



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : pressemitteilung

Berlin, 5th January 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Künstlerhaus Bethanien is pleased to present:

**ALEKSANDRA POLISIEWICZ**      **Wartopia**  
16th January – 1st February 2009

**URBAN ART**  
**(Marek Pisarsky**  
**+Anne Peschken)**                      **Globalpix**  
16th January – 1st February 2009  
Wed – Sun, 2 – 7 pm, Studio 1

**OPEN STUDIOS**                      **Jungju An (ROK), Cynthia Girard (CA), Romeo Gongora (CA),**  
**Ane Graff (N), Sara Hughes (NZ), Jost Kirsten (NA), Thomasz**  
**Kowalski (PL), Anouk Kruithof (NL), Pia Lindman (FIN), Ives**  
**Maes (B), Christian Niccoli (I), Christodoulos Panayiotou (CY),**  
**Björn Perborg (S), Sarah Ryan (AUS), Patrick Tuttofuoco (I),**  
**André Sousa (P).**  
15th January 2009, 7 – 10 pm, 1st + 2nd floor

**JOINT OPENING**                      **Thursday, 15th January 2009, from 7 pm**

2009 marks the 70th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the German invasion of Poland and in remembrance, Künstlerhaus Bethanien is showing the project *Wartopia* by the Polish artist Aleksandra Polisieiwicz (curator: Bozena Czubak).

Aleksandra Polisieiwicz was born in Katowice, Poland, in 1974 and lives and works in Warsaw. In *Wartopia* the artist essays a virtual recreation of the city of Warsaw according to unrealised National Socialist plans dating from the first years of the Second World War. In architectonic urban panoramas displayed as coloured prints, animations and design models, her visual reproductions reveal an equivocal view of history.

Aleksandra Polisieiwicz carried out extensive research for the project *Wartopia* and made it the foundation to her virtual reconstruction of an uncompleted and still largely unknown chapter of

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recent history. The starting point for the urban visions of *Wartopia*, which were generated using 3D-technology, was the National Socialists' urban developmental concepts: they proposed the complete demolition of Warsaw in order to build "the new German city of Warsaw", which would have housed less than a hundred thousand inhabitants. The city model realised virtually by Polisieiwicz manifests the ambiguous historical dimension and also disturbs the viewer with its visual attractiveness: the aesthetics of the ensemble are based on elements of a monumental, modernistic classicism that presents itself as an icon of stereotype totalitarian architecture. Polisieiwicz's concept can be regarded as critical art concerning the mediatizing of collective memory.

We are showing *Wartopia* in collaboration with the Polish Institute Berlin, where the exhibition can be viewed subsequently (4th – 28th February 2009, [www.polnischekultur.de](http://www.polnischekultur.de)).

**Marek Pisarsky** (\*1956 in Poland) and **Anne Peschken** (\*1966 in Montreal/Canada) have been working together under the name **Urban Art** since 1985. The artists live and work in Berlin and Myslibórz, Poland. As Urban Art, Peschken and Pisarsky practise interventions into public space belonging to the field of Concept Art, making use of a wide range of artistic media.

The exhibition *Globalpix* in Studio 1 shows a selection of large-format "pixel images" as well as a video which has been produced in the style of a documentary soap. In order to create the pixel images, the artists collect painted-on canvases discarded by other artists and cut them into strips so that only slight traces of the original painting remain visible.

After this, the strips are interwoven with one another on stretcher frames so that they generate basic structures for new images. These grid-shaped, square fields each represent one pixel when the images are painted later. The resulting images have a very coarse definition that can only be discerned properly from a distance. In search of up-to-date aesthetic and painterly forms of expression, parts of the images are painted over to produce a new composition, but fragments of the old painting are retained along with the memory of/an interlock with earlier art production. Pisarsky's and Peschken's depictions of historical themes thus correspond to the double-perspective viewing suitable for pixel-images, for it seems we can perceive "history" more clearly from a greater (temporal) distance than we can when we are at the heart of (temporally close) events. Entirely in the spirit of an extended concept of painting, these pixel images interweave various levels: they examine the question of artistic originality, (over-)production and utilisation, as well as processes of perceptual technique and cognitive science concerned with the composition of pictorial elements, the creation of illusions, the construction and de-construction of a panel picture, and finally also the generation of digital aesthetics using analogue means.

#### OPEN STUDIOS

As always at the beginning of each year, we would also like to give our visitors the opportunity to gain an insight into the work and current projects of those artists taking part in our International Studio Programme and to converse with artists from all over the world.

Begin: 15th January 2009, 7pm (until ca. 10 pm).

All these events are being realised with generous support from the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Senate Office – Cultural Affairs.