

Селекция на артисти,
номинарани или носители на
Наградата на Фондация "Рикар"

A selection of artists who have
been nominees or winners of the
Prix Fondation d'entreprise Ricard

Mathieu K. Abonnenc
Bertille Bak
Stéphane Barbier-Bouvet
Julien Bismuth
Cyprien Gaillard
Louise Hervé &
Chloé Mailet
Adrien Missika
Stefan Nikolaev
Lili Reynaud-Dewar
Jimmy Robert
Bruno Serralongue
Marie Voignier

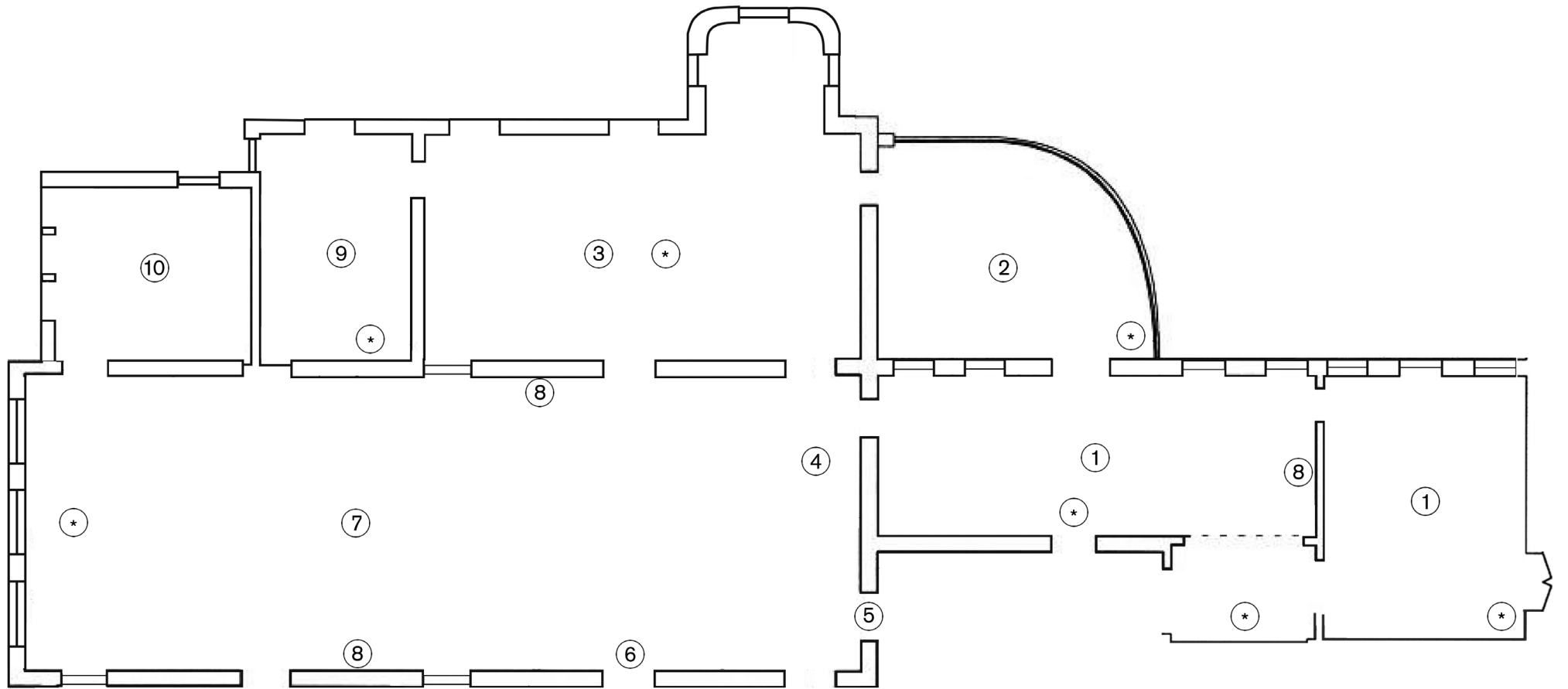
Куратор | Curator
Емил Урумов | Émile Ouroumov

Национална галерия / Двореца - Пл.
Княз Александър I, София
National Gallery / The Palace - Prince
Alexander I Sqr, Sofia, Bulgaria

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19.05
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2017



Potemkin Palace

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Mathieu K. Abonnenc, Bertille Bak, Stéphane Barbier Bouvet, Julien Bismuth, Cyprien Gaillard, Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet, Adrien Missika, Stefan Nikolaev, Lili Reynaud-Dewar, Jimmy Robert, Bruno Serralongue, Marie Voignier

Curator: Émile Ouroumov

After a series of exhibitions of works by winners of the Prix Fondation d'entreprise Ricard in Moscow (2008), Seoul (2014) and Mexico City (2016), in 2017 the foundation will present the exhibition "Palais Potemkine" ["Potemkin Palace"] at the National Gallery / The Palace in Sofia, Bulgaria. For the first time in this international series, the exhibition will also include artists nominated for this prize, which was created in 1999*.

