

# VENICEPROJECTS

## MEDIATIONS BIENNALE

POZNAN 3-30.10.2008

Poland's location on the borderland of European and Asian influences, for centuries stimulated development of a unique cultural perspective, which differs from the post-colonial identity of Western Europe. The art of Central Europe is the result of mutual social, historical, ethnic, religious, cultural and aesthetic influences. At times, remotely inspired by main European trends, it produced completely new artistic phenomena and manifestos. Although it is difficult to talk about Central European art as a separate, consistent reality, each confrontation with it evokes a desire to name this unique phenomenon so deeply embedded in the region's reality.

The theme of the first Polish Biennial -Mediations- addresses a very real cultural dilemma in contemporary society: the preservation of identity versus its loss.

Of necessity, mediation requires reaching a compromise, developing a dialectical relationship between the parts that can lead to a partial loss of the self in favor of an understanding of the other and the creation of an "us".

Social and cultural precariousness is a condition that characterizes the lives of global citizens.

The world has always been multicultural but this characteristic has assumed a particular speed and specificity in our time: the globalization of the economic market, of information and the speed of means of transport have made intercultural communication possible. But is all this real or only virtual?

Interpersonal relationships as well as those between communities are becoming increasingly complex, and terms like deterritorialization and the new nomadism are frequently used. All this contributes to feeding the identity crisis that is inside each of us.

The building of a truly democratic and global society must be based on the recognition of all universal rights. In this sense, art can be a useful area of identity comparison and exchange that permits imaginary bridges be built that are favorable to cultural mediation.

The two artists Marya Kazoun and Koen Vanmechelen, invited to this event, have always confronted the theme of identity in their work. Their artistic experimentations, although very different, are joined by an attempt to communicate with the outside world by investigating the contact between the self and the other. Theirs are individual journeys but at the same time, universal ones.