



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : pressemitteilung

Berlin, 1st August 2008

Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to invite you to the opening of the following exhibitions:

DANIEL BARROCA

Soldier Playing with Dead Lizard

15th – 31st August 2008, Studio 2

**LIBIA CASTRO &
ÓLAFUR ÓLAFSSON**

Recent Works

15th – 31st August 2008, Studio 3

Mi – So, 14 – 19 Uhr

**JOINT OPENING
and
OPEN STUDIOS**

Thursday, 14th August 2008, 7 – 10 p.m.

DANIEL BARROCA's artistic work is concerned with memory, its images and their reception. He asks how things of the past may be made visible in the present, searching for a fitting approach to and a contemporary interpretation of the fragmentary legacies of historical events, e.g. photos, pictures, and sound and voice recordings. The artist's particular interest is in materials that enable highly subjective views of a specific historical epoch or event, in the form of personal recordings by anonymous individuals. On the basis of this material, he develops his drawings, films or photo installations and thus creates perspectives that can be compared to the 'official' version in the history books.

In the exhibition *Soldier Playing with Dead Lizard* at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Daniel Barroca presents eight short video sequences in the form of an 8-channel video installation. Its collages of images and sounds are based on snapshots – discovered at a Portuguese flea market - taken by soldiers who fought in Portugal's colonial war in Guinea-Bissau during the 1960s and 70s. The rather indistinct soundtrack for the videos was assembled from fragments of a tape recording from the same period; in interplay with the eight videos and the slow, sluggish motion of their images – shown on monitors scattered apparently by chance around the exhibition space – this emphasises the fragmentary and multilayered quality of memory. The fact that no historical events can be seen in the images – for they are only reflected in an indirect, subjective way – is a consequence of Barroca's poetic visual language, which is subtle and suggestive. On the other hand, this method also re-

b.w.

flects the actual political and social conditions at the time of the colonial wars as if in a distant mirror: under the rule of the junta in Portugal, there could be no open and direct criticism of the inhumane war in the colonies, although it was ravaging the homeland.

A catalogue with DVD and texts (English) by Francesco Stocchi and Christoph Tannert is being published for the exhibition *Soldier Playing with Dead Lizard*.

DANIEL BARROCA, born in Lisbon in 1976, lives and works in Lisbon. He studied at the Escola Superior de Artes e Design in Caldas de Rainha, Portugal and at Ar.Co in Lisbon and was awarded the União Latina Prize for young artists in the field of fine art in 2003/04. Daniel Barroca currently holds the João Hogan fellowship from the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian and is participating in our International Studio Programme for twelve months.

LIBIA CASTRO & ÓLAFUR ÓLAFSSON work with a wide range of artistic media and examine themes relevant to the socio-political situation of public and urban space; their art is a matter of language, urban identity and the effects of globalisation on local communities. The projects of the artist couple are 'nomadic': numerous journeys, long periods staying in places – in e.g. Cuba, Spain, the Netherlands, Iceland, Turkey and Germany - and cooperation with local communities and activist groups are established components of Castro and Ólafsson's artistic practice. Motivated by their own hybrid identity and experience as migrants, they not only transport their research from one place and context to the next, but intervene in, reactivate and highlight social and political spheres. Castro & Ólafsson define their practice (to differentiate it from the much-used phrase "site-specific") as "site-related, creating connections between several localities". In their exhibition in Studio 3, Castro & Ólafsson are showing selected works from the past five years as a representative insight into their artistic practice and so reflecting on their own work in the form of a dialogue between the individual projects. Sculptures, photographs, video and sound works like *Uterus Flags*, *Bosbolobosboco # 5*, *Your Country Doesn't Exist*, *Mirror Beam*, or *115 Abajos Esmeralda* exemplify their personal, poetic-realistic style of committed artistic work – and people's everyday life together with its events, encounters, spaces, and important political and economic, but also minor personal occurrences.

LIBIA CASTRO, born in Spain, studied at the Frank Mohr Institute in Groningen, Netherlands (Painting and Multimedia, MFA), at the Academia de Arte Flamenco in Jerez, Spain and the College of Design in Dortmund.

ÓLAFUR ÓLAFSSON, born in Iceland, studied at the Frank Mohr Institute in Groningen (Painting and Multimedia, MFA) and the Icelandic Academy of Arts and Crafts in Reykjavik (Multimedia). The artist couple, who have been realising joint projects since their studies in Groningen, live and work in the Netherlands when they are not travelling.

OPEN STUDIOS

Parallel to the exhibition openings on 14th August, we would like to present a further round of Open Studios here at Bethanien.

From 7 to ca. 10 p.m., the following artists will be giving an insight into their latest projects:

Jungju An (ROK), **Daniel Barroca** (P), **Castro & Ólafsson** (E/ IS), **Markus Degerman** (S), **Cynthia Girard** (CAN), **Anouk Kruithof** (NL), **Pia Lindman** (FIN), **An Te Liu** (CAN), **Ives Maes** (B), **Christian Niccoli** (I), **Christodoulos Panayiotou** (CY), **Sarah Ryan** (AUS), **Martin Skauen** (N), **Sophia Tabatadze** (GE) and **Ntando Xorile** (curator, ZA).

Best regards

Künstlerhaus Bethanien