—

Bulgaria's Communist leaders were eager to show the West that their country was prosperous and dynamic. So we art students were sent to tell the farmers along the Orient Express tracks where they should park their combines and pile their hay to give the misleading impression of prosperity.

Christo (Christo Javacheff), interview, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, June 2, 1995

A contemporary art prize often operates at the intersection of two movements: a cohesion effect (identifying and defining a national art scene) and a competition effect (singling out and rewarding one particular voice out of a multiplicity). At the end of this process, and through the practice of a dozen winners or nominees, the exhibition "Potemkin Palace" highlights the polysemy of this community of minds and approaches, and assembles it around a shared question: what is

art's relationship with contemporary social issues; what role does an art institution play at the heart of the city; how can an exhibition be constructed in relation to its context?

The title of the project opens this analysis through a reference to “Potemkin villages”, an expression referring to deceptions that serve purposes of propaganda. The setting of the exhibition is the building housing the National Gallery / The Palace in Sofia, an old royal palace that witnessed or participated in all of the upheavals of the history of modern Bulgaria: Ottoman domination; independence and the monarchy's political blunders; the proclamation of the republic and Soviet satellization; the rise of democracy tempered by a period of unbridled capitalism. Today, at a time when social and political reference points seem unstable, this building teeming with historical and political meaning, conceived and realized by foreign architects, artists and craftsmen, can serve as a creative tool for analyzing the state of society, the historical and contemporary role of cultural exchanges and institutions.

The very practice of these artists from the French scene enriches the notion of a “scene” and places it in perspective. The plurality of their concerns defies the compartmentalization of geographic, stylistic or thematic boundaries that might try to homogenize their approach. Though they are united by their various connections to France, they are nonetheless citizens of a global art community. Their research and collaborations lead them to former Eastern Bloc countries, to France's overseas territories, to former colonies, and to urban or remote areas in France and around the world. They tackle colonial history, boundary lines, political upheavals, the role of monuments and urban planning, the construction of national narratives, museum displays, the backdrop of the information society, media discourse, access to public voice and opinion, the analysis of gestures, the alterity of bodies, and the inequality between individuals.

“Potemkin Palace” is above all an invitation for artists and the public to take part in a process of establishing and revealing the foundations of society.

— Emile Ouroumov, January 2017

**The Fondation d'entreprise Ricard is a place of experimentation, creation and meetings, dedicated to art in its most contemporary expressions. Its mission is to support French contemporary art and spread awareness of it in France and abroad. Created in 1999, the Prix Fondation d'entreprise Ricard was the first prize to reward emerging talent on the contemporary scene. Every year, an independent curator is invited to organize an exhibition at the foundation, presenting a group of emerging artists from the French scene. The prize is then awarded to one the artists, selected by a jury made up of collectors, museum directors, as well as curators of previous editions of the Prix Fondation d'entreprise Ricard. A work by the winner is purchased and then donated to the Centre Pompidou, where it is exhibited in its permanent collections, and the prize also provides the winner with financing for a project abroad.*

The exhibition is organized by Pernod Ricard Bulgaria, the Fondation d'entreprise Ricard and the National Gallery / The Palace in Sofia, and is supported by the Institut Français.

The catalogue of the exhibition will be published in Summer 2017.

1 Adrien Missika

*1981, lives and works in Berlin

Via photography, video, sculpture, and installation, Adrien Missika works on the themes of travel and exotics, the unknown and timelessness. The work entitled **As the Coyote Flies (2014)** takes up the role of a symbolic threshold to the exhibition. Adrien Missika has shot in video 11 attempted flyovers, from various geographical points, of a drone over the USA-Mexico border wall, focusing not only on the section already constructed, but also on the landscape contrasts on both sides of the wall. The artist compares the one he shot in flight to a “coyote” – slang term for Mexican traffickers of illegal migrants through the border.

