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An interview to the Artistic Director of Mediterranean 18 Young Artists Biennale

at 14 aprile 2017



Driant Zeneli was appointed the Artistic Director of Mediterranean 18 Young Artists Biennale, with the responsibility for conceptualizing the theme of the Biennale and setting up the curatorial team composed of:

Curator of Applied Arts: Jonida Turani
 Curator of Visual Art: Maja Ćirić
 Curator of Performance: Ema Andrea
 Curator of Literary Creation: Maria Rosa Sossai
 Curator of Music: Alban Nimani & Rubin Beqo
 Curator of Film: Eroll Bilibani

We asked him some questions about the upcoming Biennale in Tirana and Durrës.

What are your expectations, as Artistic Director, about this event? What will be the added value of this event in the framework of the complex transition of the Euromediterranean scenario?

I feel I should speak as an artist for the artists while I answer your question. I believe that this Biennale is happening at the right place in the right time. What I expect to come is a hurricane of energy brought by the young artists of Europe and the Mediterranean. The added value is the art and the ideas they bring with them, to be shared and also questioned. The Biennale will start with a journey, where a boat will take artists, critiques, journalists together with casual passengers from Bari to Durrës. What will be important is the moment of 'crossing', where it will be possible to start reflecting about how to create solutions together.

Which previews could you give us about the types of works that will be presented in Tirana?

I prefer not to define disciplines, I think of art as an energy that takes different shapes and in the moment if its appearance it has a responsibility in front of the public. I am sharing this responsibility with a group of friends who will curate the different sections of the biennial Ema Andrea – Performance, Eroll Bilibani – Film, Maria Rosa Sossai / ALA Group – Literary Creation, Rubin Beqo/Alban Nimani – Music, Jonida Turani – Applied Art, Maja Ćirić – Visual Art. The artists are invited to bring selected artworks that respond to the concept of History+Conflict+Dream+Failure=HOME as it was proposed by the Biennale call, with their own interpretation of looking at the present future and its different shapes. Some of them present the melancholy of the past that is gone, others reflect on new media of communication, and others the failures of present society.

What are your impressions about the contemporary art scene of Albania?

I was 17 years old when the first Tirana biennial happened in 2001. I remember very well those days, although I did not understand what I was looking at, I perceived that something new was happening in the country. The same year I went to study in Italy and although I lived for the next fifteen years, I have always been close and active to the Albanian art scene. The energy here is not missing, but there is an urgency to conciliate it with independent institutions which can function beyond political waves. My great desire is that this Biennale could function as a seed, somehow as the Tirana Biennial did by inspiring a generation of cultural actors which are still working in the country today.

The concept of the event that you have drafted is "HOME": where did you get the inspiration from? What is the idea behind it?

The idea of home for this Biennale is grounded on four elements: 'history, intending the archive of the unaccountable number of individual stories, recorded or forgotten. Conflict, to consider the way we share homes. Dream as the project of home, as the fundamental human right to be free to choose and desire our real or imaginary home. Failure as the inner resistance of the various attempts, transformed along the way in search for the dream home.' The inspiration comes from how I developed my work for the past ten years, I guess that for an artist to make art is a metaphor for building 'home'.

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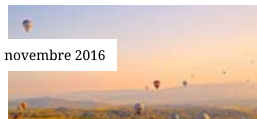
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