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PRESS KIT

ATELIER LUXEMBOURG
THE VENICE BIENNALE PROJECTS 1988 - 2011
13/10/2012 - 24/02/2013

ATELIER LUXEMBOURG THE VENICE BIENNALE PROJECTS 1988 - 2011 PRESS KIT

INDEX

PRESS RELEASE	03
1988: PATRICIA LIPPERT, MORITZ NEY	04
1990: MARIE-PAULE FEIEREISEN	05
1993: JEAN-MARIE BIWER, BERTRAND NEY	06
1995: BERT THEIS	07
1997: LUC WOLFF	08
1999: SIMONE DECKER	09
2001: DORIS DRESCHER	10
2003: SU-MEI TSE	11
2005: ANTOINE PRUM	12
2007: JILL MERCEDES	13
2009: GAST BOUSCHET & NADINE HILBERT	14
2011: MARTINE FEIPEL & JEAN BECHAMEIL	15
THE VENICE BIENNALE - HISTORICAL OUTLINE	16
THE NATIONAL PAVILIONS	17
THE LUXEMBOURG EXHIBITION PAVILION: THE CA' DEL DUCA	18
ADDRESS AND INFORMATION	19
THE PARTNER'S MESSAGE: BANQUE BSI LUXEMBOURG SA	20

Press release

Under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness The Grand Duchess

ATELIER LUXEMBOURG

THE VENICE BIENNALE PROJECTS 1988 - 2011

Exhibition from Oktober 13, 2012 to February 24, 2013

Curator Enrico Lunghi

Artists Jean-Marie Biver, Gast Bouschet & Nadine Hilbert, Simone Decker, Doris Drescher, Marie-Paule Feiereisen, Martine Feipel & Jean Bechameil, Patricia Lippert, Jill Mercedes, Bertrand Ney, Moritz Ney, Antoine Prum, Bert Theis, Su-Mei Tse, Luc Wolff

Since 1988 Luxembourg has regularly participated in one of the most important international contemporary art events: the Venice Biennale, one of the characteristics of which is the hosting of national pavilions, inherited from the model of nineteenth century International Exhibitions. The history of Luxembourg's participation in the Venice Biennale reads like a veritable success story. The first participations only offered Luxembourg's artists limited exhibition conditions: confined to the Padiglione Italia, which at the time hosted countries without pavilions. Then, in 1995, what appeared to be an inextricable situation – the eviction of countries without pavilions from the Giardini, the main site for the Biennale – turned to Luxembourg's advantage. Finally, in 2003, to everyone's surprise, the Luxembourg pavilion, installed since 1999 in a fifteenth century building known as the Ca' del Duca, was awarded the Golden Lion for best national participation.

The exhibition *Atelier Luxembourg – The Venice Biennale Projects 1988 - 2011* retraces the exceptional development of the presence of a small country in this international contemporary art event. As far as possible, it reconstructs the artistic projects as they were displayed in Venice, with the original artworks and the necessary adaptations for their exhibition in a museum context. Presented are the projects by Patricia Lippert and Moritz Ney (1988), Marie-Paule Feiereisen (1990), Jean-Marie Biver and Bertrand Ney (1993), the pavilion *Potemkin Lock* by Bert Theis (1995), a reinterpretation of the installation *Magazzino* by Luke Wolff (1997), *Chewing and Folding in Venice* by Simone Decker (1999), the installation *Casa Mia* by Doris Drescher (2001), the exhibition *Air Conditioned* by Su-Mei Tse (2003), *Mondo Veneziano* a movie by Antoine Prum (2005), the video installation *Collision Zone* by Nadine Hilbert and Gast Bouschet (2009) and the installation *Le Cercle fermé* by Martine Feipel and Jean Bechameil (2011). Because it was intimately linked to the space of the Ca' del Duca itself, the project *Endless Lust* by Jill Mercedes (2007) is only presented in the exhibition in the form of documentation.

The various presentations are accompanied by archive documents and filmed interviews specially produced for the occasion, in which the artists cast a retrospective gaze on their Venetian experience. The considerable development of Luxembourg's art scene over the last 25 years is indirectly reflected through the Biennales.

This exhibition is part of the framework of *Atelier Luxembourg*, an initiative including several exhibitions and projects focussed on artistic creativity in Luxembourg since 1945, developed in partnership with Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain, the Centre national de l'audiovisuel (Dudelange), the Musée d'histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, the Musée national d'histoire et d'art and Villa Vauban – Musée d'art de la Ville de Luxembourg.

Luxembourg's 1956 participation in the Venice Biennale is currently on display at the Musée national d'histoire et d'art in Luxembourg (21/09/2012 - 20/01/2013).

