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Ostrale – Centre for Contemporary Art

Success: OSTRALE Biennale O21 defies Corona

Dresden. The international exhibition of contemporary arts OSTRALE Biennale comes to a successful end for this year this Sunday evening (3.10.2021). Despite the pandemic-related restrictions, it has still been possible to count about 25,000 visitors since the start on July 1 (2019: about 28,000).

"That's fewer than in the period before Corona. But given the circumstances, we can be proud of the attendance. Because due to the hygiene requirements we had to limit the number of visitors. Unfortunately, the uncertainties surrounding hygiene and the access restrictions kept many from visiting this year. Due to the corresponding requirements, we incurred additional costs of around 60,000 euros" estimates Andrea Hilger, director of the OSTRALE – Centre for Contemporary Arts. The "O21 for Kids" program for schoolchildren was attended by around 2,500 pupils (95 school classes) from all over Saxony, Thuringia and Saxony-Anhalt – in previous years, up to around 400 classes had been guests in each case.

This year, the main exhibition venue of the OSTRALE was the former Robotron canteen, centrally located in Dresden's Lingnerstadt. The Ostmodern style pavilion, which had been empty for years, proved to be an ideal location after having been cleaned out and made statically safe for the first time in years: *„Our visitors were enthralled by the historic charm of the building, the natural light and the interior structure. We hope to be able to use the building in the future as well. After low-threshold renovation, it would be ideal for the presentation of contemporary art in particular. We are in a constructive exchange with the building's owner Gateway Real Estate, to whom we are immensely grateful for the opportunity“*, said Franz Leyser, representative of the OSTRALE.freunde sponsoring association.

Art lovers who missed the show, which included 557 works by 138 artists from 34 nations, can get an idea of what it was like with the help of the exhibition's 384-page, high-quality catalog: among other things, it documents the Biennale with descriptions of the artworks, with all the photographs taken in the exhibition space (available at post@ostrale.de or at the OSTRALE - Center for Contemporary Art, Rethelstraße 45, 01139 Dresden).

The next OSTRALE Biennale will take place in Dresden in summer 2023. As part of the project "Flowing Connections" co-funded by the Creative Europe Program of the European Union, parts of this year's Biennale will be shown in the meantime in Budapest (19.3.-22.5.22), Split (1.6.-30.6.22) and from 5.10.-13.11.22 in the program of the European Capital of Culture 2022 Kaunas/Lithuania.

F.d.R.d.A. Tobias Blaurock

OSTRALE

Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst



The OSTRALE Biennale is one of the major temporary exhibitions for contemporary arts in Germany. It is not a sales exhibition per se, which gives it the freedom to discuss socially relevant topics away from the market. The guiding principles of the OSTRALE, such as peaceful coexistence, acceptance of the foreign or unknown, respectful interaction, religious diversity and internationality, among others, are reflected in the content of the exhibitions. The OSTRALE team has already designed large parts of the contemporary arts program of European Capitals of Culture several times, such as in 2010 in Pécs, 2016 in Wrocław, 2018 in Valletta/Malta, in the Rijeka/Croatia (2020), where, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic could only be presented digitally, and a presentation of a selection of OSTRALE works in the European Capital of Culture 2022 Kaunas/Lithuania follows. In 2021-2022, OSTRALE is a lead participant in the Flowing Connections project (<https://vimeo.com/487428285>), (<https://vimeo.com/544940287>) co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe program. In collaboration with Art Quarter Budapest (Hungary), Slobodne Veze (Croatia) and ECOC Office Kaunas 2022 (Lithuania), the project includes the OSTRALE Biennale O21 in Dresden and OUT of OSTRALE exhibitions in Budapest, Rijeka, Split, Zagreb and Kaunas in 2022, complemented by an artist in residence program and several workshops on digital cultural management, post-industrial cultural spaces, art education and the inclusion of people with disabilities.

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