We Didn't Cross the Border, the Border Crossed Us (2014) is a series of black & white photos of the saguaro cactus, which is typical for the USA-Mexico border area. Situated outside of any other context, these plants, being typical of Arizona and Northern Mexico and having an exceptionally long lifespan occasionally reaching 150 years, are presented as portraits. With this series Adrien Missika reminds of the constantly changing borders and their artificial nature.

2 Mathieu K. Abonnenc

*1977, lives and works in Metz and Rome

Mathieu K. Abonnenc's work focuses on the issue of cultural domination whereon contemporary societies are based. Through video, photography, painting, installation, curatorial projects, he explores the principles of dominant presence associated with the imperial and colonial history of so-called “developed” countries.

Forever Weak and Ungrateful (2015) is a series of photogravures realized by Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc and themed on the monument of Victor Schoelcher, one of the prime contributors to the cause of abolitionism in France. The monument is located in Cayenne, the administrative centre of French Guiana and the artist's birthplace. The sculpture by Louis-Ernest Barrias depicts the statesman, who proudly shows the way to freedom to a young, semi-naked slave, whose shackles lie broken at his feet. The photogravure's (old photographic technique, whose closeness to gravure is reminiscent of sculpture's 3D) enables fixation on details clearly presenting the dominant/dominated relation between the two characters – starting from the difference in clothing, through the mentoring hand on the

shoulder, to the freed slave's grateful gaze. Abonnenc's work focuses on the complexity of the analysis of colonialism traces in the post-colonial era's urban environment.

Secteur IX B, 2015

Inspired by *L'Afrique fantôme* – the scandalous diary of the French surrealist Michel Leiris about his involvement in the ambitious ethnographic Dakar-Djibouti expedition in the 1930s, Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc presents in his first feature film his reflexion on identity, cultural subjugation, objects as bearers of memory, as well as the role of museum institutions in these processes.

Betty (Betty Chomanga) is a young anthropologist working on the Dakar-Djibouti mission. Her research takes her from the IFAN Museum of African Arts in Dakar to the Museum of Man in Paris. Seeking the borders of anthropology, she decides to use medicines from the 1930s expedition aid kit. In psychedelic delirium, Betty holds fast to a recently discovered family archive.

The Fear of Insects, The Fear of Incest, 2014

The poster by Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc, which accompanies and supplements his film, further elaborates of the issue of subjectivity and objectivity of the researcher and the artists. The poster reproduces drawings by Emile Abonnenc, the artist's grandfather, an entomology researcher. The new type of mosquito he discovered, Phlebotomi, was named after him – Abonnenci. The artist sees in this yet another aspect of colonization and offers a different perspective on the issues of identity.

3 Bruno Serralongue

*1968, lives and works in Paris

Bruno Serralongue's work focuses on the status, uses, and circulation of the media image. His practice is close to photojournalism and targets the “background” of politics. Serralongue's photographs offer a new, critical look at the current events and the media world.

Series Calais, 2006-

Passage, zone industrielle des Dunes, Calais, janvier 2008

Passer en Angleterre, accès terminal transmanche, Calais, juillet 2006

Point d'eau dans le «bidonville d'État» pour migrants, Calais, 2 novembre 2015

Un incendie ravage le «bidonville d'État» pour migrants au moment de son démantèlement, Calais, 26 octobre 2016

Vestige (sac de couchage), Calais, juillet 2007

Ahmed, en route vers le centre de jour Jules Ferry, «bidonville d'État» pour migrants, Calais, jeudi 16 avril 2015

Opened back in 1999, the Calais camp gathered a huge mass of refugees wishing to cross over into England. Between 2008 and 2014 the migratory stream to the city was relatively stable but this changed after 2015 when by virtue of a decision of France's Interior Minister, all temporary camps were demolished and the refugees were interned into what human rights organizations would later call "state-owned ghetto", while the media made it popular as the Jungle of Calais. Crime is on the rise but police stays out of what takes place in the camp's interior. The number of refugees therein exceeded 10 000 in 2016. Between 24 and 28 October the camp was dismantled and the refugees were resettled in various centres throughout France. Bruno Serralongue shot the camp's evolution showing us a different and very human face of the camp.

Kosovo, ensemble 1, 2009

Representing the first chapter of the *Kosovo* series, the displayed photographs were shot during the first anniversary of Kosovo's independence, February 17, 2009. Bruno Serralongue follows the establishment of a new state and national identity building. Shooting individual and seemingly insignificant moments from Kosovo's daily life, Serralongue shows us scenes from markets, streets, museums, boxing tournaments, making us think how the image of a country is created.

