

# the artistic intervention – a process

site-specific indoor and outdoor installations  
curated by Peter Noever

Magdalena Jetelova

Michael Kienzer

Koen Vanmechelen

Zaha Hadid

Kendell Geers

Erwin Wurm

Often the process of an experiment can be more revealing than the outcome itself. Dealing with a specific site means a willingness to interact with it, with its occupants, here and now, to open oneself to the habits, perceptions, fears, and yearnings of the space.

In many respects this project will put the avant-garde potential of the traditional craft of glassmaking to a test. Glassmaking, in turn, challenges the risk potential of art—an experiment with no clear outcome.

**Zaha Hadid's** experiment, which stands prototypically for the project as a whole, is a radical collision course with the craft of glass manufacturing. It couldn't be realized in time for the opening of the exhibition but is nevertheless—albeit not visibly—still present here as an invisible statement. As a consequence she now shows a table-object in fiber glass which was produced in 2008.

In his sculpture which is on display here and which was produced specifically for this exhibition by Berengo Studio furnace, **Michael Kienzer** transforms a specific material of this city into a contradictory norm: the so-called euro-pallet, the standardized unit for the transportation of products. Kienzer chooses a paradoxical material for this form. Glass is itself an object that requires protection and is completely inappropriate as packing material for transportation.

**Erwin Wurm** distorts a meticulous reconstruction of the house he grew up in and its furnishings, giving it radically new proportions. In relocating the house of his childhood he thus directs attention to a strange phenomenon of 'Venice': the irreality of the Narrow House also reflects the irreality of Venice.

**Magdalena Jetelova's** interventions communicate with the aquatic profile of the city. In an intervention that was specifically developed for the Palazzo Cavalli Franchetti, the artist exaggerates the Venetian extravaganza of building houses into water in that she turns landing stages into dinner tables and with a gushing gesture she invites her guests to sit in the water. A moving large-scale mirror transfers the movement of the ubiquitous water from the outside to the inside.

The questioning of the borders of space plays a key role in the various ways in which we perceive the city. What is generated here is the inspiration that happens when one allows an interaction between artists. What takes place in each of the art positions is what happens when artists are not afraid to melt into the context, their surroundings, the site, when they acknowledge, in the artistic sense, the unique installation potential of a place.

Brutality and beauty characterize **Kendell Geers'** object arrangements and material camouflages. Violence, risk, danger, and perpetration carve themselves into the work through poetic language and the unambiguous shaping of the material. Kendell Geers actively pushes the borders and isn't afraid to address banality, kitsch, or sexism. The shift in context and intensification of Geers' work is a result of both the site (Venice) and his focus on working with a specific material.

**Koen Vanmechelen's** object stands as a trophy and makes reference to his solo exhibition 'Nato A Venezia', which is also currently being shown in Palazzo Loredan, two minutes from here. The hatching of the 15th generation of his 'Cosmopolitan Chickens' is taking place here and now. As a chicken coop Venice celebrates the egg and places it on a pedestal. The absurdity of a hen's pride is crowned by the glass egg clutched by the steel claws of a chicken. It is presented in the sense of a melting pot of nations but it resorts to the medium of Venetian 'national' pride to flaunt itself, in this case: glass.

Here, none of the positions stand alone, even if each speaks for itself, blends with its surroundings, communicates with the site. The realized and unrealized projects interact in direct dialogue with the participants and artists, with Venice as a place and non-place, with its architecture, its jadedness toward art, its anarcho-capitalist commercial dogmas, its attitude toward commodities, its physical substances, its rhythms, its art obsessions, its ridiculousness and beauty.