

Kamikaze Loggia

Pavilion of Georgia at the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia

Bouillon Group, Thea Djordjadze, Nikoloz Lutidze, Gela Patashuri with Ei Arakawa and Sergei Tcherepnin, Gio Sumbadze

Commissioner: Marine Mizandari, First Deputy Minister of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia

Curator: Joanna Warsza

June 1 – November 24, 2013

Preview: May 29 – 31, 2013

Opening: May 30, 2013, 5.15 pm

Venue: Arsenale (waterfront facing Canale di Porta Nova, near the Giardino delle Vergini)

Map: <http://goo.gl/maps/8TZoL>



Kamikaze Loggia, Tbilisi 2007. Foto: Levan Asabashvili/Urban Reactor

Press Release

The Pavilion of Georgia at the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia will be a parasitic extension to an old building in the Arsenale. This informal structure called “kamikaze loggia”—characteristic of Tbilisi—will be designed by the artist Gio Sumbadze, who is a researcher of the typology of these architectural additions. Vernacular extensions of modernist buildings have been created since the 1990s as an organic response to the new, “lawless” times after the fall of the Soviet Union. They increase the living space and are usually used as terraces, extra rooms, open refrigerators, or—as in Sumbadze’s case—an artist studio. It is said that a Russian journalist named them “kamikaze”, drawing a parallel between the romantic and suicidal character of such an endeavour and the typical ending of most

Georgian family names “-adze”. This architecture also refers back to the local palimpsestic building technique, which since the Middle Ages has allowed new houses to be built on top of existing ones on the steep slopes of the Caucasus Mountains thus not monumentalising the past but expanding on it for the future.

This year the Pavilion of Georgia will take the form of a kamikaze loggia hosting an exhibition of the Bouillon Group, Thea Djordjadze, Nikoloz Lutidze, Gela Patashuri with Ei Arakawa and Sergei Tcherepnin, and Gio Sumbadze. The exhibition looks at the creation of such informal architecture, a manifestation of the refusal of dominant structures, in order to incorporate provisional liberty, local self-determination and contemporary appropriation of the infrastructural legacy of Soviet master plans. The exhibition aims at presenting the extraordinary range of informality, bottom-up solutions and the concept of self-organization in Georgian art and architecture. Looking at local examples of self-initiated environments—e.g. kamikaze loggias, “euroremonts”, “beautifications” or other modifications of the Soviet heritage—the project will seek to examine their anticipatory and often progressive potential. It will cast a critical look at the social, political and ideological discourses of the last twenty years in Georgia—thus introducing an artistic scene of a country that sometimes is described as “Italy gone Marxist”.

During the preview days there will be daily performances by Bouillon Group, Nikoloz Lutidze, and Gela Patashuri with Ei Arakawa and Sergei Tcherepnin.

Artistic Advisor: Nana Kipiani

Assistant Curator: Sandra Teitge

Project Managers: Gvantsa Turmanidze with Nino Bezarashvili and Anna Asatiani

Production and architecture: M+B Studio SRL

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Online

www.georgian-pavilion.org

www.facebook.com/GeorgianPavillon

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Publications on occasion of the exhibition

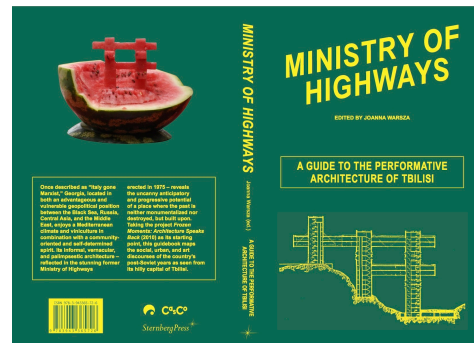


Kamikaze Loggia

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Ministry of Highways

A Guide to the Performative Architecture of Tbilisi

Joanna Warsza (Ed.)

With contributions by Ei Arakawa, Ruben Arevshatyan, Levan Asabashvili, Bouillon Group, George Chakhava, Thea Djordjadze, Didier Faustino, Yona Friedman, Nana Kipiani, Nikoloz Lutidze, Marion von Osten, Nini Palavandishvili, Gela Patashuri, Lali Pertenava, Marjetica Potrč, Richard Reynolds, Slavs and Tatars, Gio Sumbadze, Sophia Tabatadze, Éric Troussicot, Jan Verwoert, Aleksandra Wasilkowska, et al.

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Biographical Information

Artists

Bouillon Group, an artist collective, founded in Tbilisi in 2008.

Bouillon Group's performances, actions and artistic interventions mostly take place in the public realm. They also worked on a series of exhibitions in private apartments referring to the role of private flats during the Soviet Union—often the only space of public debate or exhibition making, which was not officially supported and controlled. They have taken part both in *Betlemi-Mikro-Raioni* (2009) and *Frozen Moments. Architecture Speaks Back* (2010), art projects in Tbilisi curated by Joanna Warsza. They have exhibited with AICA Armenia (2010), in Poland (MOCAP in Kraków and Arsenał in Białystok, both in 2011), and in Germany (GfZK in Leipzig, 2010), among others. The project for *Kamikaze Loggia*, the Pavilion of Georgia, will continue their reflection on the public and the private, as well as on the religious and the ideological.