4 Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet

*1981, they live and work in Paris

The work of Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet varies between performance and film, mostly focusing on theater and narrative, on history and historical reconstructions.

La performance des Saint-simoniens, 2015

With their slide-projection, Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet seek the roots of performance in history, long before the 20th century, and find them in the communities, who fought for change of the social structure and relations. The performance of Saint-Simonists began in 1830 when a small utopian group retired to an estate where it set up an artistic-political commune. Twice a week their home would open its doors to anyone wishing to observe the daily life within. The artists see in this a proto-form of performance, a mise-en-scene of utopian ideas. In their "spectacle" the Saint-Simonists are not actors – they play their genuine roles. During the exhibition the performance **A-side** is activated on several

occasions, with the performer inviting the audience to jointly reconstruct history but also make their own internal reconstruction.

5 Cyprien Gaillard

*1980, lives and works in Berlin and New York

Between iconoclasm and minimalist aesthetics, between romanticism and land art, Cyprien Gaillard's work follows the human footprint stamped on nature.

Fence (After Owen Luder) (2013) is a reproduction of a semi-circular bronze fence, an architectural element of the now-demolished car park designed by the British brutalist architect Owen Luder, which was built in the English town of Gateshead. Despite numerous awards and titles bestowed on the architect, his buildings are seen as unaesthetic in recent decades. The grates installed on the car park's building are part of the so-called "protective architecture" – they aim to prevent thrill seekers from climbing the building. Gaillard follows the process of destruction of this architect's legacy: "I wanted to make a monument to a dead building, to Luder," Gaillard said. "I have the feeling that all cities will start to look alike in the drive for urbanistic changes. To erect the building is a symbolic act: they destroy it, I rebuild it."

6 Lili Reynaud-Dewar

*1975, lives and works in Grenoble

Lili Reynaud-Dewar's works mix cultural influences from the Rastafari movement, through jazz, voodoo, conceptual art, cinema, and design. These elements are mixed into video art, sculptures, sound installations, and filmed performances.

The video entitled **Vivre avec ça?! Museion (Soleil politique) (2014)** connects to poem of American poetess Eileen Myles and is representative of the artist's work. Reynaud-Dewar paints her boy black and dances in the empty exhibition halls of the Bolzano's (Italy) Museion art center. Her movements are inspired by those of Josephine Baker, who in the 1930's became a symbol of racial stereotypes but also of the struggle to overcome them. The dance does not stop in the exhibition hall, it goes on in other – audience-inaccessible – parts of the building – corridors, offices, technical rooms. Thus the performance turns into an intimate criticism of the museum institution and a deliberation on the long history of social and cultural initiatives to overcome sexual, racial, and political stereotypes.

7 Stefan Nikolaev

*1970, lives and works in Paris and Sofia

Stefan Nikolaev's work is based on presence and absence, on association games, as well as on transformation and resemanticization of objects.

Under Deconstruction, 2002/2017 (Specific production)

Reactivation of the work presented in 2002 at the Cetinje (Montenegro) biennale. The installation's name embodies a play of words (originally "under construction" with a "de" prefix added in the new version: "under deconstruction"). The worker helmets placed throughout the hall are a throwback to the various helmets having crossed the Balkans over the years: Nazi, Soviet, Blue ones... and, in present days, the worker helmets, which represent the quickly changing regional context and landscape.

8 Julien Bismuth

*1973, lives and works in New York and Paris

Julien Bismuth's work connects to literature and visual arts. For years, he has been working on language codes, in their textual as well as physical dimensions. His performances, the theatric dialogues between objects, music, and gesture, often have a storytelling element.

Slapdash, 2017 (Specific production)

With minimal and simplified gestures the artist takes out of his coat's pockets various objects, such as rubber gloves, flour, a hammer, scissors, a photo... following a scenario written on the museum's mirrors. Taken out of context, the gestures and objects appear accidental but they gradually acquire meaning and turn out to be connected to the Palace space.

9 Bertille Bak

*1983, lives and works in Paris

With her videos, installations, and paintings, Bertille Bak looks at categories such as identity, society, territory, and memory, placing man at the basis of their analysis. Her stories attempt to explain the present of a certain social group and interrelations therein.

Usine à divertissement, 2016

Bertille Bak's interest is drawn by the simultaneously thriving and destructive tourism industry and its impact on local traditional communities. The triptych follows the Lahu tribe in Northern Thailand, peasants from Northern Morocco, and residents of Camargue (Southern France) – all of them heavily dependent on mass tourism. With her committed work Bertille

Bak presents a spectacle in search of exotics, local traditions perverted to extremes, and a parody of the rivalry in the marketing of adventure and unique sensations.

