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MÜNCHEN



Sacra Conversazione: Identity, Heritage, Globalization

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1, 80539 München, Germany

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IMPRINT

Exhibition catalogue for the art project “Sacra Conversazione: Identity, Heritage, Globalization” by LMU München featuring an exhibition by TEAM BECKER PINTER and STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY, from 4 to 26 April 2017 at VIU Venice International University, Isola di San Servolo, Venezia

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an art project by LMU München
featuring an exhibition by TEAM BECKER PINTER and
STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY
from 4 to 26 April 2017 at VIU, Isola di San Servolo, Venezia

Welcome

Prof. Dr. Bernd Huber

President

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Dear Guests and Visitors,

San Servolo, this beautiful island surrounded by the turquoise waters of the Venetian lagoon, is without a doubt an extraordinarily inspiring and picturesque location. As such, it is also home to Venice International University (VIU), a place for scholars and students from VIU's international member institutions to come together and immerse themselves in scholarship on both the past and on the global challenges of our time.

But San Servolo is not only a place for academic discussion and exchange. Besides academia, Venice itself is certainly most famous as a city of the arts. In addition to countless museums and churches, the Venice Art Biennale draws droves of artists and visitors to the Lagoon year after year. San Servolo has hosted its share of Biennale exhibitions, and VIU and its President Umberto Vattani encourage all guests, be they students or professors, to experience this unique amalgamation of research and art on the island.

It is precisely this nexus between art and academia that is the central idea behind LMU Munich's UniGalerie. The gallery, located in the heart of the university's main building, was established to promote cultural dialogue and to encourage students to engage with contemporary art. Now, the curator of LMU's UniGalerie wants to bring this

conversation to San Servolo: Inspired by the altarpiece in the church of San Zaccaria in Venice, a Giovanni Bellini painting of the Virgin Mary and Child Jesus with a group of – paradoxically quiet – saints entitled "Sacra Conversazione," the exhibition "Sacra Conversazione: Identity, Heritage, Globalization" seeks to deepen the dialogue between art and science.

The exhibition, co-hosted by LMU and VIU, has been created especially and exclusively for VIU's premises on San Servolo by the artists TEAM BECKER PINTER and STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER. They have created works that grapple with VIU's main academic focus, the Globalization Program, and professors Christof Rapp and Stephan Lessenich from LMU have acted as their scientific "godfathers". The amazing result of this creative co-operation will be on display on San Servolo for the upcoming weeks.

I would like to thank the initiator of this exhibition – UniGalerie's curator Markus Sattler, the artists and contributors, and especially VIU for providing the space as well as their organizational support. I am confident that this wonderful exhibition will spark interesting conversations among its visitors, and I wish all an enjoyable experience!



Our idea was to stage an art exhibition not just by LMU at VIU, but specifically for VIU. The initial idea evolved during a visit to the Church of San Zaccaria, located very near the boat pier of the same name, where one can board a vaporetto for San Servolo. It houses a famous altarpiece by Giovanni Bellini which is supposed to illustrate a so-called "Sacra Conversazione", i.e. the type of painting which shows the Virgin and Child enthroned and surrounded by four saints. The saints in question however, appear to be entirely turned in on themselves and absorbed in contemplation, a state which actually contra-

dicts all notions of a "sacred conversation". Rather than dialog, the prevailing mood seems to be a kind of blissful silence which forces the observer to wonder whether the term "Sacra Conversazione" for this painting is purely facetious. One might also suppose that the conversation in question has not yet begun or that it is being conducted on a level superior to that of mere words. It is precisely this uncertainty inherent in the painting – that is the ambiguity of whether a discussion, a conversation, or a dialog will ultimately occur or not – which provided our first basic idea. We wished that our art project would become dialog-oriented and involve several participants. We also wished to focus our project entirely on VIU – this is our second

basic idea. It has been established that the architectural elements illustrated by the Bellini altarpiece demonstrate that the painting was created specifically and exclusively for a certain altar in the Church of San Zaccaria. This is demonstrated by the fact that the decoration of the marble altar's superstructure, its columns and capitals, form an integral part and are continued in the architectural ensemble shown in the painting. Acting on this impulse, we decided that LMU's art project would be developed exclusively in view of the exhibition at VIU. Its contents are thereby specifically focused on VIU and explicitly address three themes of VIU's concerns of study and research contained within the "Globalization Program": Identity, Heritage and Globalization.