Thea Djordjadze, born in 1971, visual artist.

Thea Djordjadze's meticulous objects, constructions and installations often deal with architectural structures—both familiar and unfamiliar—and references to modernism as well as to science, music, archaeology and politics. For her multipartite sculptural ensembles, Djordjadze uses everyday materials such as ceramics, cardboard, textiles or plaster along with found objects; she combines fragile materials with stable wooden or steely structures which are reminiscent of banisters, tables or bookcases. One of her major—although not obvious—influences on her work is the Georgian informal architecture as well as the relation between the landscape and the built environment in her native region of the Caucasus. Thea Djordjadze lives in Berlin and has exhibited worldwide. Recently she participated at dOCUMENTA (13) and opened solo shows in Malmö Konsthall, Kölner Kunstverein, Kunsthalle Basel and the Aspen Art Museum.

Nikoloz Lutidze, born in 1984, actor, visual artist and performer.

Nikoloz Lutidze is particularly interested in the performative elements of architecture and the on-going modification of urban textures since the fall of the Soviet Union. Since 2010 he is working on a series of actions based on the concept of "Euroremonts", a local neologism for a superficial renovation according to European standards. He will continue this series for *Kamikaze Loggia*, the Pavilion of Georgia. His performances, both funny and intelligent, aim at enabling a critical discussion about the legacy of communism and a Soviet aesthetical influence in Georgia. Nikoloz Lutidze is author of the documentary film *Freedom of Expression* (2009), shown at different human rights centres throughout the Caucasus.

Gela Patashuri (b. in 1973) with **Ei Arakawa** (b. in 1977) and **Sergei Tcherepnin** (b. in 1981)

The collaboration between Gela Patashuri, Ei Arakawa and Sergei Tcherepnin—a Georgian, a Japanese and an US-American—accidentally started in Tbilisi in 2005 on occasion of the performance *Grand Openings* that was part of the "Tbilisi series" (tbilisi3.com). Since then the collective performances of Patashuri, Arakawa and Tcherepnin involved staged situations, choreographed sequences, process-oriented sound and sonic events that work with architecture and landscape as a medium, reflecting the notions of interdisciplinarity. They presented their work at Casco in Utrecht, The Showroom in London, Bétonsalon and CAC Brétigny in Paris, as well as in Tbilisi in *Frozen Moments. Architecture Speaks Back* (2010). For the Pavilion of Georgia at the 55th Biennale di Venezia they plan to stage a musical composition using 277 poems which Alexi Bakhteli, construction worker and Gela Patashuri's father, wrote between 1978 and his accidental death in 2003. The trio will use all first lines of the 277 poems to compose what may become a series of songs performed in and outside the *Kamikaze Loggia*.

Gio Sumbadze, born in 1976, visual artist.

Gio Sumbadze is mostly working in collectives. He is a member of the Tbilisi art collective Goslab and founder of the Urban Research Lab (URL), a Tbilisi-based platform of artists, architects and photographers. URL produces an on-going archive documenting the repurposing of Soviet infrastructure and studying its relationship to the erosion of the Marxist ideology. URL also constructs a database of social housing in Tbilisi—mostly “mikroraions”, large suburban modernist housing estates—focusing their post-Soviet condition. Together with the Rotterdam Architecture Biennale, URL co-initiated the project *New Map of Tbilisi* that addressed the rampant real estate development in Tbilisi. Based on his architectural research in Tbilisi Gio Sumbadze developed the *Kamikaze Loggia* as the form of the Pavilion of Georgia.

Commissioner

Marine Mizandari, born in 1963, first deputy minister of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, has graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts of Tbilisi and holds a PhD in Art History. She conceived and led various cultural projects in Georgia, Belgium and Germany including intercultural events involving various cultural actors from the European and Eastern countries; she delivered lectures on cultural topics in Paris, Freiburg and Louvain-la-Neuve and carried out missions aiming at monitoring the EU funded cultural projects in Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Ukraine. She has valuable experience in Cultural Heritage Conservation issues.

Curator

Joanna Warsza, born in 1976, is a curator for visual, performing arts and architecture. She was associate curator of the 7th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art. Warsza works mostly in the public realm, examining social and political agendas. In 2009 and 2010 she worked in Tbilisi on two projects in the public realm: *Betlemi-Mikro-Raioni* and *Frozen Moments. Architecture Speaks Back* which resulted in curating the Pavilion of Georgia at the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia. She is editor of *Ministry of Highways: A Guide to the Performative Architecture of Tbilisi*, published by Sternberg Press in May 2013, and one of the curators of the Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art, opening in September 2013.