10 Marie Voignier

*1974, lives and works in Paris

Marie Voignier's work is directed to localities of no particular attraction, from desert terrains to hangars. Through symbiosis of the roles of documentarist and artist, she reveals specific features of contemporary societies.

Hinterland, 2009

70 km from Berlin, at the location of a former military base, a giant metallic cupola has been erected, beneath it are Tropical Islands – a recreation facility imitating the perfect vacation on a Pacific island. Marie Voignier follows the history of this surprising place: Soviet occupation, shutting of the GDR borders, fall of the Berlin Wall, and Soviet withdrawal, an utopian project for construction of airships, and residential xenophobia. Refracted through the park's attractions, Hinterland tells of the transformation of a society from being a "socialist" to a "capitalist" one, of our societies' consumerism, of the façades, and what is hidden behind them.

11 Jimmy Robert (performance on Sunday, July 2, 2017)

*1975, lives and works in Bucharest

Following in the footsteps of female artists (the choreographer Yvonne Rainer, performance artist Carolee Schneemann, or Marguerite Duras, whose literary and cinema works are strong inspirations for him), Jimmy Robert builds an artistic genealogy, which steps out of the patriarchal pattern.

Figure de style, 2008

Figure de style is a repetition of Yoko Ono's famous 1965 *Cut Piece* performance, where she asked the audience to cut her clothes with scissors, gradually stripping her naked. Jimmy Robert borrows the principle of original performance, its eroticism and violence, thereby adding other issues to the gender matters – the presence of black identity in museums.

* Stéphane Barbier Bouvet

*1981, lives and works in Brussels and Geneva

Stéphane Barbier Bouvet's work and the objects he creates are a replica of

certain environments and situations, a search for forms and dependencies among them.

National Gallery, 2017 (Specific production)

The installation closely connects to the exhibition space, that is to say the former palace, and the various pieces of furniture and objects, as well as the security personnel in the halls, whose continual presence lends a sense of permanence, to the point they become unseen and invisible in a gallery. Playing on the various rules and conditionalities, the work is a self-styled dialogue between the objects and persons' original purpose or role, and their aesthetization. Pianos, armchairs, fire extinguishers form part of the objects, which, being grouped by dimension and proportion, tell of the legacy from various eras in the furnishing of the halls

Biographies and annotations: Ina Belcheva

Translation from Bulgarian: Boleslav Kamenov

ПА ЛАТ ПО ТЪОМ КИН

19.05 - 20.08.2017

 Permod Ricard Bulgaria

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Пърформанси и програма от разговори
Въведение в съвременното изкуство:
Потьомкинови села, по света и у нас в
сътрудничество с фондация Отворени
Изкуства и Галерия SARIEV Contemporary

Performances and talks programme *Introduction to contemporary art: Potemkin villages, home and abroad*, with Open Arts Foundation and gallery SARIEV Contemporary

20.05.2017 (Събота | Saturday)

14:00–17:30

Разговори с артисти | Artist talks

Stefan Nikolaev, Bruno Serralongue

Пърформанси | Performances

Julien Bismuth, *Slapdash*

Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet, A side [Страна А],

със Стефан Додуров | w/ Stefan Dodurov

20:00 / 21:00 / 22:00

Европейска нощ на музеите |

European Night of Museums

Пърформанс | Performances

Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet, A side [Страна А],

със Стефан Додуров | w/ Stefan Dodurov

1.07.2017 (Събота | Saturday)

15:30–18:00

Разговори с артисти | Artist talks

Mathieu K. Abonnenc

Пърформанси | Performances

Louise Hervé & Chloé Maillet, A side [Страна А],

със Стефан Додуров | w/ Stefan Dodurov

Разговори с куратори | Talks with curators

Светлана Куюмджиева, артистичен директор
на Пловдив 2019 | artistic director of Plovdiv 2019

2.07.2017 (Неделя | Sunday)

14:00–18:00

Разговори с артисти | Artist talks

Marie Voignier, Stéphane Barbier-Bouvet

Пърформанси | Performances

Jimmy Robert, Figure de style [Стилистична фигура]

Разговори с куратори | Talks with curators

Pierre Val-Blanc, куратор от екипа на Документа

2017 Атина-Касел | curator of the Documenta 2017

Athens-Kassel team

Обща дискусия | General discussion