

A chi ti stai rivolgendo /Who Is Your Audience

a project curated by Lorenzo Bruni for AstuniPublicStudio

John Bock, Vlatka Horvat, Christian Jankowski, Joel Kyack, Kamen Stoyanov, Mario Ybarra Junior

Opening: Friday 8 October 2010, 7 p.m.



AstuniPublicStudio is pleased to announce the opening of the group exhibition **A chi ti stai rivolgendo / Who is your Audience** curated by Lorenzo Bruni – which will open on Friday 8th October 2010 at Galleria Enrico Astuni in Bologna. The show consists of a series of performances, images, and sculptures specially created for the occasion, together with works previously made for important international exhibitions. **John Bock, Vlatka Horvat, Christian Jankowski, Joel Kyack, Kamen Stoyanov, and Mario Ybarra Junior**, some of the most interesting artists at the international level, reflect on the concept of cultural identity by encouraging and investigating the relationship between artist and audience, between listener and speaker, and between collective and private spaces. The works on show aim not to represent the reality they are in, but rather to focus on attempts to interact with it.

The **A chi ti stai rivolgendo / Who is your Audience** project is the outcome of a more general reflection on the act of “communicating”. While messages can be thrown into our “liquid modernity”, existing quite independently from a specific, “active” interlocutor in that particular instant, what is it that brings about the need for an exchange of information? Paradoxically, it almost seems that MMS and SMS messages, social networks like Twitter, Facebook, and the various blogs that have sprung up are used more to assert the existence of the person who sends the message than to bring about a dialogue with the “other”, who is different from us. Raising queries today about the true meaning of communication brings into question the very nature of the audience and of collective identity, as well as what we mean by this term, and what role it plays with regard to society. These considerations become an ideal means for shedding new light on the evolution of artistic research in the late 1990s and, in particular, on those artists who approached changes in social customs and habits by reacting to them and working on the relationships – which still remained entirely to be examined and elicited – between the individual and society, and between the space of art and that of life.

The exhibition is not so much about artists who use the medium of performance as about the concept of performative action, the aim of which is to pick out potential and desirable actions that can influence and interact with reality in order to understand and change it. It is only like this that we can once again talk of the concept of future and the way we plan for it. This is why **Christian Jankowski** has created a video from excerpts of programme formats on television, questioning the artist’s future work for the Biennale of Sydney, and ending with live coverage of the opening itself, in May 2010. He thus takes McLuhan’s concept that the medium is the message to its extreme consequences. **Mario Ybarra Junior** introduces with the photographic series *Go tell it* (2001), urban spaces where the artist himself is attempting with a megaphone in hand, to charge up a crowd of people that just escaped or that still has to show up. **Joel Kyack** recently organised spontaneous happenings in the Los Angeles traffic by broadcasting a play on local radio

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and dramatising it with puppets which could be seen in the back of his Jeep. In 2008, **John Bock** put on his performance inside a bus travelling across Athens, creating a contrast between city life and his own personal actions, which recalled those of sculpture, even though with a view to producing ephemeral objects. With *The Small Eiffel Tower Meets the Big* of 2007, in which he placed himself in front of the Eiffel Tower, showing distracted passers-by a large poster with a reproduction of it, **Kamen Stoyanov** was attempting to return people's attention to its presence and architectural structure rather than looking at it simply as a tourism stereotype and symbol. **Vlatka Horvat's** *This Here and That There*, 2007, for the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, painstakingly takes up the challenge of arranging a large number of chairs in different combinations for listening or dialogue with a hypothetical audience that will never form, since her search for the ideal stage takes place in the middle of a river – something which normally divides rather than connects the urban space it runs through.

These works are real actions that aim to reverse our passiveness towards the means we use for communication (but who with, exactly?) and to encourage a new, concrete perception of our relationship with the urban space we find ourselves dealing with every day. They do not intend to represent reality, but rather to focus on and give concrete form to an attempt to establish dialogue with it and within it. In order to bring about a dialogue, however, it is first necessary to find a common language with the "other", and this is why these works delve back into the twentieth-century tradition of the theatre of the absurd and into Situationist ideology, as in the attempts by Bertolt Brecht and Jerzy Grotowski to make the audience active. This type of code and language came about as a reaction to an official culture that now belongs to another century, and that is no longer part of our contemporary world. Fully aware of this, the artists thus examine how it appears today and what codes are formulated at the universal level by our present. In order to do so, the questions they pose when re-examining the concept of collective memory and identity do not find answers so much in which world they are dealing with as in what reality they are conjuring up and which reality they would like to address in future.

On the occasion will be published the catalogue of the show.

A book, to be published during the show with Silvana Editoriale and edited by Lorenzo Bruni, will examine the changes and the new nature of the concept of performance that has arisen since the late 1990s.

Opening: Friday 8 October 2010, 7 pm
Exhibition dates: from 9 October 2010 to 06 February 2010
c/o Galleria Enrico Astuni
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Visitor information:
Tues-Sat: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. / 3 p.m.-7 p.m; Sun and Mon by appointment only; free admission

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