1988

**PATRICIA LIPPERT
MORITZ NEY**

Location: Giardini di Castello, Padiglione Italia

After a one-off appearance in 1956, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg returns to Venice in 1988 on the initiative of artist Patricia Lippert, who convinces the then Minister of Cultural Affairs, Robert Krieps, of the importance of its presence for the country's art scene.

Confirmation from the Biennale arrives very late and things happen fast: Lucien Kayser is invited to write the text for the catalogue, Moritz Ney is to exhibit with Patricia Lippert, and the honorary consul of Luxembourg in Venice, Bartolomeo Bellati, takes care of negotiations with the Biennale organisers.

Without a dedicated exhibition space, Luxembourg finds itself confined to a wing of the Padiglione Italia, alongside other countries without pavilions such as Cyprus, South Korea, Cuba, Iraq and San Marino.

The exhibited artworks reflect the dominant artistic trends in Luxembourg at the time, which include the figurative expressionism of the German *Neuen Wilden* and the influence of the School of Paris. Patricia Lippert mixes gestural abstraction with expressive figuration in her paintings, evoking a personal mythology in sombre colours, while Moritz Ney sculpts heads in wood cut with an axe and painted in bright colours, and also makes paintings in gouache containing emotive imagery.

The works by Moritz Ney presented at the Venice Biennale in 1988 couldn't be relocated to this day. We are presenting here a similar hanging of works created by the artist during the same period.



On the left: **Moritz Ney**, *Mère créatrice*, 1986, collage and gouache on paper, 104 x 92 cm
Nico Molitor Collection, Luxembourg, © photo: Moritz Ney



On the right: **Patricia Lippert**, *Balanceakt*, 1987, Acrylic and pigments on paper mounted on canvas, 123 x 248 cm
Courtesy the artist, © photo: Patricia Lippert

1990

MARIE-PAULE FEIEREISEN

Curator: Guy Wagner

Location: Giardini di Castello, Padiglione Italia

Aware of the compactness of the spaces in the wings of the Padiglione Italia and the lack of visibility of this part of the Biennale, artist Marie-Paule Feiereisen and curator Guy Wagner seek to rent a room in extremis in a well-appointed Venetian palace, with the support of the Ministry of Culture, the consul in Venice and the gallery owner Martine Schneider-Speller. But then the idea is abandoned, and it is therefore necessary to return to the site provided by the Biennale.

Marie-Paule Feiereisen produces a series of paintings especially for the occasion. A large polyptych and two diptychs are the embodiment of several years of research into shape, colour, transparency of pictorial materials and gesture, in a style that synthesises an informal approach with an abstract composition. However, because the space allocated to her is insufficiently high, she is obliged to present the work obliquely and on the ceiling, which does not correspond to her initial intention.

For the first time, Luxembourg is present at this international event and is represented by one artist. This means selection without compromise while also enabling the artist to use the entire space available to her. The dream of a regular entry from Luxembourg at the Biennale begins ...

The work *Diptyque I : Contre sens... de bas en haut et de haut en bas (1989-1990)*, presented at the Venice Biennale, could not be found for the exhibition.



Marie-Paule Feiereisen, *Polyptyque (8) : Non Sens*, 1989 - 1990 [detail], acryl on canvas, 130 x 162 cm
Michael Stahlschmidt Collection, Cologne, © photo: Marie-Paule Feiereisen

1993

JEAN-MARIE BIWER
BERTRAND NEY

Curator: Lucien Kayser

Location: Giardini di Castello, Padiglione Italia

Once again, two artists represent Luxembourg at the Biennale. As in previous years, Luxembourg's entry is in a wing of the Padiglione Italia, which remains overlooked by many art world professionals and most visitors. Making the best of a bad lot, the two artists choose to present only small format artworks so as not to find themselves in an awkward situation given the small space allocated to them.

As a result, Jean-Marie Biwer produces three series of paintings in which intimate scenes and still-lives are seen as if through small television screens, subverting the spectacular nature of many artworks exhibited at the Biennale. In Bertrand Ney's sculptures insensual and evocative forms, he experiments with the process of transformation of materials by renouncing traditional tools, replacing them with the process of acid on stone. With one artist opting for realist figuration, and the other, for a form in a state of becoming, the two artists contradict the dominant aesthetic in Luxembourg at the time.

Despite Luxembourg, as a small country, having the benefit of now regularly participating in this important international event, it must be admitted that the first three entries have generated little interest beyond our national border.

As one of the three *Bum-Chi-Bum* series by Jean-Marie Biwer is presently incomplete, the artist presents here an installation composed by recent paintings echoing this series.



