

Fabrizio Plessi
inaugurates the Hassan Museum in Rabat
presenting 'Fez Fez'
curated by Paolo De Grandis

Vernissage: Monday 29th May at 7.00 p.m.

Hassan Museum: 14, Avenue Mohamed Lyazidi, Villa Andalucia - Hassan, Rabat

Open to the public: 30th May – 30th July 2006

Arte Communications announces the opening of the Hassan Museum in Rabat with the exhibition project entitled 'Fez Fez' by Fabrizio Plessi.

The Hassan Museum, internationally directed by Paolo De Grandis and supervised by Fathiya Tahiri, Chairwoman of the Hassan Museum Foundation, is housed in the historic Villa Andalucia which, with its rich historic and artistic heritage, has been able to highlight Fabrizio Plessi's significant interest in Morocco.

For the inauguration of the Museum, the artist from Emilia, though Venetian by adoption, proposes the project 'Fez Fez': an installation composed of preparatory studies on paper, bozzetti, iconographic items and a video illustrating the path that led to the conception of the work 'Fez' which, through virtual language, recalls the atmospheres of the wool dye-works at Fez. The installation, presented on the occasion of the exhibition held in Berlin in 1994, is part of a cycle of works dedicated to the cities visited by Plessi, who likes to define himself as an untiring traveller, to recreate evocative environments according to his highly personal artistic viewpoint. The artist has always been interested in the use of technology combined with the classic aspects of materials, in an expressive path between the concept and the execution of the work of art; he alternates thoughts and situations in a state of apparent, unceasing change, where the videos of red water and the hanks of wool tangibly become the signified and the signifier, an expressive means of the work of art for outlining the need to restore to Morocco, in a process of cultural reappropriation, a place that has its own cultural heritage, free from any folkloristic sense.

Morocco, crossroads of cultures and ideas, of goods and knowledge. And above all of fabrics, precious witnesses of taste and custom and a privileged object of innovations and contaminations, repropose here following the activities, interests and culture of an artist who, in his unceasing expressive research, transposes into his projects a vitality that goes beyond the limits imposed by the material. His expert manipulations change the canonical aspects of the means of expression: the video transfers the pulsating matter, releases colour, while iron, steel and wood are supporting elements which, however, never give up their own material identity. Like a great trap for the senses, 'Fez Fez' offers refuge to the emotion to enchant and envelop the onlooker in the inspired atmosphere and the unexpected sound effects of Ryuichi Sakamoto, bringing extraordinary thoughts to the surface, a continuous wandering through the soul and the unlimited richness of places and traditions. The recent partnership that has been formed between Paolo De Grandis and the Kingdom of Morocco is therefore embodied in the art of Fabrizio Plessi. This partnership has led to the creation of the Hassan Museum which will be able to bring works and projects of the highest level to Rabat.

The exhibition, curated by Paolo De Grandis and organised by Arte Communications, will be held from 30th May to 30th July.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Fabrizio Plessi was born in 1940 in Reggio Emilia, he lives and works in Venice, Paris, Cologne and Mallorca. From the Sixties onward he introduced the use of technology into his art, becoming the first leader of a school in Europe, indeed it is no coincidence that he invented the term "video-installation". His works are to be found in permanent collections in the most important museums in the world. He has held the Chair of Painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice and has taught "Humanisation of technologies" and "Electronic set design" at the Kunsthochschule für Medien in Cologne. In 1987 he took part in 'Documenta 8' in Kassel with 'Rome', a monumental installation which brought him international recognition. In 1999 he won the prestigious "Kunstpries Nord/Id" which selected him as artist of the year in Germany. He has taken part in 8 Biennials in Venice and at the 51st edition he presented 'Vertical Sea': a 44-metre installation placed in front of the Gardens and which can still be seen there, showing all its magnificence.

THE HASSAN MUSEUM IN RABAT: THE LOCATION AND THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT

Villa Andalucia, home of the Hassan Museum in Rabat, was built in 1929 and the very name recalls the Spanish origins of its owners.

The architectural structure and the decorations of the walls in Spanish-Moorish style bear witness to the building's imposing historic and artistic heritage. Both the inside and the outside are decorated with mosaics and ceramics. There are important mosaics illustrating "The Glories of Spain" in the fifteenth century, partly reproducing some famous paintings by Diego Velasquez. The garden comprises green areas and covered environments, finely decorated with the typical Zellige mosaics and with five fountains, rich in mythological elements. The idea of putting this important space to good use, together with the desire to create a dialogue between Morocco and the European artistic context, was strongly felt by Paolo De Grandis, who for years has been engaged in the promotion of new geographical areas both in the Venice Biennale and on an international scale, and by Fathiya Tahiri who has coordinated the realisation of the project in the capacity of Chairwoman of the Hassan Museum Foundation. The challenge will be to bring important projects to this new museum, so that it can ensure the opening of the Country to the rest of the world. This aspiration was already anticipated on the occasion of Morocco's first participation in the latest edition of the Venice Biennale, also organised by De Grandis. The museum is an integral part of a programme of cultural renewal of the city of Rabat and of Morocco, the aims of which are to present internationally known artists, to promote local artists, and to collaborate with the major institutions operating in the sector. According to the International Director, Paolo De Grandis, "the basis will be a dynamic exhibiting concept: works by important and local artists will be shown according to a principle of exchange based on cooperation, a principle that is destined to produce new synergies at international level. We shall work to ensure that the museum becomes a point of reference both for people operating in the field and for a wider public. The aim is to keep a platform for discussion and comparison constantly open and alive, and at the same time to promote the city of Rabat as the Moroccan capital of contemporary art."

INFORMATION

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