

War of the Buttons – Children and the World of War

**An exhibition of the Ursula Blickle Foundation
November 12 – December 17, 2006**

Two films make up the framework of this exhibition which, based on 13 artistic positions from Germany, Iran, Lithuania, Austria, Russia, and the USA, draws subtle connections between the world of the child and the world of war. The point of departure is the film "War of the Buttons," which was directed by Yves Robert in 1961. Based on the novel "La Guerre des boutons" written by Louis Pergaud in 1912, this film tells the story of the children of two neighboring French villages who are caught in a permanent situation of dispute and conflict. The second film is by Ali Samadi Ahadi & Oliver Stoltz, a documentary about the child soldiers in Sierra Leone, West Africa. This film entitled "Lost Children" makes reference to the situation of children all over the world who must fight in real wars.

Between these two films the exhibition traces a research project about the themes of childhood, identity, and memory. Contemporary art increasingly addresses the current topics of international violence, political conflicts and the fact that children are being used as soldiers all over the world. In the wake of a series of exhibitions in which the topics of childhood and war were presented internationally in respect to their meaning in artistic works, the exhibition "War of the Buttons" has materialized as an attempt to continue developing the corresponding initial reception as well as to give special attention to the relationship between the biographical and documentary levels in the individual works. Together the projects presented here draw a political portrait in which the individual works take greatly varying positions and address a very wide range of subject matter: the look back at one's own childhood appears side by side with the processing of historical material. The staging of situations with literary and filmic references is juxtaposed with the observation of social phenomena and the documentation of real wartime conflicts in which children are involved as soldiers.

In keeping with the wide spectrum of the exhibition, the catalogue conception includes contributions by Doris Kessler, Ursula Meissner, Elisabeth Vera Rathenböck, Beate Rodlauer, and Ursula Sedlaczek. In addition to presenting the individual artistic works, the writers also address the subject matter from a psychological, political, and background reporting angle. A further literary approach is provided by "La Guerre des boutons," the book written by Louis Pergaud in 1912 that sets the theme and serves as the intellectual core of the whole project.

After its run at the Ursula Blickle Foundation, the exhibition will travel to Denmark (Århus Kunstbygning Center for Contemporary Art) and Austria (Landesgalerie Linz).

Participating artists: Ali Samadi Ahadi & Oliver Stoltz, AES+F, Shahram Entekhabi, Manfred Erjautz, Bernhard Fuchs, Anthony Goicolea, Gintaras Makarevičius, Ursula Meissner, Monika Oechsler, Lisl Ponger, Yves Robert, Markus Schinwald, Thomas Sturm, Thomas Wrede, Gregor Zivic

Exhibition venue
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Curator
Dr. Martin Hochleitner, Curator, Landesgalerie Linz

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Preopening viewing
Please call for an appointment:
Phone +49 7251 60919 Fax +49 7251 68687

Press photos
Available on our website:
www.ursula-blickle-stiftung.de

Duration of the exhibition
November 12 – December 17, 2006

Opening
Saturday, November 11, 2006, 7:00 p.m.

Catalogue
A catalogue is being published
in conjunction with the exhibition

Opening hours
Wed. 2:00 p.m. till 5:00 p.m.
Sun. 2:00 p.m. till 6:00 p.m.
and by appointment

We'd appreciate an announcement of our exhibition in your medium. If publicized, please send us a copy for our files. Thank you!