On the left: **Jean-Marie Biwer**, *Bum-Chi-Bum*, 1993, mixed media on paper, 29,5 x 36,5 cm
Privat Collection, Luxembourg and courtesy the artist, © photo: Jochen Herling



On the right: **Bertrand Ney**, *Facteur X*, 1993, limestone, 24 x 20 x 18 cm
Courtesy the artist, © photo: Ernest Wennig

1995 BERT THEIS POTEMKIN LOCK

Curator: Enrico Lunghi
Location: Giardini di Castello

This year, the chief curator, art historian Jean Clair, decides to use the entire Padiglione Italia for his exhibition: the countries without a pavilion in the Giardini are therefore obliged to rent expensive spaces scattered around the city of Venice.

Without sufficient funds to rent such a space, Luxembourg's participation seems compromised, but Bert Theis finds an alternative: he proposes to produce, in a corner of scrubland between the Belgian and Dutch pavilions, an artwork somewhere between a practicable sculpture and a temporary pavilion. Playing on several levels of interpretation, *Potemkin Lock* transports the spectator in the Giardini of the Biennale towards an interior garden where they become, at the same time, an artistic element for the other viewers. The journey into this space is made to rap music composed of words extracted from an interview with Marcel Duchamp and put to music by Ralph Rippinger.

The wealth of correspondence with the Biennale, the local administration of Venice and the Belgian and Dutch ministries, is indicative of the audacity of the project: in the end, no-one authorises it, but no-one formally forbids it either.

Thus in 1995, Luxembourg is the only country without a permanent national pavilion present in the Giardini, giving it an unprecedented visibility, while the originality of Bert Theis' proposal opens the door to an international career.



Bert Theis, *Potemkin Lock*, 1995, installation, 400 x 1250 x 990 cm, courtesy the artist, © photo: Wolfgang Träger

1997

LUC WOLFF MAGAZZINO

Curator: Lucien Kayser

Location: Magazzino delle Zitelle, Giudecca

Still lacking a permanent space in which to exhibit, Luxembourg rents a former depot on the Giudecca for Luc Wolff's installation. Although the site is spacious and enables the development of an ambitious project, it is very far from the main crowd of visitors to the Biennale.

Luc Wolff nevertheless uses the characteristics of the location, amplifying them by transforming the space into a kind of depot for materials and plants that he activates during the six-month duration of the Biennale, which he spends on site. The shelves, wooden planks and plants are all potential elements for producing an artwork in a space left empty in the depths of the former depot. But each viewer only formulates the work in his or her imagination after having met the artist.

In 1997, Luxembourg is no longer a white dot on the international art map: the creation of the Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain in 1996 and the preparations for the 1998 Manifesta 2 inspire several journalists and art world professionals to go and visit *Magazzino*.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Culture and the Public Buildings Administration begin negotiations to transform the ground floor of a Venetian house (the Ca' del Duca, owned by the family of a former ambassador for Luxembourg) into a permanent exhibition space.

The installation *Exposure* (2012) is an adaptation, in the Mudam context, of the project *Magazzino* (1997).



Luc Wolff, *Magazzino*, 1997, installation, variable dimensions, © photo: Wolfgang Träger

1999

SIMONE DECKER
CHEWING AND FOLDING IN VENICE

Curator: Enrico Lunghi
Location: Ca' del Duca

Located on the Grand Canal, in a picturesque courtyard between the Campo San Stefano and the Palazzo Grassi, the Ca' del Duca from now on serves as the Luxembourg pavilion for the Biennale of visual arts (and architecture from 2004).

At this venue, as yet unknown, Simone Decker develops two projects playing on notions of space and representation. The *Folding Projects* are foldable and portable prototype spaces, the reflective surfaces of which multiply the internal volume to infinity, while the *Chewing Projects* display chewing gum sculptures photographed, in trompe-l'œil, at various points around the city in such a way as to invade the whole of the Serenissima. The artist humorously and ironically comments on the constant and compulsive search for exhibition spaces, but also questions the limits and materiality of contemporary sculpture: her foldable spaces are small infinite sculptures and with her chewing gum, she produces virtually the largest possible exhibition in public space.

The success of the photographs is immediate: the images by Simone Decker are used in numerous articles about the Biennale and even illustrate the cover of a CD distributed by the French magazine *Les Inrockuptibles*. The Luxembourg pavilion thus rapidly becomes an exhibition space of repute to be discovered by all visitors to the Biennale.



