

DEUTSCHER RECHSTUEDE PAVILLION 2013 AI WEIWEI ROMUALD KARMAKAR SANTU MOFOKENG DAYANITA SINGH

1ST JUNE TO 24TH NOVEMBER 2013
55TH INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA



And who are you? National representation in art today

A panel discussion held by the German pavilion at the 55th International Art Exhibition—La Biennale di Venezia 2013 in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut and the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa).

With Susanne Gaensheimer, Gilles Kepel, Simon Njami, Dayanita Singh, and Mark Terkessidis
Moderation: Koyo Kouoh

Date: Friday, May 31, 4 p.m.
Location: French pavilion, Giardini della Biennale, Venice

The German pavilion at the 55th Biennale di Venezia pursues a transnational approach. Due to the French-German cooperation at this year's Biennale, the contribution curated by Susanne Gaensheimer with works by Ai Weiwei, Romuald Karmakar, Santu Mofokeng, and Dayanita Singh is held at the French pavilion. Gaensheimer's exhibition examines the format of the national pavilion as an open concept and explores Germany as a cosmopolitan place that is actively involved in an international network, in its art as much as in the realities of its everyday life. In this context, the panel discussion ***And who are you? National representation in art today*** engages with the question of the contemporary significance of national representation in art. The speakers are the curator of the German pavilion, Susanne Gaensheimer; the political scientist and Islam scholar Gilles Kepel; the sociologist and cultural critic Mark Terkessidis; and the curator and author Simon Njami. The art critic and curator Koyo Kouoh moderates the debate.

In Germany as elsewhere, a wide range of forms of collaboration between artists from all over the world and the exchange of ideas and cultural productions across national borders have come to shape the realities of work in the arts and beyond—in an immigration country such as Germany, everyday life also demonstrates that the concept of national belonging and nation-based classification has lost some of its significance and can no longer be thought in categories of unequivocal differentiation. Needless to say, we cannot just negate the question of national affiliation; still, international and intercultural contacts have become an integral part of who we are as a society and constitute one of the country's most important cultural assets as well as a major social and political challenge for the present and future.

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The panel discussion, held as part of the international forum during the 55th Venice Biennale, raises the question of whether and how the format of the national pavilion can adequately represent Germany's cultural and social diversity and which role national and cultural identity plays for the production of art today.

Susanne Gaensheimer is director of the MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, and already curated the German pavilion in 2011, when her installation of the art of Christoph Schlingensiefel was awarded the Golden Lion for Best Pavilion. Dayanita Singh is one of the participating artists in this year's German contribution. The Islam scholar, sociologist, and political scientist Gilles Kepel has worked on aspects of radical Islam; his book "The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West" was published in 2004. Mark Terkessidis is a journalist and writer who focuses on pop culture, racism, and migration; his book "Interkultur"—a neologism that has since entered German usage—came out in 2010. Simon Njami is a writer and curator of numerous exhibitions of African contemporary art such as "African Remix" (2004–2007); he was also co-curator of the first African pavilion at the 2007 Venice Biennale. The moderator of the panel discussion, Koyo Kouoh, was an advisor to the artistic directors of documentas 12 and 13 and is the founder and director of RAW MATERIAL COMPANY, a mobile exhibition space for artistic practices and the exchange of critical ideas headquartered in Dakar.

The panel discussion ***And who are you? National representation in art today*** is held by the German pavilion in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut and the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen – ifa).

The German contribution is realized on behalf of the Federal Foreign Office and in cooperation with the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen – ifa). The Goethe-Institut and the ifa Freunde des Deutschen Pavillon / Biennale Venedig e.V. support the German Pavilion.

The Sparkassen- Kulturfonds of the German Savings Banks Association is main sponsor of the German Pavilion at the 55th International Art Exhibition—La Biennale di Venezia.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,

Markus Müller

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