

Pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the 57<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

# RADENKO MILAK

# UNIVERSITY OF DISASTER

May 13 – November 26, 2017 At Palazzo Malipiero 3198 San Marco, Venice

Inauguration of the pavilion is on Friday, May 12, 2017 at 6:00 pm



## COMMISSIONER:

Sarita Vujković, Museum of Contemporary Art of Republika Srpska.

#### CURATORS:

Fredrik Svensk, Sinziana Ravini, Anna van der Vliet, Christopher Yggdre, in collaboration with Hans Ulrich Obrist.

## **EXHIBITORS:**

Radenko Milak in collaboration with Roman Uranjek, and guest artists: Lamin Fofana, Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Juan-Pedro Fabra Guemberena, Loulou Cherinet, Geraldine Juárez in collaboration with Joel Danielsson, Nils Bech in collaboration with Ida Ekblad.

## COLLABORATORS:

Mladen Banjac (deputy curator), Roberto Zancan (architect), Nemanja Mićević (graphic designer), Branka Šestić (PR), Mladen Šukalo (technical development) Nenad Markić (technical development), Julie Banâtre, Maša Davidović, Léa Perrier, Lana Pilipović, Predrag Terzić, Lucie Touya

## **ORGANIZATION AND PRODUCTION:**

Museum of Contemporary Art of Republika Srpska, L'Agence à Paris

## WITH THE MAIN SUPPORT OF:

Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, City of Banja Luka

#### WITH THE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OF:

laspis - The Swedish Art Grants Committe's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists, OCA (Office for Contemporary Art Norway), FCC (Fondo Concursable para la Cultura) MEC, Ministerio de Educación y Cultura - Uruguay.

GALLERY | PRISKA PASQUER, La Balsa Arte, Les Filles du Calvaire Gallery, Duplex/100m2, Galerija Fotografija, ICIA - Institute for Contemporary Ideas and Art, Paletten Art Journal.

# PRESS RELEASE

After the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Biennale Arte in 2003 and 2013, Bosnia and Herzegovina will also present itself at the forthcoming 57<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, with the project "University of Disaster". This participation aims to initiate the establishment of continuity of exhibiting within which this country would be present not only in the International Art Exhibition, but also at the Biennale Architettura. The decision concerning the participation was brought by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the project was officially supported by the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska.

Artist Radenko Milak will represent Bosnia and Herzegovina at the 57<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia with the project "University of Disaster" in collaboration with Roman Uranjek, and guest artists Lamin Fofana, Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Juan-Pedro Fabra Guemberena, Loulou Cherinet, Geraldine Juárez in collaboration with Joel Danielsson, Nils Bech in collaboration with Ida Ekblad.

Commissioner of the Pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina is Sarita Vujković, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Republic of Srpska, and curators that had been chosen to make an international curatorial of this project are: Cristopher Yggdre, Fredrik Svensk, Sinziana Ravini, Ana van der Vliet, which will work in collaboration and with the support of Hans Urlich Obrist. Organiser of this whole project is the Museum of Contemporary Art of Republic of Srpska, and which has decided, along with the artist Radenko Milak, that the Pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be located at the Palazzo Malipiero, S. Marco 3198, Venice, the venue in which the Pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina was located during the 55<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia in 2013.

As with the realisation of the Pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Biennale Arte 2013, long-term goal of this institution is to set new parametres when it comes to this kind of organisation and to, thanks to this international project, connect with other institutions and artists in order to improve the development of the contemporary art scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



RADENKO MILAK From the Far Side of the Moon | 2017 | animation movie | duration 13' 21" | movie stills

# **UNIVERSITY OF DISASTER**

What would happen if we rewrote the history of art solely from the perspective of the representation of catastrophe? Original or final, the catastrophe, with its natural cataclysms, epidemics and human activities such as war and conflicts, has always had an aesthetic dimension and an impact on our desire, imagination and our relation to the world. This is something that one can hardly ignore encountering the art of the artist Radenko Milak from Bosnia and Herzegovina - a work totally in line with what Modern History teaches us, that catastrophes are not external or independent to us: we are its demiurges. After the second world war, the German philosopher, Günther Anders, considered Auschwitz and Hiroshima the two founding events of an era in which humanity has become incapable of representing what it has set up or created.