Simone Decker, *Chewing gum Forno*, 1999, photography, Mudam Luxembourg Collection, © photo: Simone Decker

2001 DORIS DRESCHER CASA MIA

Commissioner: Marie-Claude Beaud

Curator: Björn Dahlström

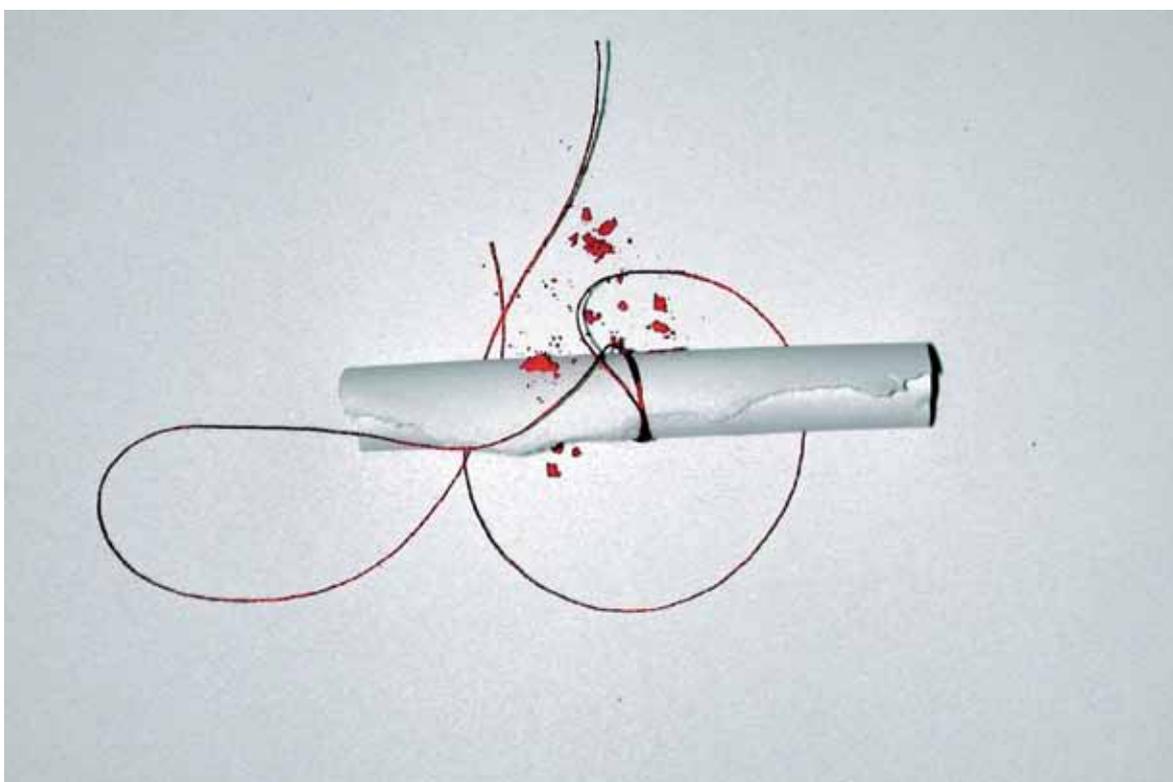
Location: Ca' del Duca

Organiser: Mudam Luxembourg

In 2001, it is Doris Drescher's turn to exhibit in the Ca' del Duca. For the first time, the Ministry of Culture assigns the administration of the exhibition to a cultural institution, Mudam, then in its planning phase. In fact, up to this point, the artists and curators did not have a trained team to ensure the correct functioning and supervision of operations. Thanks to the structural support of Mudam, the organisation and mediatisation of Luxembourg's entry becomes professionalised in line with the importance of this international event.

Doris Drescher's project is titled *Casa Mia*. Through her intimate, precise and sensitive work, the artist transforms the site into a poetic metaphor for a domestic space. The exhibition rooms become her dining room, her lounge, her bathroom, her kitchen. The viewer discovers an interior world peopled with drawings, short statements written on the walls, objects, installations and films. The whole reveals a delicate sensibility engaged with the outside world.

The professional world and the international press closely follow the project. With the Casino Luxembourg, Mudam and the Luxembourg pavilion in Venice, from now on Luxembourg actively participates in artistic developments in Europe.



Doris Drescher, *Casa Mia*, 2001, installation, mixed media, video, furniture, wooden boat.
Mudam Luxembourg Commission and Collection, © photo: Doris Drescher

2003

SU-MEI TSE
AIR CONDITIONED

Commissioner: Marie-Claude Beaud
Curator: Björn Dahlström
Location: Ca' del Duca
Organiser: Mudam Luxembourg

Once again, it is a young artist as yet unknown to the general public who is chosen to represent the Grand Duchy in Venice. Su-Mei Tse presents two films, an anechoic chamber, sculptures and a neon. The exhibition is titled *Air Conditioned*. In the June of the heat wave that beat all record temperatures, this title is especially apt ... The exhibition is very appropriate and very refreshing: the artist creates a dense and poetic visual journey and plunges the Luxembourg pavilion into an atmosphere in which music, sounds and silence interact in a singular way and where time seems to flow to a different rhythm.

