



PRESSE - MITTEILUNG

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»Blue – The Colour of the Place«

On the occasion of the 18th Architecture Biennale in Venice

›La Galleria‹ Dorothea van der Koelen · Venezia

On the occasion of the 18th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice, ›La Galleria‹, the Italian branch of Gallery Dorothea van der Koelen in Mainz (Germany), presents works by 10 international artists from 8 countries in the exhibition *Blue – The Colour of the Place*: Lore Bert, Daniel Buren, Mohammed Kazem, Joseph Kosuth, Nam Tchun-Mo, Fabrizio Plessi, Arne Quinze, Reinhard Roy, Turi Simeti, Günther Uecker and Jan van Munster.

In the heart of the city, directly opposite the stage entrance of the famous ›Teatro La Fenice‹, and only 5 minutes walk from St. Mark's Square, lies ›La Galleria‹, the Italian branch of Gallery Dorothea van der Koelen in Mainz. Also this year, coinciding with the ›Biennale di Venezia‹, the gallery presents an exciting exhibition entitled *Blue – The Colour of the Place* from May 20 to November 26, 2023.

In the exhibition, three aspects are symbiotically brought together: the aspect of the international, as a biennial entails, the aspect of the spatial that is immediately inherent in architecture, and the aspect of the particular place of Venice, a city built on water and thus shimmering in many shades of blue.

Beautiful palaces (architectures) can be found in many Italian cities, Rome, Florence and many others, but what makes the lagoon city special is the water that is present everywhere. The water that can sometimes become threatening (›Acqua alta‹), that appears fascinating in the light of the lagoon, that glistens and shimmers, that flows, that rises and falls with the tides, that with changing light can take on different colors from turquoise to dark to bright blue when the sun shines and the palaces are reflected in the water: *Wasser Venezia - Acqua Luminosa* is the title the writer Hanns-Josef Ortheil has given his book on Günther Uecker's small watercolors of Venice. ... The mysterious and at the same time fascinating nature of this special place is always and everywhere present.

Traditional Canvas paintings do not exist in this exhibition. All artists work spatially in some way. Individual works are presented ›in situ‹, like those of Daniel Buren, for example, while many enter the space, becoming reliefs, as in the case of as in the case of Lore Bert, Turi Simeti or Nam Tchun-Mo. Others suggest space, like the raster paintings of Reinhard Roy or the *Corona-*

Scratches of Mohammed Kazem, or they experiment with new materials and forms like Arne Quinze or Jan van Munster. Fabrizio Plessi, the Venetian by choice and grand master of video art, who is basically not a video artist at all, but merely translates his poetic paintings of water into a digital world, has contributed a particularly beautiful and poetic work, in which the water - against the gravity – slowly grows from the bottom of the monitor to the top and builds up.

The world-famous French stripe artist and multiple Biennale and Documenta participant Daniel Buren, who was awarded the ›Praemium Imperiale‹ in 2007 and covered the sail-like roof of the Gehry building with luminous color surfaces in 2016 for the reopening of the ›Fondation Louis Vuitton‹ in Paris, is showing one of his works *Encore des Carrés* in La Galleria, consisting of 16 wooden panels with his characteristic 8.7 cm wide white stripes – in blue, of course. Since Daniel Buren often works ›in situ‹, we have created the wall space for the work in the exhibition in the color scheme of the theater next to it, to create a special space for him and suggest a kind of architecture.

A special position in the exhibition is occupied by the Venetian by choice and multiple Biennale participant Fabrizio Plessi. Although he is not actually a video artist, he does use monitors in his work. There, one usually sees flowing water or blazing fire. Neither tells a story, but represents universal values. The pre-Socratic Heraclith intrudes with his idea that being is in the process of becoming and is subject to constant change. ›We cannot get into the same river twice‹, he says, because both the river and oneself have changed in the meantime. In fire he sees the purifying power of change and the cycle of life. Something passes and something new emerges from it, like a phoenix from the ashes ... significantly, La Galleria is located at the back of the ›Teatro La Fenice‹, the phoenix that rose again from the ashes after the fire of 1996. A particularly poetic video work is present in the exhibition: from the bottom of the monitor, the water – against gravity – poetically grows upwards. Perhaps also a kind of ›phoenix‹ ?

Another Italian contribution in the exhibition is by Turi Simeti, a member of the ›Gruppo n‹ - the Italian faction of the ›Zero‹ people who were around Lucio Fontana in Milan at the time, and to which Piero Manzoni and Enrico Castellani etc. belonged, too. Turi Simeti is considered to be the direct representative of those works of art that have gone down in art history under the term ›Concetti Spaziali‹. His monochrome works have minimalist and clear forms and show the most diverse variations of his world-famous ›Ovali‹. In Venice, a special work in luminous Yves Klein blue is presented. The *8 ovali blu* seem to be happily in conversation with each other.

