On 16 May 2018, just one day before the opening, two outstanding scholars and activists will meet in an installation by the artist. Italian **Silvia Federici**, professor of political philosophy and author of the influential feminist treatise *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*, will be talking to feminist economist **Mascha Madörin** about systematic exclusion and historically systemic discrimination, issues that can still divide two left-wing feminists even today. On 30 May 2018, **Paul Rechsteiner**, member of the Swiss National Council and president of the Trade Union Federation, will join our regular 5-o'clock thesis forum to give his outspoken views on social inequality. Then, on 14 June 2018, the recently published book *Freiheitsentzug in der Schweiz – Formen, Effizienz, Bedeutung* (Imprisonment in Switzerland: Forms, Efficiency, Significance) will be presented, with its author **Daniel Fink** talking to experts about statistical and ethical inconsistencies in the Swiss prison system.

On 7 June 2018, as part of the Helmhaus series *Willkommen in der Problemzone!* (Welcome to the Problem Zone!), exhibitions will be the focus of discussion with artists **Gianni Motti**, **Asia Andrzejka Naveen** and **Daniele Buetti**, all of whom have constructively challenged the institution, the audience and even the curators. And on 22 May 2018, boundary-breaking violinist **Tobias Preisig** will give a concert responding to the boundary-breaking installation by Gianni Motti.

die grosse um_ordnung

Reshaping, refashioning, reordering the world – *refaire le monde* – is the challenge that artists Sabian Baumann, Rahel El-Maawi, Tim Zulauf and Diana Bärnmann have tackled in their project *die grosse um_ordnung*: a political art event, held in May on Zurich's Helvetiaplatz and in the Theaterhaus Gessnerallee, countering sexism, racism, discrimination against the disabled ... with the collective demanding privileges for all, rather than for the few. In September, they will pursue *die grosse um_ordnung* (the grand re_ordering) in the group exhibition *refaire le monde* * *PROPOSITION* at Helmhaus Zürich.