Our project aims at stimulating creative dialog on several levels and among all the participants. As a first step, TEAM BECKER PINTER and STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER will explore the triple theme "Identity, Heritage and Globalization". The conclusions of the two artists which stem from their differing methods and techniques will be viewed side by side in a section of the exhibition.

Their two diverse approaches will hopefully motivate a second level of conversation and will be further discussed through the granting of an academic seal of approval of the work accomplished. A professor from LMU will offer his reflections of how the theme of "Identity, Heritage and Globalization" is being handled. Sociologist Stephan Lessenich will further elaborate on the research presented by TEAM BECKER PINTER, while Christof Rapp of the philosophy faculty will base his lecture on the ideas of Stephan M. Schuster's concept. Since each expert will present his findings in detail during the opening of the exhibition a brief abstract of their papers may be found in the current catalogue.

A third potential level of conversation involves the artists, the scholars and the recipients. Ideally, it will motivate a lively discussion among all present and across all levels. Yes, there is always room for the risk factor. Our project designed as an experiment may fail partially or completely resulting in a mute "Sacra Conversazione" reminiscent of Bellini. This is a risk we are glad to take.



TEAM BECKER PINTER

There is no generally accepted definition of the term “globalization,” and opinions as to its meaning are as diverse as the individuals who hold them. In its own approach to the concept, TEAM BECKER PINTER takes the polyvalent nature of the term as its starting point. Central to their style and modes of work is the notion of repetition, which mirrors the resonances between art and culture – echoes which are now transmitted in real time by modern media to all corners of the world, to be individually reconfigured and reinterpreted by everyone at the receiving end.

The present installation focuses on Frida Kahlo – the “Queen of the Selfie”, as TBP likes to call her – and Mickey Mouse, surely one of the most famous icons of a pop culture that now encompasses the globe. Depictions of these two figures provide the setting for the installation – Frida Kahlo on the left, Mickey on the right. Within the space between them, anything goes: The always imperfect resonances between art and culture, augmented or fragmented – but never (the) original (note).

Repetition also comes into play in TBP’s use of materials. Recycled posters serve as the substrates for new images. In the broadest sense, even the work process itself can be subsumed within the connotations of “globalization”: gestures are spontaneous, rapid, unencumbered by preconceptions of the outcome, and always open to the possibility of failure. The project assimilates the art of the past in order to deconstruct it in the present and reassemble it into something entirely new.

TBP quite deliberately refrains from passing any value judgments on the term “globalization”.

The Artists

Peter Becker and Thomas Pinter both work at LMU Munich, albeit in different capacities – Pinter in public relations and Becker at the Institute of Art Education. Pinter, who is Online Editor in the University’s Press Office, has designed and realized a number of cooperative multimedia projects in collaboration with Becker. Peter Becker lectures on Contemporary Art, with a focus on the innovative use of electronic image and sound processing. He is recognized as a pioneer of the art form of VJing and has been acclaimed for his visual representations of electronic music at clubs and festivals.

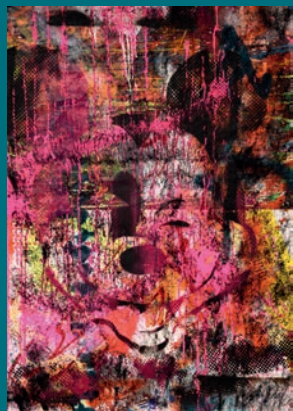
As TEAM BECKER PINTER the duo creates installations and sets of images, which emerge from a process-oriented, performative approach that incorporates elements of contemporary and urban art forms and exploits the remix concept that now plays a dominant role in pop culture. In effect, they paint, they spray, tag, tear, make collages and videos – spontaneously, simultaneously, synchronously, speedily.