Brand new to the Venetian Gallery is the Korean artist Nam Tchun-Mo. Already presented 11 years earlier in a group exhibition on the theme of Korean Monochrome in Mainz, last year he showed an extensive solo exhibition on two floors of the Cadoro in Mainz, which was accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue. His pictorial works, always in relief, fit well with the Architecture Biennale because they are all spatial. Fabric stretched over wooden beams is soaked in synthetic resin and, after drying, cut into small pieces and mounted on pictorial surfaces. This peculiar way of working is clearly reminiscent of the artists of the ›ZERO‹ group, who were just as eager to experiment with new strategies for finding images. Though about 30 years younger, Nam Tchun-Mo is clearly in the tradition of Korean Monochrome, which began in the 1960s but developed primarily in the 1970s. The *spring* and *beam* works in this exhibition are coveted collectors' items worldwide.

Next to ›paper‹, ›space‹ is the most important term to characterize the work of the internationally renowned artist Lore Bert. Actually, all of her works are somehow 3-dimensional. This is true for her extraordinary relief objects, as well as for her environments and even for her collages. After her overwhelming success at her participation in the 55th Venice Art Biennale in 2013, the gallery presents Lore Bert's latest compositions in a noble combination of white and blue Japanese paper and real gold leaf, as well as a series of small-format watercolors, collages and pictorial prints in different shades of blue.

The artist Mohammed Kazem from Dubai, who designed the national pavilion of the United Arab Emirates at the Biennale 2013 and is considered the new star of the UAE, shows some of his *Corona Scratches* from 2020 in Venice. They were created in response to the outbreak of the pandemic, on the one hand, and on the other hand, for the first time, they bring color to the torn papers scratched by means of scissors, which, in addition to the relief (which tries to capture light, see his series *Collecting Light*), always include the gesture of doing, archiving, for example, the sounds of production. Those scratch works are also sometimes called *Sound of an Angle* ...An extensive museum exhibition of his work has opened on both floors of the Ludwig Museum in Koblenz on June 18, 2023.

Belgian Arne Quinze, best known for his large-scale environments spanning streets, bridges and squares, presents two brand new works of metal in the exhibition. *Chroma* is a new series, in shades of blue and others, in which interior interacts with exterior. Two-layered openings curve inward and outward, perhaps a chaotic universe at first glance, yet all designed at second glance. This is true not only for these works, but actually for everything that Arne Quinze takes in hand. The seemingly disorderly nevertheless obeys a superordinate structure.

Günther Uecker is one of the most internationally respected German artists of the second half of the 20th century. At the end of the 1950s, in the circle of the German ›Zero‹ Group, he developed his nail structures, for which he is now world-famous. The first encounter between Dr. Dorothea van der Koelen and Günther Uecker took place in 1983, resulting in a total of 99 special editions, including 41 embossed prints, over three decades of close collaboration. Medium- and large-format embossed prints documenting the decades of collaboration will be on display at La Galleria.

The vernissage of the exhibition will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2023 from 18:00 in ›La Galleria‹, with opening speech at 18:30. Following the opening, an aperitif will be served in the garden.

›La Galleria‹ was founded in 2001 and is considered the little Venetian sister of the important Gallery Dorothea van der Koelen in Mainz, which was founded in 1979 by Dorothea van der Koelen, who was only 19 years old at the time. Today she runs two galleries, a publishing house for art science (Chorus-Verlag), the ›Dr. van der Koelen Consulting‹ and the ›van der Koelen Foundation for Art and Science‹, based in Mainz. In 2014 she opened ›CADORO – Center for Art and Science‹ in Mainz. The gallerist studied art history, philosophy, book studies, logic and Romance languages and literature at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz and received her PhD in 1993.

The program of the gallery is clear, strict, beautiful and humorous - but (almost) always abstract: concrete - conceptual - constructive. The cooperation with about 30 artists from 15 different countries manifests itself not only in the exhibitions and publications; the specialties also include an international exhibition management and worldwide cooperation with museums and companies. In addition to organizing outstanding art-in-architecture projects in ›van der Koelen Consulting‹, the ›van der Koelen Foundation‹ also facilitates lecture series such as *Experts in the Art Business* in cooperation with the University of Mainz. In the last 44 years, Dr. phil. Dorothea van der Koelen has curated over 600 exhibitions in 30 countries, published 200 publications and given more than 250 lectures on contemporary art. In 2020 – the year of the outbreak of the Covid pandemic – a YouTube channel was launched, with new films on art appearing weekly, in which the gallerist makes public her personal view of artworks and artists. In just over 3 years, more than 58,000 films have been accessed under *#StayHome with Dr. Dorothea*.

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Bilder zum Direkt-Download sowie weitere Presseinformationen in Kürze unter:

www.galerie.vanderkoelen.de