Thanks to this work, Luxembourg is awarded the Golden Lion for best national participation, the most prestigious award at the Biennale. The surprise is all the greater given that only 'great nations' had been awarded it previously and it is the first time (and the only time to date) that the prize has been awarded to a pavilion located outside the Giardini.

The progress made since the 1988 entry is enormous. This reflects the evolution of Luxembourg society during the same period: the opening up to Europe and the development of a world-class financial centre coincide with the need for Luxembourg artists to no longer measure themselves in purely local terms.

Su-Mei Tse has since exhibited in many of the most prestigious museums worldwide.

The works presented at the Venice Biennale in 2003 are complemented here by a more recent work: *Wood Songs*, 2011.



Su-Mei Tse, *Pénélope, le retour*, 2003, installation, mixed media
Commission Mudam Luxembourg, Courtesy the artist and Peter Blum Gallery, © photo: Su-Mei Tse

2005

ANTOINE PRUM

MONDO VENEZIANO. HIGH NOON IN THE SINKING CITY

Curator: Boris Kremer

Location: Ca' del Duca, Cinema Giorgione Movie

Organiser: Maciste film, Casino Luxembourg

Antoine Prum innovates by basing his project on the production of a medium-length film, *Mondo Veneziano. High Noon in the Sinking City*. The film takes an abandoned Venice as a backdrop and presents itself as a satire of the contemporary art world by staging an encounter between four stereotypical protagonists: a convivial artist, a theorist, a painter, and a curator. A dialogue of the deaf occurs between these four characters, composed uniquely of citations mostly borrowed from influential texts on contemporary art and punctuated with scenes of bloody murders explicitly making reference to the gore cinematic genre. It is not far removed from the aesthetic of a filmmaker like Quentin Tarantino. For the artist, the confrontation between these two worlds ironically reflects 'the gap between artistic theory and practice'.

Everything in *Mondo Veneziano* smacks of artificiality including the characters, who seem to merely be caricatures of their own role and Venice itself, suggesting that the fiction and the reality of the city are confused. The film was in fact entirely shot in the south of Luxembourg on a film set built in 2001, to be demolished in 2005. It is therefore a 'Venice in Luxembourg' that Antoine Prum craftily presents.

Following its presentation in Venice, *Mondo Veneziano* has been shown in numerous exhibitions and film festivals.



Antoine Prum, *Mondo Veneziano. High Noon in the Sinking City*, 2005, 35 mm film transferred to HD video, length: 33'
Mudam Luxembourg Collection, © photogram: Antoine Prum, Maciste film

2007 JILL MERCEDES ENDLESS LUST

Commissioner: Enrico Lunghi
Curator: Kevin Muhlen
Organiser: Casino Luxembourg
Location: Ca' del Duca

For her project *Endless Lust*, Jill Mercedes entirely transforms the interior of the Ca' del Duca (ceilings, walls, floors and even the most modest fittings including visible switches and electric cables) and installs carefully chosen furniture in order to conjure another place made of desires and sensuality. Her project also includes a soundtrack of music and sounds created by Gast Waltzing from catalogues used by the film industry.

The artist uses the pavilion as a base for work and for meeting the public during the entire duration of the Biennale: in clement weather conditions, the courtyard is like a lounge equipped with Wi-Fi (rare in Venice at the time) and is a good place to hang out.

Conceived and produced specifically for the Ca' del Duca in Venice and entirely based on the unique experience of the visitor, the installation *Endless Lust* is not reproducible: only a few texts and documents remain from this time.



Jill Mercedes, *Endless Lust*, 2007, in situ installation, mixed media, © photo: Christian Mosar