In 2016, they combined their pictorial work with video mapping (a specific form of multimedia presentation) in a project that was shown in clubs and at media festivals.









Frida, 100 x 100 cm, acrylic and aerosol on canvas





Frida, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster

Frida, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster

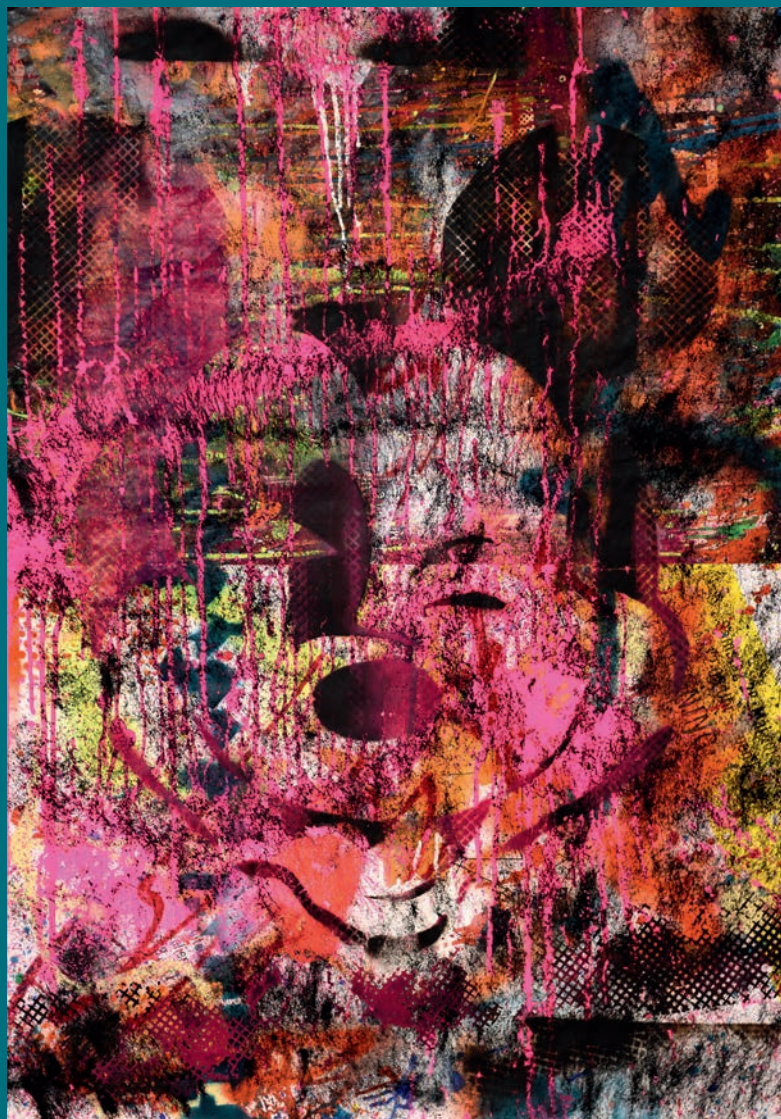




Frida, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster

Frida, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster





Mickey, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster

Mickey, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster

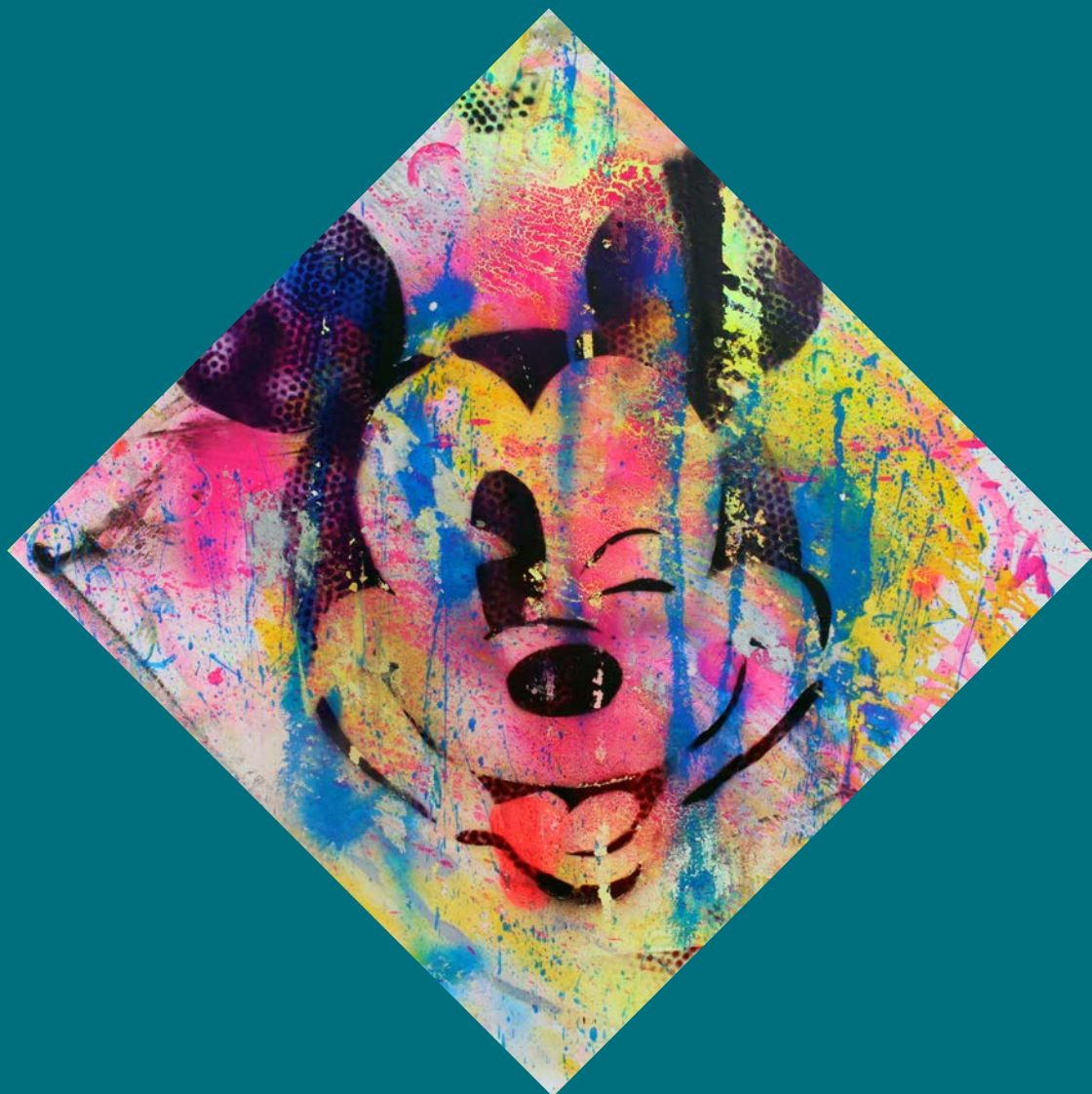




Mickey, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster



Mickey, 117 x 83 cm, acrylic and aerosol on poster



Mickey, 100 x 100 cm, acrylic and aerosol on canvas

Paint It Again, Sam

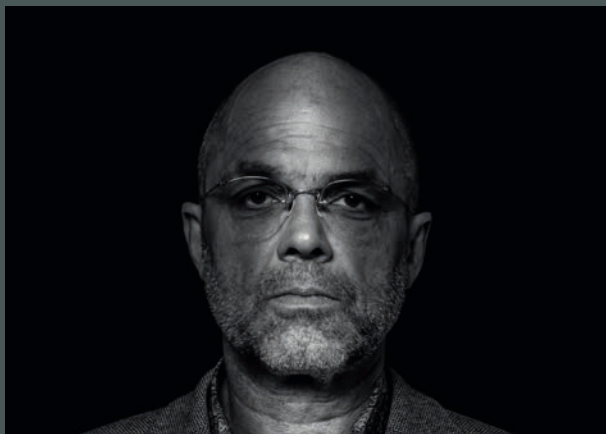
Prof. Dr. Stephan Lessenich
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

With globalization, the world has become a village. At least this is what social sciences have been telling us for almost three decades now. And it is what we actually think the world is like – or what we would like it to be and to be about. With the globe having shrunk to the size of a village, everything and every place is within our reach, at our disposal. Thanks to our technological devices, to the infinite flow of communication, to the global spread of cultural symbols, to the easiness of moving around the world, we are part and parcel of our own and personal United Nations. We are all cosmopolitans now: from Munich to Venice in only some