

Press Release

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EXPERIMENTA SUR

May 28 – June 11, 2014 Bogotá, Colombia

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Artists, groups, and researchers involved:

Jens Dietrich (DE), Kenneth Goldsmith (USA), Adrian Heathfield (GB), André Éric Létourneau (CA), Heidi und Rolf Abderhalden / MAPA Teatro (CO), Milo Rau / IIPM – International Institute of Political Murder (CH/DE), Gob Squad (DE/GB), Philippe Quesne / Vivarium Studio (FR), Adriana Urrea (CO)

Cooperation Partners:

Mapa Teatro, Goethe-Institut Bogotá, Instituto Distrital de las Artes – IDARTES, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Teatro Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, Universidad Central, Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano, Siemens Stiftung

The international summer academy EXPERIMENTA SUR opens up a work and discussion forum for experimental formats of cultural work in society. It brings together in Bogotá artists and researchers from Latin America, Europe, and the USA. Understanding art and culture in equal measures as a driving force and expression of social change is at the heart of this initiative organized by Siemens Stiftung, Goethe-Institut in Bogotá, and Colombia's Mapa Teatro together with local institutions. By providing grants in the context of an excellence initiative Goethe-Institut makes it possible for emerging artists from throughout Latin America to participate.

Over the space of three weeks artists and researchers will be highlighting different aspects of social change in workshops, artists' labs, lectures, discussion events, and live performances. Under the heading "Expanded Dramaturgies" interdisciplinary forms of collaboration and the search for new presentation contexts will be addressed. Impulses for discussion come from the New York sculptor and poet **Kenneth Goldsmith**. With UbuWeb he created a key source for experimental art on the Internet. In one lab he focuses on uncreative writing. "Because creativity has become a cliché. Everyone wants to be creative which means the notion of creativity has become extremely uncreative. The entire model has been turned on its head. Why shouldn't uncreativity become the new creativity?" says Goldsmith who takes the digital turn seriously also in terms of written text.

How to discover new ways of describing what crucial changes society is actually undergoing? In an artists' lab, documentary theater maker **Jens Dietrich** will present his research methods in the transcultural context and focus on specific or extreme situations in life that were used as a script. Techniques, methods, and issues on writing *for* and *about* ephemeral events are presented for discussion in a workshop by British curator and author **Adrian Heathfield**. The development of new technologies also brings about change in the acoustic narrative forms of Canadian media researcher **Éric Létourneau**. Together with a group of young artists he will work on the production of an audio piece and will experiment here with formats of intervention and action. In another lab Colombian philosopher **Adriana Urrea** will examine correspondences between ethics and aesthetics, arts and politics.

The academy's theater program looks to artists and teams finding a surprising form for the material arising from their often months-long research: in "Hate Radio" **Milo Rau** looks at genocide in Rwanda. In a reenactment he allows the radio station RTL – that prepared the destruction of the Tutsi minority like an advertising campaign – to broadcast live again in originally recreated settings. On stage are genocide survivors. This theatrical work "like no other" (FAZ) gives expression to social contradictions, trauma, and utopias. In Colombia it is presented in the public space so that passers-by can also participate.

The British-German performance group **Gob Squad** has set itself no lesser task than to present a portrait of western society in the 21st century. Founded in 1994 by students from Nottingham and Gießen, Gob Squad is now one of Europe's most renowned theater groups. Their latest work "Western Society" is

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a balancing act between a play, video installation, interactive live film, and improvisation – as well as being a reenactment: a short YouTube video found on the Internet is recreated by the performers in which they request assistance from members of the audience. The performance is a new staging and an imaginary view of what might link the people in this home video with each other. It constructs a view that seems to contain everything that keeps us together and separates us. While “Hate Radio” makes perceptible those invisible images in which the people in Rwanda were caught, “Western Society” shows us how life in western society is built on images, often templates.

Kicking off the program is the latest production “Los Incontados” by **Mapa Teatro** from Colombia. In a blend of archive material and testimonies, documents, and fictions the triptych focalizes three faces of the violence in Colombia: that of the paramilitary, the drug trade, and guerrillas. The unfolding of the density of meanings of such drastic events of dehumanization and violence in the present day makes theater a micro-political and poetical medium of embodiment.

Since 2010 Siemens Stiftung has been involved with annual academies on socially relevant topics within the field of the performing arts in Latin America. The foundation, alongside THE – Asociación para el Teatro Latinoamericano, Goethe-Institut and a series of local organizations in three countries, has produced a growing network of work platforms in Argentina (PANORAMA SUR since 2010), Chile (MOVIMIENTO SUR since 2012), and Colombia (EXPERIMENTA SUR since 2013).

Further information:

www.experimentasur.com

<http://www.siemens-stiftung.org/en/projects/experimenta-sur>

www.goethe.de/ins/co/de/bog.html