

Susan Seubert

Asphyxiation Series

Exhibition Announcement:
Venice Biennale | May 2017

www.seubertfineart.com

Susan Seubert

Asphyxiation Series

Announcing the Artist's Inclusion in *Personal Structures* A Collateral Exhibition of the 2017 Venice Biennale

We are delighted to announce that Susan Seubert has been invited to participate in *Personal Structures*, a collateral exhibition of the Venice Biennale. Organized by the Global Art Affairs Foundation and hosted by the European Cultural Centre, the exhibition at the Palazzo Bembo runs in tandem with the 57th Venice Biennale from May 13th to November 26th, 2017.

Bio

Award winning photographer Susan Seubert was born in 1970 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ms. Seubert is an active fine art and journalism photographer based in Portland, Oregon and Maui, Hawaii.

Her provocative imagery has earned her critical acclaim with inclusion in the Portland Art Museum's 1999 and 2001 Biennials, the 2009 Tacoma Art Museum's Northwest Biennial and selected as a finalist for the 2011 Contemporary Northwest Artist Awards. Ms. Seubert was selected to be one of only 24 participants in Portland2012, A Biennial of Contemporary Art, presented by Disjecta and curated by Prudence Roberts. In 1999 Columbia University in conjunction with LIFE Magazine awarded Ms. Seubert an Alfred Eisenstaedt Award. She received an International Photography Award for her piece entitled, "Nest," a study of wild bird nests rendered in ambrotype.

Exacting in her preparation and printing, she is a master of antiquated techniques including silver gelatin, platinum, tintype and wet plate collodion. She is also proficient in all aspects of digital media. Since receiving her BFA in photography from the Pacific Northwest College of Art in 1992, Seubert has exhibited continuously in the United States and abroad. Her work was featured at the Houston Center for Photography in 1997, and included in exhibit at Exit Art (New York) in 2001. She continues to regularly contribute to such publications as National Geographic Traveler and The New York Times. Ms. Seubert has been acknowledged as a Photography Expert by the National Geographic Society, awarded for Overall Excellence in Photography by the North American Travel Journalists Association in 2011 and 2014, and won in the category of Environmental Portraiture in the Photo District News Faces competition.

www.seubertfineart.com
www.sseubert.com

Personal Structures - Open Borders *Time - Space - Existence*

Public Dates: 13 May - 26 November 2017

VIP Preview: 11-12 May 2017

Venue: Palazzo Bembo

Curated by Valeria Romagnini, Lucia Pedrana, Sara Danieli, Alesia Varnaeva, Bianca Bonaldi, Elena Volpato, Alessandra Valle, Anaïs Hammoud

In the context of the Venice Art Biennale 2017, the Global Art Affairs Foundation (GAA) presents the exhibition "Personal Structures – open borders". The exhibition is hosted and supported by the European Cultural Centre in two of its prestigious venues in the center of Venice: Palazzo Bembo and Palazzo Mora.

The exhibition shows an extensive combination of internationally established artists and artists whose works are less well-known - a cross-section of what can be seen as contemporary art today. The selected artists come from many different parts of the world, different cultures resulting in very different artworks. Visually, the works may appear very different, but all present their own subjective, personal expression of their reflection on the concepts Time, Space and Existence.

The exhibition mainly presents recent artworks by living artists, either site-specific, specially made for this exhibition, or coming directly out of the collection of the artist. Some rooms in the palazzos are dedicated to the presentation of a single artist, while other rooms will present a combination of projects and works. These strong statements give each of the rooms a very specific character. The exhibition features a broad variety of artistic media: video, sculptures, paintings, drawings, photos and installations. Since the more than 200 participating artists originate from very diverse cultures representing over 40 countries and are also of very different age, the topics Time - Space - Existence are highlighted from unusual, very personal points of view.

