

BERLIN BIENNALE

Press Release

Berlin, November 28, 2011

The 7th Berlin Biennale announces Associate Curators: Voina Group from Russia and Joanna Warsza

Artur Żmijewski appointed the Voina group from Russia and Joanna Warsza from Warsaw as Associate Curators, who will work together to develop the concept and program of the 7th Berlin Biennale.

Voina

Oleg Vorotnikov (a.k.a. Vor), Natalya Sokol (a.k.a. Kozljonok or Koza), Leonid Nikolajew (a.k.a. Leo the Fucknut) and Kasper Nienagladny Sokol

The art collective Voina (engl.: war) from Russia was founded in 2005 by Oleg Vorotnikov and Natalya Sokol. Voina engages in street action art that is directed against the Russian authorities. Their actions are regularly joined by a large group of anonymous activists. Numerous lawsuits have been filed against the group and its activists. Most recently Natalya Sokol and her son Kasper have been arrested for several hours in mid-October 2011.

Oleg Vorotnikov, Natalya Sokol, Leonid Nikolajew and Kasper decline the use of money and live in St. Petersburg without a permanent home. Their creed is, as Natalya Sokol declares: "The artist who denies political awareness is just a designer."

"We do not expect that the Voina group will be practicing an ordinary curatorship. Maybe they will knock at the doors of artists' studios, but not to check the art works, but to remind us about the ethos of the artist. They are among the last few believers who practice an art that is a direct political job. They continue their own, limitless, erratic and serious practice in Russia. Have they already done their 'best artwork'? Is it maybe the huge dick on Litiejnyj brigde in St. Petersburg? We do not think so. Their best artwork is the reminder that as the art world, we are on the way to just become a neoliberal elite who plays for financial gain and the accumulation of symbolic capital." (Artur Żmijewski and Joanna Warsza)

Read a quote from a conversation with Leonid Nikolajew here:

<http://www.berlinbiennale.de/blog/en/allgemein-en/quotes-from-an-interview-with-lonia-jebniety-engl-leo-the-fucknut-16762>

For further information:

<http://en.free-voina.org>

Most recent actions by Voina:

Action "Dick captured by KGB". June 14, 2010

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sw-rx6JqQIE&feature=player_embedded#!

Action "Leo the Fucknut is our President!". May 16–22, 2010

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2tqrO0GTIc&feature=related>

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Joanna Warsza

Joanna Warsza, born in 1976, is a curator on the cusp of the performing and visual arts. She graduated from the Warsaw Theater Academy and completed a postgraduate course at the University of Paris 8 dance department. She is a founder of the independent platform Laura Palmer Foundation (www.laura-palmer.pl). Joanna Warsza has worked mostly in the public realm, curating projects that examine social and political agendas, such as the invisibility of the Vietnamese community in Warsaw, the phenomenon of Israeli Youth Delegations to Poland, or the legacy of post-Soviet architecture in the Caucasus. Together with Krzysztof Wodiczko she runs a seminar on conflict, trauma and art at the Warsaw Higher School for Social Psychology as well as on the performativity in contemporary culture. She has realized projects with Berlin theater Hebbel am Ufer, Warsaw Museum of Modern Art, the AICA Armenia, the GeoAir Tbilisi, the Centre Pompidou or Biennale de Belleville, both in Paris, among others. She is an editor of *Stadium-X – A Place That Never Was*.

Since the beginning of 2011 she has worked with Artur Żmijewski on the development and realization of the concept of the 7th Berlin Biennale. Joanna Warsza lives and works in Berlin and Warsaw.

Read a conversation between Joanna Warsza and Artur Żmijewski here:

<http://www.berlinbiennale.de/blog/en/allgemein-en/universalizing-the-exception-16719>

The 7th Berlin Biennale takes place from April 27 to July 1, 2012.

The Berlin Biennale is organized by KW Institute for Contemporary Art and supported by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation).

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