The impossibility of representing catastrophe is, paradoxically enough, not related to the absence of documentation, in particular of visual documentation. The unrepresentable is primarily defined as the inability to take measure of disaster. At the same time disaster and desire share the same distant etymology. "University of Disaster" can therefore also be read as "University of Desire", desire as antidote to the crushing feeling of powerlessness in the face of surrounding disaster. What can art do in this new era of unrepresentable disaster? What is the relation between disaster and desire today?

Through his work, Radenko Milak questions the imagination of the image in the digital era. His practice involves the real or supposed power of images and their status in our visually saturated societies. He reveals the aesthetic potential and phantoms of each image that haunt our consciences by creating unfaithful echoes of the continuous flow of images in our global visual archive. For this exhibition, the artist has created a Wunderkammer of films, paintings, watercolors, collages, some in collaboration with Roman Uranjek, which gives the political, social and environmental disasters an entirely new dimension, inviting us to drift towards the horizons of a world where art becomes the last form of resistance to current and future disasters.

The guest artists in this exhibition are engaged in other aspects of the disasters and desires of our time, confronting, contradicting and adding to the proposals by Radenko Milak and Roman Uranjek, turning the exhibition into a complex montage, inviting the audience to make up new connections between the tensions in the works. The beauty of unrequited love in the performance work of Nils Bech with Ida Ekblad, is played out in the context of the magic of the feminist intervention by Sidsel Meineche Hansen, subverting the power and desire in the sexist matrix of contemporary digital pornography, accompanied by the brutal bliss of Lamin Fofana's techno music installation reflecting the horrors of forced migration, in contrast to the seductive contradictions of Geraldine Juárez's frozen installation that stores, layers and fuses geologies and memories against the backdrop of desires and disasters of media history and climate change, and the powerful camouflage of Juan-Pedro Fabra Guemberena's installation on the expanded potential of the strategy of camouflage in a world of disasters.

But, "University of Disaster" is not only the exhibition at the Pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina of the 57<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, it is also the starting point for a real university, a shared creative space of knowledge and imagination building, a laboratory. It is at the same time an artistic and political proposal, a project in the making. A conference will be held in Venice with writers, researchers, theorists and artists in November during the last week of the Biennale Arte 2017. For this occasion, a new commissioned work by Loulou Cherinet will be presented.

# **BIOGRAPHIES**

## **EXHIBITORS:**



Vladimir Stojakovic, 2017

**RADENKO MILAK** (b. 1980, Yugoslavia) studied from 1999 until 2003 at the Academy of Fine Art in Banja Luka and from 2003 until 2007 at the University of Fine Arts in Belgrade. The painterly work of Radenko Milak circles around questions of fixation and recall of the visual presentation in our personal memories and in the visual world. His work was exhibited in numerous solo shows in the past years in Paris, Amsterdam, Cologne, Darmstadt, Amsterdam, Bogota, Zagreb, Ljubjlana, Istanbul, Bucarest. His works are part of the public collections

of the Hessisches Landesmuseum (Darmstadt), Jewish Museum (Frankfurt), Folkwang Museum (Essen), National Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo), Museum of Contemporary Art of the Republic of Srpska, Banja Luka, City of Lyon.

Contact: radenkomilak@gmail.com | http://radenko-milak.blogspot.ba/



**ROMAN URANJEK** (b. 1963, Slovenia) Founder of IRWIN (1983), NSK (Neue slovenische kunst)(1984) and Novi Kolektivizem group (1985). In 2002, the artist launched the project: At least one cross a day after 1.1.2002 (still in progress). In 2005, the artist launched the project: Artists Book after June, 2008.

Contact: roman.uranjek@guest.arnes.si

## AND INTERNATIONAL GUESTS:



Stefanie Abell

**LAMIN FOFANA** (b. 1982, Sierra Leone) is an electronic producer and artist. His instrumental electronic music contrasts the reality of our world with what is beyond and explores questions of movement, migration, alienation, and belonging. He is from Sierra Leone, lived in Guinea, the United States, and is currently based in Berlin. His releases include Another World, New Horizons, and Doubleworld.