2009

GAST BOUSCHET & NADINE HILBERT COLLISION ZONE

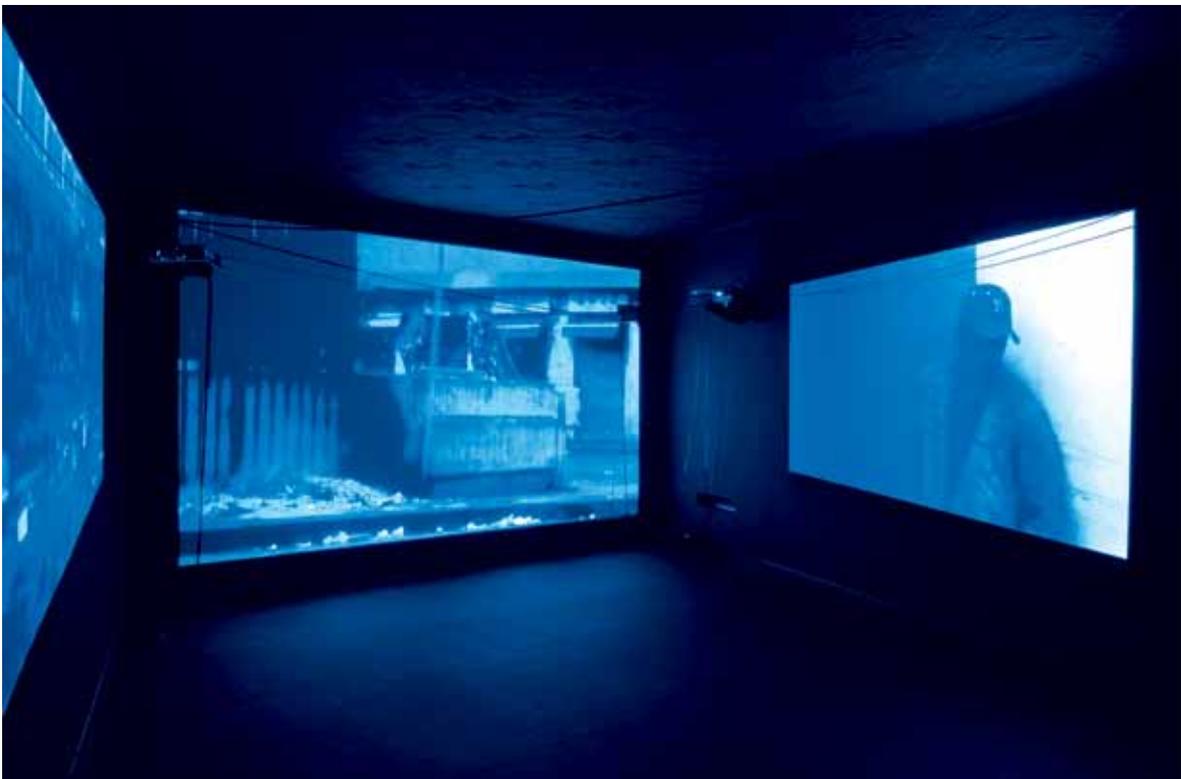
Curator: Christian Mosar

Location: Ca' del Duca

Organiser: Casino Luxembourg

Emerging from a collaboration developed in the mid 1990s onwards, Gast Bouschet and Nadine Hilbert's photographs and video installations concern geographical zones where physical realities, social preoccupations and political issues are combined in a particularly poignant way. Their works are marked by dense, immersive and sensitive environments, which favour the evocative power of image and sound over the articulation of discourse.

The installation *Collision Zone* originates from a reflection on the conflictual relationship between the African and European continents. As the title of the work (borrowed from the vocabulary of geology and plate tectonics) suggests, the Mediterranean space is approached as a zone where a certain number of tensions and contradictions are embodied, as a zone of collision, 'in geographical areas where the two worlds – a rapidly changing Africa versus an increasingly paranoid "Fortress Europe" – face each other.' Presented throughout the Ca' del Duca, ten projections integrate with the architecture of the site. The installation combines video sequences shot on the 'borders' of this region, in inhabited landscapes, with sound elements produced by the Belgian duo – musicians Y.E.R.M.O.. It plunges the viewer into an immersive universe, which is both visual and sonorous.



Gast Bouschet & Nadine Hilbert, *Collision Zone*, 2009, Videoprojection and sound installation, sound design in collaboration with Y.E.R.M.O.
Courtesy the artists, © photo: Christian Mosar

2011

MARTINE FEIPEL & JEAN BECHAMEIL LE CERCLE FERMÉ

Curator: René Kockelkorn

Location: Ca' del Duca

Organiser: Casino Luxembourg

The installations of Martine Feipel and Jean Bechameil, who have worked together since 2008, are always formulated in reaction to the places in which they are embedded, and question our perception of space. They deal with the heart of controlled spaces of the contemporary world of openings where illusion, imagination, instability and the illogical are combined.

Le Cercle fermé thus takes as its starting point the architecture of the Ca' del Duca, a building dating from the fifteenth century which is composed of a series of rooms without any true right angles because of its age. Martine Feipel and Jean Bechameil's work is installed close to the Grand Canal and also responds to the context of Venice, which in many ways is an unreal and atemporal city. During the exhibition run, the artists also completely transform the Ca' del Duca into a succession of illusionistic paintings, oscillating between the real and the unreal and playing on loss of bearings: straight becomes curved, the floor becomes confused with the ceiling and orientation is disturbed. The installation contains inert and deformed objects and appears frozen in time. It opens up a potential space at the heart of the existing space. The title of the installation translates the experience of the viewer on various levels: disoriented, like in a closed labyrinth, you also find yourself at the heart of the installation where you can project your own narrative.



