

The 31st Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana



Installing of the 1st International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, 1955. Courtesy Moderna galerija, Ljubljana.

Nicola Lees appointed curator of the 31st Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana

The International Centre of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana is delighted to announce the appointment of Nicola Lees as the curator of the 31st Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana. The Biennial will take place from 28 August to 3 December 2015. With its 31st instalment, it will be celebrating its 60th anniversary.

Since 2013, Nicola Lees has been the curator for Frieze Projects, the annual not-for-profit programme featuring artist commissions, film, and music at Frieze London. Nicola was previously Senior Curator of Public Programmes at the Serpentine Gallery, London, where she oversaw interdisciplinary, time-based and performance projects, artist commissions, initiating Park Nights and the Serpentine Cinema series, and realizing the Serpentine Gallery Marathon (co-curated with Hans Ulrich Obrist). In 2007 she curated the exhibition 'Left Pop Bringing it Home' at the Second Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art and worked on key solo exhibitions by Alex Katz, Mirosław Balka, and a group exhibition with Philippe Parreno at the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

The 2015 biennial, *Over you/you*, takes its starting point from a scribble in the corner of one of Martin Kippenberger's drawings, and will bring together traditional, and not so traditional, forms of graphic art production, posing them as sites within which political and aesthetic agency find common ground. Traversing both historical and contemporary tendencies that reject the strict and reductive terms of the discipline, *Over you/you* will gather practices that foreground the graphic arts' more radical gestures, exploring the shifting nature of the network and forms of dissemination.

The Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, founded in 1955, was born within the specific geo-political conditions of the former Yugoslavia. The exhibition quickly became a unique meeting point for artists of the sharply polarized West and East. Although aesthetically the Biennial advanced the hegemony of the Western-oriented artistic canon, at the same time, and with considerable self-assurance, it advocated and promoted artistic pluralism. This made it one of the few places where artistic production from a large part of the world, which was at the time excluded from the dominant discourse, was given an opportunity to present itself on an equal footing with the west. The Biennial has continuously reflected the developments and transformations of the fine art print. It is seen as one of the print biennials that has most radically expanded the borders of the medium and redefined the notion of printmaking.

The 24th edition of the Biennial in 2001 (curated by Stephan Coppel, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Gregor Podnar and Breda Škrjanec) linked traditional printmaking with contemporary art practices. The 25th Biennial of Graphic Arts in 2003 (curated by Christophe Cherix) focused on the value of books, journals, magazines, bulletins and other publications in terms of both function and content. The 26th Biennial in 2005 paid tribute to the fifty-year history of the Biennial and was composed of eighteen smaller scale exhibitions prepared by renowned global institutions specializing in the graphic arts. The 27th Biennial of Graphic Arts (2007) was curated by the International Centre of Graphic Arts with a Benjaminian take on the concepts of reproducibility. The current concerns triggered in art and society by the cult film trilogy *The Matrix* were reflected in the main exhibition of the 28th Biennial of Graphic Arts (2009, curated by Božidar Zrinski). The 29th Biennial of Graphic Arts (2011, curated by Beti Žerovc) expanded the focus to include the event-based exhibition. The last edition, the 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts in 2013, returned to reconsider the nature of the graphic processes, showcasing the way in which the artists of today respond to contemporary communication tools and processes, and was prepared by American curator Deborah Cullen.

Organizer:



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