**SIDSEL MEINECHE HANSEN** (b. 1981, Denmark) is an artist based in London, whose research-led practice manifests as exhibitions, interdisciplinary seminars and publications. Recent solo presentations include: SECOND SEX WAR, Gasworks, London and Trondheim Art Museum; NO RIGHT WAY 2 CUM, Transmission, Glasgow International, Glasgow. Meineche Hansen currently works as an associate professor at the Funen Art Academy, Denmark.



**JUAN PEDRO FABRA GUEMBERENA** (b. 1971, Uruguay) is an artist currently based in Berlin and Stockholm. His works have been exhibited extensively internationally, in, among others, the exhibition, "Delays and Revolutions" at the 50th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2003; "My Private Heroes" Marta Hereford Museum, 2006; "The Moderna Exhibition", The Modern Museum of Art, Stockholm, 2006; "Favored Nations", 5<sup>th</sup> Momentum Biennal, Moss, 2009; 1st Biennale of The Americas, Denver, 2013; and the

School of Kyev, Kyev, 2015. He is represented in collections such as The Modern Museum of Art, Stockholm; Sammlung Goetz, München and The Wanås Foundation, Knislingen, Sweden.



**LOULOU CHERINET** (b. 1970, Sweden) lives in Stockholm where she is currently Professor at Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design. Cherinet's work has evolved through interdiciplinary collaboration. Her process uses filmmaking as a tool for probing how abstract notions and state policy appear in bodies, objects, and the behavior of the cities she lives in. Cherinet was educated at the Addis Ababa University School of Fine Art and Design and the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. She has exhibited her work in the São Paulo,

Bamako, Sydney and Gothenburg Biennales as well as the Manifesta 8 (Murcia) and Momentum 7 (Moss). She has also had solo shows in Addis Ababa, Prague, Stockholm, Krakow, Jakarta, and Lüneburg. Her work has toured with major group shows such as Africa Remix and Divine Comedy, curated by Simon Njami.

GERALDINE JUÁREZ (b. Mexico City, 1977) is an artist working with the media and



Emma Skerfe

its stories, histories and contexts in relation to cultural techniques and economics. Recent group exhibitions include 'Works for Radio', The Lake Radio, Copenhagen (2017); Exstrange, on-line auction/ exhibition (2017); 'Dreamlands: Immersive Cinema & Art, 1905-2016', Whitney Museum of American, New York (2016) and 'Totally Sick', Medical History Museum of Gothenburg (2016). Recent public talks and events include Transmediale, Institute of Contemporaty Art, (ICA) and the Museum of Art and History in Brussels. Her texts

have been published in journals, magazines and books such as Continent.cc, Paletten, The Radiated Book (Constant, 2016), Intercalations 3: Reverse Hallucinations from the Archipielago (K.Verlag, 2017) and Scapegoat, Journal for Architecture | Landscape and Political Economy (forthcoming, 2017).



**JOEL DANIELSSON** (b. 1981, Sweden) is an artist working with sculpture, photography, video and performative aspects related to the process of making. His practice deals with the behavioral, emotional and environmental issues of consumerism. His work has been exhibited in group shows such as 'Förjaga bristen på sammanhang', Göteborgs Konsthall (2016), 'Totally Sick', Medical History Museum (2016) in Gotenburg, and 'Spring exhibition', Liljevalchs, Stockholm (2015).

The artist



Benjamin A. Huseby

**NILS BECH** (b. 1981, Norway) is a Norwegian singer, composer and performance artist. Bech has done performances in Europe and the U.S at institutions such as the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, New Museum (Performa 11) and Sculpture Center; NYC, ICA Institute of Contemporary Art and Frieze Fondation; London, Van Gogh Museet, Witte de Witte and Amsterdam Kunstverein; the Netherlands, KW Institute of Contemporary Art; Berlin, Kunstnerens Hus and Henie Onstad Art Center, Oslo Norway, among others.



**IDA EKBLAD** (b. 1980, Norway) lives and works in Oslo, Norway. Recent solo exhibitions include Karma International, Los Angeles (2016); BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2015); Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin (2015); Greene Naftali Gallery, New York (2014); National Museum of Norway-Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, Norway (2013); West London Projects, London (2011); Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen, Norway (2010); Alessandro DeMarch, Milan (2009); and The Journal Gallery, New York (2009). Her work is in the

collections of Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo; and Zabludowicz Collection London/Sarvisalo/New York.

