FRONTIERS REIMAGINED

ART THAT CONNECTS US

44 ARTISTS | 25 COUNTRIES

09.05.15–22.11.15

MUSEO DI PALAZZO GRIMANI
VENICE, ITALY
Frontiers Reimagined: Art That Connects Us was an official Collateral Event of the Venice Art Biennale in 2015, held at the 16th-century Museo di Palazzo Grimani, the only Roman-style palazzo in the city. Featuring 44 artists from 25 countries, it was the first official cooperation between the Italian Ministry of Culture and the Biennale.

In his book Imagined Communities (1983), Benedict Anderson identified the collective imagination as an instrument of nationalism. Frontiers Reimagined, by contrast, proposed the artistic imagination as a means of transcending such limitations and boundaries, addressing global challenges and cultural collisions through creative problem-solving.

The exhibition was based on the lifelong researches into the response of artists to empire and globalization by the art historian, curator, gallerist and film-maker Sundaram Tagore – an international quest that over the previous 26 years frequently involved scholarly dialogue and curatorial collaboration with the co-curator, Marius Kwint.

Kwint’s role in this exhibition included concept development, researching, selecting and commissioning several of the artworks, liaising with artists, obtaining grant funding, writing the rationale of the 85-page Biennale application document, key exhibition panels, and one of the underpinning essays in the 120-page catalogue. He also gave supporting lectures and talks.

The artists ranged from emerging talents such as the Haitian-Swiss activist artist Sasha Huber and Iranian abstract calligrapher Golnaz Fathi, to international superstars such as the Bulgarian environmental artist Christo, Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado and the late American neo-Dadaist Robert Rauschenberg, who was a pioneer of cultural interchange through art. At least six new works were specially commissioned for the exhibition and many others were new.

Frontiers Reimagined was rated by The Art Newspaper high among the top five outside the main Arsenale and Giardini areas; ArtsHub (Australia) labelled it ‘certainly’ ‘the most successful collateral show’. It attracted over 25,000 visitors over the period: extraordinary numbers for a collateral show.

The Venice Art Biennale is the world’s premier contemporary art event and comprises approximately 90 national pavilions and exhibitions, with a further 44 official collateral shows of grouped and solo artists in 2015, and many more unofficial exhibitions and events around the city that the Biennale always attracts.
Links

https://www.frontiersreimagined.org/
Exhibition website with details of the main artworks, artists, curators, museum and catalogue, and press

http://uopnews.port.ac.uk/2015/05/12/venice-exhibition-bridges-frontiers/
Article in UoP News about origins and content of the exhibition

http://www.marsilioeditori.it/libri/scheda-libro/3172193/frontiers-reimagined
Exhibition catalogue on publisher's website

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B94Tl9PkNW8qM1BWMEdoYWc4VWc/view?usp=sharing
Video walk-through by Tagore Foundation International, with details and soundtrack from robot gamelan installation by Aaron Taylor Kuffner in the courtyard (5’40’’
Further links

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORp1k5PavS0
Video of principal artworks, by Tagore Foundation International (silent, mainly from stills, 2'19")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJTHOybJ8pQ
Video walk-through by International Art Magazine (10'08")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_Hgbxjn35c
Video highlights of gala vernissage events, by Tagore Foundation International (3'27")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGnCTnn2WKI
Video interview of co-curator Marius Kwint by journalist Marialaura Bidorini (poor production quality, 8'35")
The setting: Museo di Palazzo Grimani

Canal-side exterior

Piano Nobile

Tribuna, c. 1560, with 2nd-century sculpture of the rape of Ganymede
Deliveries via the water-gate

Final additions by Jane Lee (Singapore) to In You, In Me (2105: acrylic paint, acrylic paste, pigment, epoxy, plastic mirror on wood)
Installation of Korean artist Chun Kwang Young’s Aggregation 15 (2105: mixed media with Korean mulberry paper, Styrofoam and wood), requiring the erection of a crane to a 2nd-floor window
Assembly and display of Eddi Prabondono (Indonesia), After Party/Living the High Life (2013: iron plate and painted Vespa scooter)

Complete installation photos: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1K2ZazQVlKPuHXiZuxWXv01eV6ptYtS6v?usp=sharing
Opening gala, L-R: courtyard; Sundaram Tagore with Sebastião Salgado (front middle ground) and William Dalrymple (behind Salgado); Marius Kwint and Sasha Huber (on right)
Nino Sarabutra (Thailand), What Will You Leave Behind (2012): 100,000 unglazed porcelain skulls on which visitors are invited to walk without shoes
Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan (Philippines and Australia), *Wings III*, detail, 2009: used slippers and metal stand.
Second floor entrance hall, open to the public for the first time since restoration: L-R works by Jane Lee, Chatchai Puipia, Sir Jacob Epstein, Rabindranath Tagore, Gaganendranath Tagore, Aaron Taylor Kuffner, Alberto and Isabel Aquilizan, (floor) Nino Sarabutra
Tayeba Begum Lipi (Bangladesh), *My Mother's Dressing Table* (2013: stainless steel razor blades)
Sasha Huber (Switzerland, Haiti & Finland)
Video still from Rentyhorn: The Intervention, 2008
Osi Audu (Nigeria & USA) & Self-portrait II (one of two specially commissioned works by him, 2015: pastel & graphite on paper mounted on canvas)
Marius Kwint with Sam Tan, Singapore Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth, discussing Jane Lee’s *In You, In Me*
Marius Kwint with Sundaram and Mia Tagore