
PRESS RELEASE
BASEL | MARCH 15 | 2019

Alexandra Pirici selected for Art Basel's next project on Messeplatz

This June, Art Basel is pleased to present 'Aggregate' (2017-2019), a performative environment by Romanian artist Alexandra Pirici, curated by Cecilia Alemani for Basel's Messeplatz. Known for staging complex actions and live choreographies, Pirici often explores in her work symbolic manifestations of history, individual and collective notions of bodily presence, and structures of power. Art Basel, whose Lead Partner is UBS, takes place from June 13 to 16, 2019.

For this new iteration of 'Aggregate', Alexandra Pirici brings together over 60 performers that form a vast collective body through the accumulation of individual gestures, enveloping the viewers in intricate choreographies and rehearsed compositions. Enacting gestures and sounds taken from nature and from disparate popular sources in an attempt to render different forms of heritage and cultural memory, Pirici conceived 'Aggregate' as a time capsule in which fragments from vernacular culture, art history and everyday life are given new living embodiments.

As viewers walk around this performative landscape, the dancers and enactors mix seamlessly with the audience. While following a defined, algorithmic framework, the dancers choose impromptu how they combine individual elements from a large selection of choreographic materials, including excerpts from pop songs such as Depeche Mode's 'Enjoy the Silence' (1990), staged movements that evoke art historical masterpieces such as Michelangelo's 'David' (c.1504) or Wifredo Lam's 'Lisa Mona' (1950), popular references to Bollywood movies, as well as hand signals from the Occupy movement. The choreography is further punctuated by recitations of poetry excerpts from Forough Farrokhzad, Gil Scott-Heron and Simone Yoyotte, and Romanian folk music by Maria Tănase.

By identifying and highlighting fragments of a collective consciousness, 'Aggregate' invites the viewers to reflect on how identities are constructed and performed, and how collectivity is built through the selective recollection, multiplication and hybridization of knowledge and information. Thus, Pirici urges to confront commonalities and envision society itself as a subjective, living body of shared memories and behaviors.

The new edition of 'Aggregate' at Art Basel 2019 is staged in a newly designed temporary pavilion sited on Messeplatz, conceived and designed by Andrei Dinu, a frequent collaborator of Pirici's. Inspired by American architect Buckminster Fuller's geodesic domes and by medical isolation spaces, the temporary pavilion is constructed as an air-supported structure, whose shape is defined by soft, organic lines that contrast with the geometric, grid-like environment of Messeplatz. The flexible and translucent surface of the pavilion acts as a protective membrane or shell that pulsates with the energy of the performers and the surrounding spaces.

'Aggregate' was first presented at the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein in 2017 and was then featured in the first edition of Art Basel Cities week in Buenos Aires in September 2018 as part of 'Hopscotch (Rayuela)', also curated by Cecilia Alemani.

NOTES TO EDITORS

'Aggregate' (2017-2019)

June 11 to June 14, 2019

Opening hours:

June 11 and June 12, 2019, 5–9pm

June 13 and June 14, 2019, 4–8pm

Free and open to the public

About Alexandra Pirici

Alexandra Pirici is a Romanian artist and choreographer whose ongoing actions and performative environments explore embodiment, history and invisible structures of power, in both galleries and public spaces. Her work has been shown in the Romanian Pavilion at the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale (2013); Manifesta 10, St. Petersburg (2014); the Berlin Biennale (2016); and the 5th edition of Skulptur Projekte Münster (2017). She has also presented her ongoing actions at the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2014); the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2014-15); the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2015); Tate Modern, London (2016); the High Line (2017) and the New Museum, New York (2018), among many others. Her live performative works are part of private and public art collections such as Kadist, the Van Abbemuseum and Public Art Agency.