## **COMMISSIONER:**

**SARITA VUJKOVIĆ** is the director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka and an assistant professor at the Academy of Arts in Banja Luka and vice president of ICOM-SEE. She is the author of professional and academic papers in the fields of museology, gender theory and contemporary art. She was the commissioner and curator of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Pavilion at the 55<sup>th</sup> La Biennale di Venezia. She is the author and co-author of the books *In the Civic Mirror: Female Identities in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Civic Culture 1878 – 1941*; and together with Bojana Pejić, *Microstories: Contemporary female art and its post-2000 contexts*. She holds a PhD in art history from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, and an MA in Theory of Art and Media from the University of Arts in Belgrade.

## **CURATORS:**

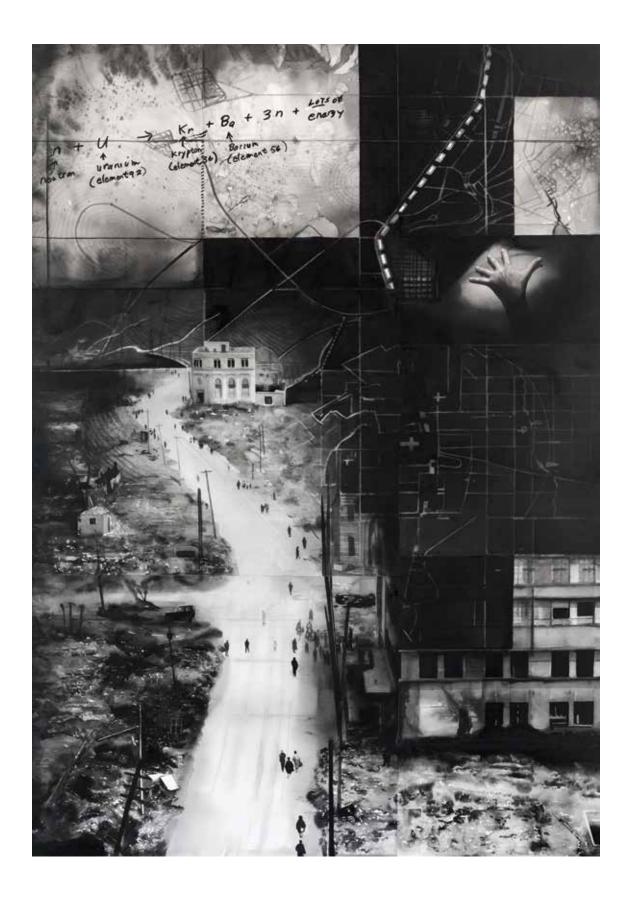
**CHRISTOPHER YGGDRE**, cultural entrepreneur, is also, occasionally, author, screenwriter and director. He was one of the founders of the magazine Les Périphériques Vous Parlent, and was a member of the artistic collective Génération Chaos from 1993 to 2001. In 2003, he founded Co-errances, one of the first cooperative community-oriented enterprises in France, which operated in the field of cultural dissemination. In 2009, he developed the agnès b. Endowment Fund, which he ran until 2012. This fund had the triple vocation of cultural, humanitarian and environmental patronage. In 2014, with Lucie Touya, he created L'Agence à Paris, which advises and accompanies artists of all disciplines as well as private and public institutions engaged in the arts and culture sector. **ANNA VAN DER VLIET** is the founder and artistic director of ICIA – Institute for Contemporary Ideas and Art, based in Gothenburg, Sweden. Her curatorial practice is to a large extent based on the idea of situation- and context-specific art productions in collaboration with artists. She has curated a number of large exhibitions, including Counterparts (2014) and the ongoing series Aesthetics of Law. Anna van der Vliet is a regular lecturer and writer. She is the publisher of the Paletten Art Journal and an art critic in Expressen. She has previously worked as a curator and acting director of MAP - Mobile Art Production, project manager at GIBCA Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art and chief editor of the Paletten Art Journal. She has a BA in Media Arts with Photography from London, and has studied art history and history of ideas at the University of Gothenburg and curatorial studies at Stockholm University.