The GAA Foundation's exhibition "Personal Structures – open borders" shows the commonness and differences between Europeans in dialogue with works of non-Europeans. In addition, the exhibition stimulates a more conscious relationship from the spectator towards their daily surrounding aiming to increase the awareness of their own personal Existence as human beings influenced by a specific Culture within Time and Space.

www.gaafoundation.org
www.europeanculturalcentre.eu



PERSONAL STRUCTURES
A series of small, square windows, each with a different colored shutter (green, blue, red, yellow, orange, etc.). The windows are arranged in a row on the second floor of the building. The shutters are open, revealing the windows inside.

Eland love
A banner hanging from the second floor balcony, featuring the text "Eland love" in a stylized, cursive font. The banner is white with red and black text.

Susan Seubert | Artist Statement

Personal Structures: Time – Space – Existence (2017)

“Exploring existence is a central theme to the series, “Not a Day Goes By: Asphyxiation Series.” The portraits of people with their heads wrapped in plastic illustrate acts of asphyxiation. The highly reflective, almost mirrored surface of the work adds to the performative aspects of the piece: the viewer’s image is reflected, offering a space to contemplate self-asphyxiation.

The 2016 rise of a racist, xenophobic, sexist, bigoted, extreme-right political climate in the US presidential political cycle profoundly depressed me. Climate change in both its literal and figurative sense was being denied as a hoax. Lies and fake news were accepted as “politics as usual.” It seemed to me that America was smothering all the positive ideals historically it has stood for. Depression and emotional pain motivated me to explore showing this issue visually as suicide.

When I researched death by suicide, I learned the most common means is by asphyxiation. All that is needed is a readily available plastic bag. In the United States one in four suicides involves suffocation. In the Western world, suicide attempts are most common among young people and females. The pressures of living in a society that places monetary gain above all else is a primary cause of attempted suicide. It is frequently linked to poverty and hopelessness. I researched images of asphyxiation and was entranced by the image of an elderly woman wearing a blue track suit who had a plastic bag over her head. I was immediately taken with this gesture. I started to experiment with different types of plastic and how the material translated in photographs. I began with an image of my husband with his head wrapped entirely in 2-mm plastic. In a classic portrait studio with light available only on sunny days, the beautiful whites reflected by the plastic define the shape of the head. The cool, black and white toned images began to emerge with a haunting quality. I crowd-sourced my subjects via an online call, offering a standard portrait in exchange for allowing me to wrap their heads in plastic to the point where suffocation seemed possible. The photo sessions were necessarily brief, but each person who sat in the studio had a different visage: sometimes it was a look of peace; other times it exuded resignation. A moment of silence emerges from each of the images. Most people chose to keep their eyes closed. The amount of plastic required depended on the subject’s head shape and size. I asked everyone to remove jewelry and wear a dark top so there would be no distraction from the silky daylight reflected from the plastic wrapping their heads.

This work originated as a highly personal exploration of suicide. One of the cognitive symptoms is the belief that death is the only way to end unbearable emotional pain. Beyond a visceral reaction to the current U. S. political context, these portraits serve as a metaphor for the age of plastic. From mass consumption propelled by credit cards to the great gray patches in the world’s oceans, our planet is literally suffocating in plastic. These images seek to capture and illustrate the ultimate human moment of choice between being and nothingness.”

Dye Sublimation Print on Aluminum, Each an Edition of 10
40 x 30 in | 101.6 x 76.2 cm

For additional series and image details, visit www.seubertfineart.com







Contact

Email: susan@sseubert.com

Tel: +001 503 819 6692

Susan Seubert | Fine Art

www.seubertfineart.com

Commercial Work

www.sseubert.com

All work on this site is copyright © 2017 and may not be used for any purpose without express permission from Susan Seubert.

Available for exhibition touring, commercial gallery representation, or purchase, with prices available upon request.

For details contact the artist at susan@sseubert.com

Currently represented by The Froelick Gallery (Portland, OR), G. Gibson Gallery (Seattle, WA) , Joseph Bellows Gallery (La Jolla, CA)