

Under_construction: visual dialogue

Talking about identities in the Armenian Transnation

Exhibition taking place

in the Monastic Headquarters of the Armenian Mekhitarian Order
Island of San Lazzaro degli Armeni, Venice

A project from under_construction e. V

Curators: Silvina Der-Meguerditchian/Barabara Höffer

with the support from the Mekhitarist Congregation, European Cultural Foundation and Fundación Armenia

Opening: June 9, from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

On June 7-8-9 a boat service will be available from Giardini to the Island of San Lazzaro.

Dates: June 09 – October 14, 2007

Public opening hours:

every day from 3:00 pm to 5:20 pm

How to reach the Island of San Lazzaro: Vaporetto n. 20

Vaporetto timetable:

from San Zaccaria to San Lazzaro h. 3:10 pm

from San Lazzaro to San Zaccaria h. 4:45 pm or 5:25 pm

Artists: Achot Achot, Emily Artinian, Andrew Demirjian, Silvina Der-Meguerditchian, Dahlia Elsayed, Archi Galentz, Sophia Gasparian

The exhibition "UNDER_CONSTRUCTION" presents a forum for frank dialogue on questions relating to identity, the potential for an Armenian identity beyond defined borders, and notions passed on for generations, such as nationality, tradition and language. On display are works by seven artists of Armenian descent whose biographies resemble a cultural patchwork. All of them are multi-lingual and grew up in diverse cultural contexts. The nomadic, hybrid nature of their existence not only enables them to move effortlessly in different languages and cultures as international artists, but also shapes a kind of culture in which identity is a paradoxical, fleeting and constantly changing process. Remembering their Armenian roots – the search for the lost garden – has become the driving force behind the visual dialogues and creative work of the artists. In this process Armenia itself has become associated with the idea of a transnation which is constantly emerging and evolving - under_construction. The exhibition "Under_Construction" is based on the Internet project of the same title that Silvina Der-Meguerditchian started in 2005 offering artists a virtual space for active, visual exchange. This platform enables the artists to experiment, experience and share their hybrid identities in an open process. A video recording of this specific working process and the visual artistic dialogues is available to visitors for viewing at the exhibition.

The island of San Lazzaro is the headquarters of the Armenian Mekhitarian Monastic Order, founded in Constantinople in the first years of the 18th Century by the Abbot Mekhitar of Sebaste, who settled together with his monks on the island in 1717 after escaping persecution. Mekhitar understood the implicit potential of the written word for the preservation of Armenian culture threatened by the vicissitudes of history. The monastery therefore not only has a rich library, consisting of over 140,000 volumes, but until 1993 it also contained an active printing office capable of publishing texts in thirty-six languages, making San Lazzaro a global reference point for Eastern and in particular Armenian culture. These books are archived in the library along with 4,500 precious manuscripts, including many illuminated works by Armenian miniaturists and by the Greek and Syrian holy fathers.

For more information and high resolution images go to:

http://www.underconstructionhome.net/underconstr_venice/fotos_prensa.htm

or contact: Silvina Der-Meguerditchian

Tel. 0049 30 327 02400 silvina_der@t-online.de