FREDRIK SVENSK works as a critic, educator, researcher, editor and curator. He is a Lecturer in Art Theory at the Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg and Editor-In-Chief of Paletten Art Journal. His work has been published in many international books and journals, and he has been lecturing all across Europe. In his teaching at Valand Svensk focuses on the intersection between art research and practice, history of aesthetics and art, continental philosophy, and on critical perspectives on art and society such as queer feminist, post-colonial, marxist theory, institutional critique and non-anthropocentrism. He is the co-translator of Gilles Deleuze's Différence et répétition. His selected curatorial projects include ÄKTA VARA (True Being / True Commodity), which investigated different contemporary processes of subjectification, with artists Debora Elgeholm, Annika Eriksson, Isabell Heimerdinger, Saskia Holmkvist, Katya Sander and Carey Young. ART AFTER EDUCATION, 2008, re-examined the critical aspects of the method used in Adrian Piper's work Bach Whistled, 1970, by putting it into a contemporary sociopolitical context, in tandem with works by artists Elke Marhöfer, Ida Börjel and Malmö Free University for Women. For his curatorial work he was appointed the YCI curator at Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, FIAC, Paris, in 2008.

**SINZIANA RAVINI** is editor-in-chief of Paletten Art Journal, theory teacher at the Sorbonne University in Paris, and curator of « novel- exhibitions » that intertwine art, psychoanalysis and literature such as *The Hidden Mother* (2012) and *The Chessroom* (2013) at Atelier Rouart, *The Black Moon* at Palais de Tokyo, (2013) and *Aphrodisia* for Bizarro Saint Germain (2014). She has also co-curated several exhibitions, such as *In search for the lost self* at Bonniers Konsthall (2007) and *United States of Europe* (2010–2012) which was exhibited in 10 European cities. She works as an art critic for Dagens Nyheter and literature critic for Göteborgs Posten and writes for magazines like Artforum, Afterall, Artpress, Frog, Initiales, Be Contemporary and SITE. She holds a PHD in literature from Heidelberg University and a MA in art history from Gothenburg University. She is currently writing a second PHD in psychoanalysis at Diderot Paris 7 University on the role of humour in psychoanalytic and religious practices.



RADENKO MILAK *University of Disaster, Earth* 2017 | watercolour | 200x140 cm



RADENKO MILAK *University of Disaster, Fire* 2017 | watercolour | 200x140 cm



RADENKO MILAK From the Far Side of the Moon 2017 | animation movie | duration 13' 21" | movie stills



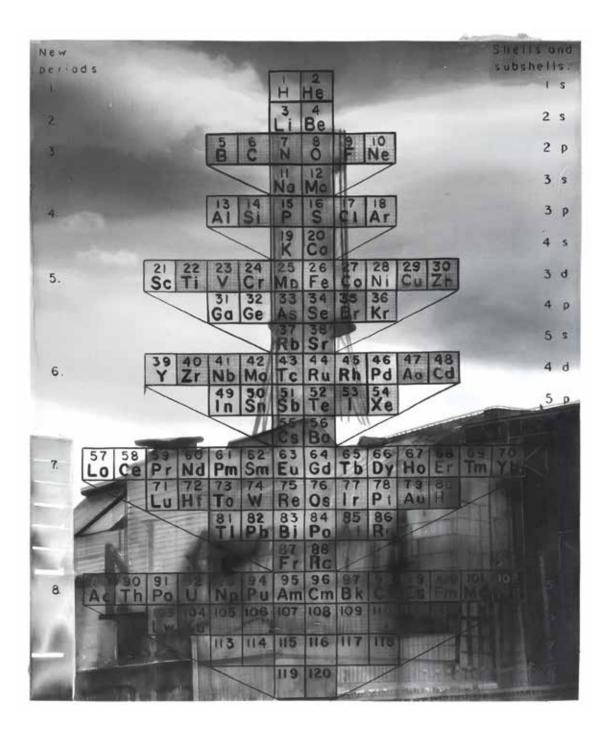
DATES, RADENKO MILAK & ROMAN URANJEK **7 February 1477, Thomas More was Born** 2017 | 146x195 cm



DATES, RADENKO MILAK & ROMAN URANJEK **7 April 1991, Kuwait Oil Fires #1** 2017 | 38x102 cm



DATES, RADENKO MILAK & ROMAN URANJEK 7 April 1991, Kuwait Oil Fires #2 2017 | 38x102 cm



RADENKO MILAK University of Disaster (Fire, Chernobyl) 2017 | watercolour | 124x104 cm

PAVILION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AT 57 <sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION - LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA	University of Disaster
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