Martine Feipel & Jean Bechameil, *Le Cercle fermé*, 2011, installation
Courtesy the artist and Mudam Luxembourg Collection, © photo: Joseph Tomassini

THE VENICE BIENNALE – HISTORICAL OUTLINE

After a long period of decline, Venice saw deliberate efforts in the late nineteenth century to promote the city's development. While industry and port were moved to the mainland, the city proper was prepared specifically for tourism. In 1895, the *Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte della Città di Venezia* took place for the first time in the Palazzo dell'Esposizione, which had been built specially in the Giardini di Castello situated in the eastern part of the city. This exhibition, which from the outset was intended to vie with the major art exhibitions and the then very popular International Exhibitions, was planned to take place every two years. From 1907, it was organised around a constantly growing number of national pavilions that were gradually set up, also in the Giardini.

From the start, the Biennale featured not only representatives of the academic style of art, but also artists from avant-garde movements. After an interruption caused by the war, and the seizure of power by the fascists, the exhibition was renamed *La Biennale di Venezia* in 1930 and extended to include the festivals of film, theatre, music and dance. Up to the time when it was again interrupted in 1942, the Biennale was misused for propaganda purposes by the European dictators.

After the war, the Biennale devoted itself in 1948 to an art-historical review of the avant-garde movements: there was a retrospective of works by Pablo Picasso, and Peggy Guggenheim showed her famous collection of modern art. The Biennale's particular predilection for the European avant-garde continued up into the late 1950s, for example, with retrospectives of Henri Matisse and Max Ernst or of artistic movements such as Der Blaue Reiter, Futurism and Pointillism. The award of the Grand Prize to the American Robert Rauschenberg in 1964 marked a turning point; the shift of the international artistic focus to New York began to make itself felt.

After student protests disrupted the 1968 Biennale, a new phase of theme-based exhibitions began in which the latest artistic productions were shown. For example, in 1976 German Celant showed works of Arte Povera, while in 1980 Harald Szeemann and Achille Bonito Oliva exhibited 45 young artists of the so-called Transavantgarde and post-modern movement. The *1. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura* was also devoted to post-modernity; this exhibition has since taken place in alternation with the art exhibition.

For the 1999 Biennale, the historical military facilities of the Arsenale were added to the Giardini as an exhibition area. This Biennale and that of 2001, both again curated by Harald Szeemann, opened themselves up to the art of the globalised world. Under the title *Plateau of Humankind*, artists from countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia were also featured, many of them still unknown. The 2001 Biennale set a new record with 63 participating nations.

In 2011, contributions from 89 nations were gathered at the Biennale around the central exhibition with the title *ILLUMInations*. It was complemented by numerous collateral events throughout the city. This Biennale was visited in total by more than 440 000 people.

THE NATIONAL PAVILIONS

From 1907 onwards, the Venice Biennale hosted national pavilions, built in the Giardini near the Padiglione Pro Arte (renamed Padiglione Italia in 1932 and then Padiglione Centrale in 2009), where the main exhibition takes place. Directly inspired by the example of the Rue de Nations celebrated at the 1900 International Exhibition in Paris, they were less a manifestation of new-born nationalism than an opportunity for friendly rivalry between nations in the pre-First World War world, against the backdrop of a fragile peace. These national pavilions also enabled the chosen artists to attract the attention of an international public in a more targeted way.

Seven pavilions were inaugurated before the onslaught of World War One: the first was built by Belgium in 1907, followed by the British, Hungarian and German pavilions in 1909, the French and Swedish pavilions in 1912, and the Russian pavilion in 1914. Today 29 countries own a pavilion in the Giardini, the most recent having been inaugurated by South Korea in 1995. Since that year, the countries without pavilions, which were formerly gathered together in the Padiglione Italia, have been invited to occupy space elsewhere in the city.

The principle of national representation, which for a while served as a model for the other visual art biennales created from the 1950s onwards, today only exists in Venice. It is considered as anachronistic by some, but nevertheless does not cease to be a big success. The latest editions of the Venice Biennale have also seen the emergence of initiatives diverging from the strict model of national representation, with some pavilions (such as the Central Asia pavilion, for example) bringing together several countries or hosting artists of other nationalities, as when the Polish pavilion presented work by the Israeli artist Yael Bartana in 2011.