About Andrei Dinu

Andrei Dinu is a Romanian designer and scenographer. He is the designer of fashion brand Prosper Center and the interior design project Atelier Brut. He has collaborated with Alexandra Pirici on various works including 'Signals' for the 9th Berlin Biennale (2016), 'Aggregate' at the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (2017) and 'Co-natural' at the New Museum in New York (2018). He has also worked with theater directors and choreographers such as Gianina Cărbunariu, Farid Fairuz and Alexandru Berceanu. In 2011, he was the designer of the Romanian Pavilion at the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space.

About Cecilia Alemani

Cecilia Alemani is the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, the public art program presented by the non-profit organization Friends of the High Line in New York City. In 2018, she served as the Artistic Director of the inaugural edition of Art Basel Cities Week in Buenos Aires. Alemani was the curator of the Italian Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale. Since 2012, she has commissioned and curated public art projects on the High Line by over two hundred artists. For the Italian Pavilion, she organized the exhibition 'Il mondo magico', featuring new commissions by Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Roberto Cuoghi and Adelita Husni-Bey. Throughout her career, Alemani has collaborated with many museums, institutions and foundations such as MoMA PS1, New York; Tate Modern, London; and the Deste Foundation, Athens. She has also pursued more unconventional projects with non-profits and informal organizations, including co-founding No Soul For Sale in 2009, a festival of independent spaces, non-profit organizations and artist collectives which took place at X Initiative, New York. From January 2009 to February 2010, she served as the Curatorial Director of X Initiative. Alemani worked as guest curator for the performance art biennial Performa 11.

About Art Basel

Founded in 1970 by gallerists from Basel, Art Basel today stages the world's premier art shows for Modern and contemporary art, sited in Basel, Miami Beach and Hong Kong.

Defined by its host city and region, each show is unique, which is reflected in its participating galleries, artworks presented, and the content of parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each edition. Art Basel's engagement has expanded beyond art fairs through a number of new initiatives such as Art Basel Cities, working with partner cities on bespoke cultural programs. For further information, please visit artbasel.com.

Partners

UBS, Global Lead Partner of Art Basel, has supported the organization for 25 years. As Art Basel's global network expanded, UBS increased its lead partnership to include all three shows, Art Basel Cities, and as co-publisher of the Art Basel and UBS Global Art Market Report. UBS has a long record of engagement in contemporary art with the UBS Art Collection, one of the world's most distinguished corporate art collections with more than 30,000 works created by artists from more than 75 countries, at its core. The firm actively enables audiences to participate in contemporary art through its partnerships with leading cultural organizations around the world. For more information about UBS's commitment to contemporary art, visit ubs.com/art.

Art Basel's **Associate Partners** include MGM Resorts International – one of the world's leading entertainment companies with a long-standing commitment to presenting and supporting art in public spaces; Audemars Piguet, whose expanding activities in contemporary art include the Audemars Piguet Art Commission; and NetJets – the world leader in private aviation. Art Basel is also supported globally by BMW (who has co-developed with Art Basel the BMW Art Journey), Ruinart, Sanlorenzo and La Prairie.

Additional Partners are Baloise Group, whose Art Prize is awarded to up to two artists exhibiting in the Statements sector, AXA ART, Davidoff, Vienna Tourist Board and Vitra. For more information, please visit artbasel.com/partners.

Important Dates for Media

Media Reception

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

Preview (by invitation):

Tuesday, June 11, 2019 and Wednesday, June 12, 2019

Public opening dates and hours:

Thursday, June 13, 2019 – Sunday, June 16, 2019, 11am-7pm

Press accreditation:

Press accreditation for the Basel show will open in early April. Please note that press accreditation for our show in Basel takes place online only. Therefore, it is important to register and apply online before coming to the fair. Please visit artbasel.com/press/accreditation.

Upcoming Art Basel shows

Hong Kong, March 29-31, 2019

Basel, June 13-16, 2019

Miami Beach, December 5-8, 2019

Media information online

Media information and images can be downloaded directly from artbasel.com/press. Journalists can subscribe to our media mailings to receive information on Art Basel.

For the latest updates on Art Basel, visit artbasel.com, find us on Facebook at facebook.com/artbasel or follow @artbasel on Instagram, Twitter, Weibo and WeChat.

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