

Art Review

Venice Biennale, Satellite Exhibitions

Venice Biennale Satellite Exhibitions: Following The Political Trail



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Venice Biennale is set in one of the most unique and beautiful places on earth- Venice, Italy. The biennale lasts from 9 May to 22 November 2015, with official biennale pavilions featuring the best of each country's artists, while the central pavilion for the 56th Biennale is curated by Okwui Enwezor.

Okwui set the path for what seems to be the most political themed central Pavilion in its history, featuring artwork by 136 international artists from 53 countries, 89 whom will exhibit at the Biennale for the first time. Each year the Biennale attracts hundreds of satellite shows dotted across the city in exhibition and alternative spaces.

This year's theme of political awareness, led by Okwui seems to have effected these shows : One of the most prominent is Andrea Morucchio's Rape Of Venice (Opening 5 June to 22 November). Andrea a Venetian artist leads a painful and poignant campaign against the corrupted destruction of the city of Venice. The Rape of Venice encourages the public to reflect on the present conditions confronting Venice today, its decline, and its relentless transformation into a

theme-park for millions of tourists. As a Venetian, indignant about the situation Venice finds itself in, he takes this opportunity offered by MAVIVE and the Fondazione Musei Civici Venezia, to analyse the situation through the language of contemporary art and the decaying of Venice.

The flooring of the rooms housing of the installation reproduces a deconstruction of the floor of Saint Mark's Basilica; thousands of pictures representing details of floor mosaic, scale 1:1, are spread casually, creating the installation floor. The original floor of Saint Mark's Basilica, the quintessential sacred place for Venetians, suffers from the vibrations of the pedestrian traffic of millions of tourists and is often under water, even when the tide is below the high-water level. Therefore, through this floor overlay, the Basilica now becomes the symbol of the physical and cultural devastation of Venice.

Another exhibition dealing with Human Rights is Patricia Cronin -Shrine For Girls (9 May to 22 November). The work is presented inside the exquisite 16th Century Church of San Gallo. For this site specific installation Patricia collected girls clothing for over twenty years and arranged them on the alters of the church. One alter is loaded with a pile of 276 hijabs , representing the Nigerian Boko Haram kidnap girls, while the central alter is piled with Indian saris worn by girls in India three of which were gang raped and hanged from trees. The juxtaposition of the calmness in the church and the terrifying stillness of the clothes with the violent events they embed makes the silence unbearable.

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