



Photo by Miriam Haile.

Closing of 'Beyond Death: Viral Discontents and Contemporary Notions about AIDS'

Office for Contemporary Art Norway

At the 54th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia
February–June 2011

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The Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA), as commissioner of Norway's representation at the 54th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, would like to announce the completion of **'Beyond Death: Viral Discontents and Contemporary Notions about AIDS'**, a postgraduate programme led by **Bjarne Melgaard** at the Faculty of Design and Arts, **Università IUAV di Venezia**, Venice. Running from 14 February to 13 May, 'Beyond Death' has consisted of a series of lectures and workshops, organised and taught by Melgaard as Guest Professor, looking at the history and present of the AIDS crisis, and its reflection within contemporary art and discourse.

The course examined how AIDS has become a key lens through which to investigate some of the key transformations affecting the world today, especially in relation to identity formation, the use of violence and the possibility of collective action. This was done through the close study of the work and ideas of a series of thinkers, writers and artists—including Leo Bersani, the Black Panthers, Douglas Crimp, Guillaume Dustan, Hervé Guibert, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Guy Hocquenghem, Chris Kraus, Tiqqun and David Wojnarowicz. The course also included the participation of Leo Bersani as Guest Lecturer.

The programme was followed by Paola Angelini, Michelangelo Corsaro, Cecilia Divizia, Elisa Fantin, Marco Fellini, Corinne Mazzoli, Nicole Moserle, Beatrice Piva, Valeria Romagnini Solfato, Valentina Roselli, Alessio Sacchetto and Davide Spillari.

As part of the course, each of the students developed a project under the supervision of Melgaard, and produced a written thesis about specific topics. The projects will be included in 'Baton Sinister', an exhibition that Melgaard, in collaboration with the students, is organising at Palazzo Contarini Corfù, Dorsoduro 1057, Venice. The exhibition will include a series of artworks, events and displays, all of which have emerged from the lectures, workshops and seminars that have taken place during the last four months. 'Baton Sinister' is open from 2 to 5 June, from 10am to 6pm. From 6 to 31 June visits are possible by appointment. To enquire about appointments, please call +39 342 13 48 017.

Materials related to the course, including the lecture programme, the reading lists and information on the students' projects, is available from the website www.deathbeyond.org.

A publication gathering and expanding upon the materials researched during the course is forthcoming.

Norway's representation in Venice in 2011 is commissioned by the Office for Contemporary Art Norway. Norway's representation at the 54th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, also includes 'The State of Things,' a series of public lectures that will be held throughout the Biennale period, reflecting upon themes such as diversity, the environment, peace-making, human rights, capital, migration, asylum, Europe, aesthetics and revolution. The programmes are generously supported by Fritt Ord. For more information on 'Beyond Death' or 'The State of Things,' see www.oca.no or contact Marthe Tveitan [marthe.tveitan@oca.no].