**ACADEMIÆ | YOUTH ART BIENNALE 2018**

**“where Plato tought”**

**Fortezza,Franzensfeste - Alto Adige,Suedtirol- Italy**  
**7 July - 31 October 2018 (Tue-Sun, 10 am to 6 pm)**

**Opening: 6 July 2018, 7 pm**

The second edition of ACADEMIÆ, a biennial event entirely dedicated to academy and university art students, will open on July 6, 2018 in the Fortezza / Franzensfeste . This edition **curated by Christian Jankowski**, will see the participation of emerging artists, selected in collaboration with artists working as professors in the most innovative European academies.

The event is focused on the multiplicity of interests and approaches of contemporary art research, considering the potential of education in the art world and the artistic community as models based on openness, interdisciplinarity and mobility. An event which aims to highlight the importance and urgency for such models in current times.

The selected artists will present **extremely varied works as regards their conceptual and formal aspects**, in a number of different environments of this historic stronghold (which already hosted Manifesta 7 in 2008) reflecting the extraordinary vitality, complexity and plurality of contemporary artistic languages.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a **publication** that represents yet another instrument used to reflect about the reason for art, the role it plays, its importance in current times.

**Academiae – Youth Art Biennale 2018**

**“Where Plato Taught” – curatorial concept by Christian Jankowski**

What we have are an old fortress in the mountains, today an exhibition venue, and the city of Bolzano, located in the heart of Europe, and its interest in contemporary young art. The *Academiae,* first held in 2016, provides proof. Works by students from various European art academies, nominated by their professors, were exhibited for the first edition.

I have been invited to curate this year’s biennial and I intend to build on this foundation. In addition to the young artists, I would also like to include in the exhibition concept the climatic conditions for contemporary teaching as created by the professors and their students.

In 2018, for the first time, the occasion arose to exploit a hitherto unused area of the Franzensfeste. This part – the last bastion of defence – is accessible only via an underground tunnel. Its cave-like character refers to the philosophical heavyweight Plato, the great-grandfather of schools and academies. In the title of the biennial Plato stands for a person who gathered people around him through a need for cognition and speaking. This is where the establishment of clubs, gangs and classes starts.

Originally the name “Academy” described an olive grove located somewhere outside of Athens – also a fine motif for coming together in an idyllic Alpine valley. Name-dropping the ancient philosopher in the title of the Biennale can be taken as consciously pathetic and not strictly Platonic. By the way, the unofficial, somewhat irreverent subtitle of the biennial is: “Teaching Art – Is it Art or a Fart?”

As a professor of sculpture, teaching has in the last thirteen years become part of my artistic selfimage. I even hear myself saying it sometimes. Yet what does this actually mean? And who benefits from it? Is the teaching of art a technical routine, is it just so much hot air or itself art? Are there student geniuses that actually have no need of teaching? How effective is speaking about art in classes today? Is each “master’s” notion of art recorded on every “pupil’s” hard drive? Can it then be deleted? Which contemporary academy class has the chance to become as legendary as, for example, the Becher class (Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth, Candida Höfer) or the class of Karl-Otto Goetz (Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter, Franz Erhard Walther) in Germany? Who today enjoys such academic fame? How closely is the success of the younger generation linked to the tutor? How successfully will classes work without a master?

I would like to invite internationally exciting classes, which will contribute from various practices in teaching. They will occupy the individual spaces and parts of the fortress and have *carte blanche* – whether a whole room will be occupied by an individual student’s position, a selected group of artists or even a community project by the whole class in which professors can participate as artists is optional. The class structure and dynamic decides how the exhibition space is organized, the course’s profile and finally the professors. The logic of one room will thus be no guide to what is contained in the next.

In a further part of “Where Plato Taught”, I wish to exhibit the teaching of art in a video projection room under the working title “*Zeugen der Lehre* [Witnesses of Teaching]”:

1. Strange Teachers – historical art teachers such as John Baldessari and Joseph Beuys.

2. Our Teachers – the professors at the Biennale talk about the dynamics that led to the contribution of their class to the biennial, as well as about their life in their respective academy.

3. About Teachers – the young artists talk about their professors and the teaching they enjoy.

I thus wish, by the way also with the help of non-academic video contributions, to make the biennial “Where Plato Taught” into a place where the various views of teaching art will become an example of art. The upcoming Biennale should take visitors on a voyage of discovery through the art of young artists and the academic landscapes that are behind them.

**Associazione ArtintheAlps Verein**

The exhibition is conceived and organised by **Associazione ArtintheAlps Verein.** It boasts the patronage of **Euroregione Euregio** and the support of the **Trentino/Südtirol Region and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano/Südtirol.**

The Association was founded by personalities living in the provinces of Innsbruck, Bolzano and Trento with different professional backgrounds, but a common love and dedication to culture. The *mission* is to promote cultural activities and events - with particular regard to the field of visual art - to enhance cultures, the artistic heritage and local artists, to stimulate the connection between the territory and international art circles and to help consolidate the bridge between different languages and cultures that has always characterised the territories in the heart of the Alps.