Padiglione Italia, Giardini di Castello, 1999
Front: Michel Majerus, *Complexity/Inhale Exhale*, 1999. © photo: Wolfgang Träger

THE LUXEMBOURG EXHIBITION PAVILION: THE CA' DEL DUCA

Luxembourg's pavilion at the Venice Biennale is a historical building with a complex architectural history. The building, situated directly on the Grand Canal, was begun in 1457 by the sculptor and architect Bartolomeo Bon for the brothers Andrea and Marco Cornaro, one of Venice's oldest and most reputable families, whose ambitious project would have matched the dimensions of the Doge's Palace. After Andrea Cornaro was driven from Venice, the site was passed on in 1461 to Francesco Sforza, the Duke of Milan, who commissioned his own architect, Filarete, to build him a residence befitting his rank in the Serenissima. Financial difficulties and the death of the duke put an end to the project, which progressed no further than the foundations and the first storey of one of the two originally planned façade towers in bugnato (embossing). It was in the rooms of the residential buildings subsequently built on the block that Titian was said to have done his large paintings intended for the Doge's Palace.

The Ca' del Duca was purchased around 1960 by Hugues Le Gallais, the former Luxembourg ambassador to the USA and the United Nations, who chose the native city of his Venetian wife as a place of retirement. In 1962 he opened a museum in the rooms of the palace, in which he exhibited his collection of Asian art and the porcelain collection of his brother-in-law, Count Marino Nani Mocenigo. Since the closure of this museum, from 1999 the Ca' del Duca has been the Luxembourg pavilion for the art biennale and, in alternation with the latter since 2004, the pavilion for the architecture biennale as well.



Ca' del Duca, View Canal Grande, 2011, © photo: Wolfgang Träger

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Wednesday - Friday: 11 am - 8 pm
Saturday - Monday: 11 am - 6 pm
Closed on Tuesdays

Entrance fee

Regular: 5 €
Reduced: 3 €
<21 years, Wednesday 6 pm - 8 pm: free

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On the occasion of the exhibition Mudam published the catalog *Atelier Luxembourg. The Venice Biennale Projects 1988 - 2011* and produces the DVD *Mondo Veneziano* by Antoine Prum.

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Main partner for the exhibition: Banque BSI Luxembourg SA



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LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Culture

THE PARTNER'S MESSAGE: BANQUE BSI LUXEMBOURG SA

Convinced that the value of any patrimony - whether financial, real estate or other - constitutes a precious wealth for the community in which we evolve, BSI has played an avant-gardist role and has been fully committed to the promotion of cultural and artistic events since its foundation in 1873. It is in this spirit that we have decided to lend our support to the Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Mudam Luxembourg, and to the exhibition *Atelier Luxembourg – The Venice Biennale Projects 1988–2011*.

We are very pleased to accompany Mudam within the framework of this ambitious retrospective, both for the artistic and cultural value of the project and for the opportunity it presents for us to actively participate in the social and cultural life of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, where we have been present for over thirty years.

Conscious of the impact that its activities have on the territory in which it operates, BSI promotes the cultural, economic and scientific development of our society through its foundations, partnerships, sponsorship, events and various projects. The range of our initiatives is very wide: support for young talent, architecture, contemporary art, classical music, research into the financial domain, international relations, exhibitions of rare and precious collections, publications. As a bank oriented towards a private clientele, we have indeed chosen to share the passions and emotions that art and music are capable of transmitting with our clients. It is in this context that the partnership with Mudam, with which we share a passion for contemporary art, is precisely inscribed.

In fact, while Mudam is the main Luxembourg museum dedicated to this artistic genre, BSI, which was already motivated by the wish to associate its name with contemporary collecting, has gathered together, since the year 2000, a collection entirely devoted to it at the centre of the BSI Art Collection, with the principal aim of spotting particularly talented artists and acquiring major artworks.

A large number of pieces from this collection are on permanent display, forming an artistic trail through the various branches of the bank, both in Switzerland and abroad, and constituting an important moment of encounter and cultural development to which BSI is particularly sensitive. Some of the artworks in the collection have even been conceived and produced by the artists specifically for BSI premises, or have been adapted to the culture of the territory where the sites of the bank are located. Each entity thus acquires its own identity through the pieces displayed and reinforces its link with the territory, culture and population.

We are pleased to add the exhibition *Atelier Luxembourg – The Venice Biennale Projects 1988–2011* to the high quality events we support. We thank Mudam and its director, Enrico Lunghi, for enabling us not only to promote those Luxembourg artists who have presented their work at the Venice Biennale, but also for sharing with the public, here, in Luxembourg, a common passion for contemporary art. Today, in the difficult and uncertain times in which we live, BSI is convinced, more than ever, that culture and art represent a means of contributing to the development of our society.

Nicola Battalora
CEO BSI LUXEMBOURG SA

Established in Lugano (Switzerland) in 1873, BSI SA is one of the oldest banks in Switzerland and specializes in private wealth management. Since 1998, the Bank has been wholly owned by the Generali Group, one of the most significant participants in the global insurance and financial products market. The bank places great emphasis on establishing and maintaining ongoing personal relationships with clients, while at the same time offering global asset management services with world-class products. It is present in the major financial markets worldwide, in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia.