

The Kölnischer Kunstverein is delighted to be able to present this year's prestigious *ars viva* prize exhibition on the theme of *History*. The Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft im BDI e.V. (Cultural Circle of German Industry in the BDI, reg. charity) awarded the *ars viva* prize for visual arts of € 5,000 each to Mariana Castillo Deball (b. 1975), Jay Chung and Q Takeki Maeda (b. 1976/77), and Dani Gal (b. 1975). Three exhibitions (in the Museum Wiesbaden, in the Kölnischer Kunstverein and in the migros museum für gegenwartskunst in Zurich) in the series *ars viva* are linked to the promotional prize, and these will be accompanied by a catalogue in two languages and an artist's edition. The three prize-winners were chosen from 44 artists in whose work the investigation of the construction of historical facts is of central importance.

It is striking that all the prize-winning artists engage in their work with the question of the construction of history, how and why it comes to be used today in the political but also the economic sphere. They concentrate in their works on the historical document as the smallest common factor on which, seen from today, agreement can be reached.

Mariana Castillo Deball was born 1975 in Mexico City and studied in Mexico City and Maastricht. In her installations and films the artist often links the dates of historical found objects with fictions of her own, in this way creating a fantastic polyphony in the representation of historical facts. The architecture of an archaeological museum can just as easily become material in her hands as a documented error in economic history. By treating both in her personal aesthetic idiom and skilfully analysing them, she gives the ponderous historical material a lightness that directs the viewer's gaze to aspects of them that are seemingly peripheral or absurd yet always form part of the construction of history.

Jay Chung and Q Takeki Maeda were born respectively in 1976 in the USA and in 1977 in Japan and studied at Yale, Berkeley, Tokyo and Frankfurt/Main. With conceptual acuteness and a good measure of humour the work of the two artists examines the extent to which the fetishism of today's consumer world and the universal possibility for anyone to appear in the mass media raises issues of originality and fakery. In doing so the two artists, who are constant performers of their own work, look at how a leading international handbag manufacturer misrepresents historical facts in order to create its own myth, as well as scrutinizing the shoddy construction of reproduction furniture.

Dani Gal was born 1975 in Israel and studied in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Frankfurt/Main and New York. In his work the artist investigates the construction of history in the media in the post-war years. He approaches this principally through sound and by examining the question of how the documentation of a historical event relates to the direct experience of that event. How does sound alter our

perception of facts? The artist has worked on the recent history of Israel, for example with a re-enactment of the first television broadcasts by the national TV station, as well as with a quasi documentary approach to the legendary musical producer Lee Perry.

The jury, under the chairmanship of Dr. Arend Oetker, this year consisted of curators Dr. Volker Rattemeyer and Dr. Jo?rg Daur (Museum Wiesbaden), Kathrin Jentjens and Anja Nathan-Dorn (Ko?lnischer Kunstverein), Heike Munder (migros museum fu?r gegenwartskunst in Zurich) and Dr. Yilmar Dziwior (Kunsthau Bregenz), Christiane Mennicke (Kunsthau Dresden) and six members of the arts committee of the Kulturkreis.

The *ars viva* exhibition ran from 11.10.2009 to 17.1.2010 at the Museum Wiesbaden. The exhibition then moves to the Ko?lnischer Kunstverein, after which it will run from 12.6. to 15.8.2010 in the migros museum fu?r gegenwartskunst in Zurich.

ars viva 09/10 *Geschichte/ History* – An exhibition of the award winners visual arts of Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft im BDI.

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