hours, from mainland to island in just a moment, from Frida to Mickey in the blink of an eye. And back again in just another blink. Exaggerated and idealized as this very short account of global culture – or rather of the culture of the global – might be, it nevertheless may be said to grasp the very core of the European life-world in the early 21st century. Travelling around the world, participating in what is going on “out there”, being almost as close to what happens on the other side of the globe as to what is going on right next to us: all this has become pretty normal to us. Throughout the last decades, we have become witnesses of the gradual dissolution of borders, of the permeability of dividing lines, of the irrelevance of belonging. Or so it seemed at least. With people moving through space and time more and more quickly than ever, it seemed that social identities were changing and multiplying, overlaid and repainted by the experiences they made and by the sensations they had somewhere abroad, far away from their hometowns. Even if they did not move from there at all, the world seemed to come to them, to enter their lives mediated by the digital forces that, at some point in time, nobody could possibly avoid any longer to be confronted with. Today, however, this account of the world and its people going global seems to be outdated and out of place. With the accumulation of the financial crisis first, the refu-

gee crisis later, and the populist crisis right now, things have changed. And they may have changed not only for the moment. It seems that we are returning to a world of borders and enclosures, of separation and exclusion. A world that, in reality, had not disappeared at all for larger parts of the world population – but that we Europeans for some time had thought to have effectively left behind. But after all, this seems to have been just an illusion, an illusion kept alive on the island of prosperity and security called Europe. An illusion which now gives way to a new sense of reality, a reality that bites. Frida and Mickey had been separated from each other for a long time already. But now, they not only virtually, but factually face a wall to be erected between them. Cheerful Mickey and tragic Frida seem to represent the two camps of a global village having split into a villain globe. They now both seem to live at the edge of the village, on opposite sides of the border. Their communication has been impaired, their images have been blurred, their relation distressed.

But maybe all this is only a matter of perspectives, a matter of painting it black. Maybe Frida and Mickey are still meant for each other. And maybe, like in Woody Allen’s *Play It Again, Sam*, TEAM BECKER PINTER turns out to be their Rick a.k.a. Bogart. “If that plane leaves the ground and you’re not on it, you’ll regret it; maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but soon, and for the rest of your life”: This is what Woody Allen, playing “Allan” and emulating Bogart, tells “Linda” (Diane Keaton as Bergman as Ilsa Lund) in the film’s last scene, and with her saying “That is beautiful” he has to admit: “It’s from *Casablanca* ... I’ve waited my whole life to say it.”

Maybe in this case, in the intimacy of San Servolo, Frida turns the tables and approaches Mickey: “Here’s looking at you kid.” Wouldn’t it be nice?



STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY

Exploring the three themes of Identity, Heritage und Globalization in 66 images, STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER by the very arrangement of his images leaves no doubt as to the central role (cultural) Heritage plays in his mind: arranged edge to edge along a horizontal axis, conjuring reminiscences of an antique temple frieze, the centre line of his tableau is in “divine proportion” to the vertical axis of the display wall.

To embody his vision, Schuster also rearranges the established order of these three themes by according prime of place to Heritage, as virtually the root and starting point of all human identity. Pure nature, symbolized by the four elements of air, water, earth and fire, providing man with the resources to draw on for creating his civilization and for crafting things both useful and beautiful, is followed by aesthetic images meditating on the various levels of connectivity between Heritage and Identity: the connection of faith and art, and the responsibility to protect identity-giving Heritage, whether in respect of cultural assets or in respect of nature itself; in the artist’s mind, the transition from Heritage to Identity is reflected in the most important and most existential part of everyday human life: the ingestion of food, or food culture, respectively.

Globalization, on the other hand, is associated by Schuster with the unabated growth of the human population, the negative aspects of progress, neglect of Heritage, and the progressive relinquishment of personal identity. The tableau ends with a gloomy vision of the

future: the images melt apart by increments, turning abstract, colours and shapes dissolve until only vestiges of light remain in the darkness of the black.

The Artist

STEPHAN M. SCHUSTER studied art history at LMU and has a long professional history working as a freelance photographic artist in Munich and all over Europe.

His conceptual work, which he usually prefers to put together in thematic series of works, more often than not grows from spontaneous ideas and inspirations based on the physical realities of photography or the technical possibilities inherent in a camera. Capitalizing on the effects of reflections and double exposure, for example, he created his illusionistic “Impressions of Nymphenburg Palace Garden”, which were on exhibition in 2013; the results of his intense study of long-term exposure and superimposition culminated in his “Informal Photographs”, which were on display in 2015 at the Karl&Faber gallery in Munich. Incidentally, one of the artist’s conceptual installations created in 2017 for the Allianz Deutschland AG gallery was conceived in Venice, while the artist was preparing for the exhibition at hand.



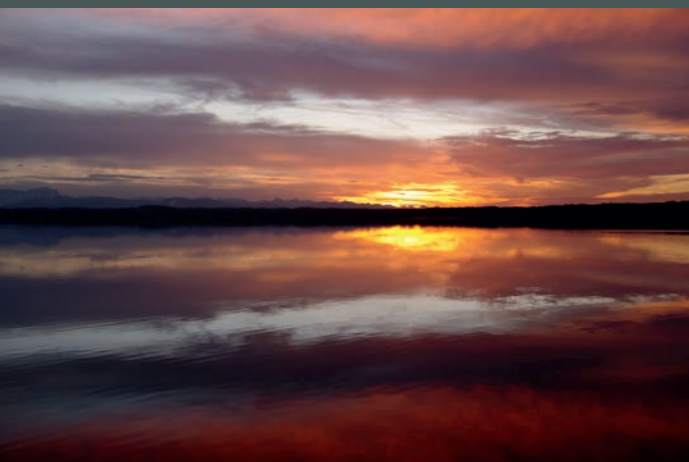
Air
July 13, 2015



Earth
December 31, 2013



Fire
August 3, 2015



Water
December 24, 2012



Fern
May 9, 2013



Forest
October 2, 2012



Winter Landscape in the Chiemgau, Upper Bavaria
January 2, 2017



Carp
June 24, 2014



Globe, c.1920 (detail)
January 25, 2017



Asparagus Field in the Dachauer Moos, Upper Bavaria
April 25, 2011



Olive Branches with Fruit, Northern Tuscany
October 29, 2011



Windfalls from a South German Apple Orchard
October 3, 2016



Barley, Lower Bavaria
June 21, 2015



Amazonian Indians c.1930
Dr. Alexander Grossmann Family Archive



'Da Tiziano' – Shoemaker's Workshop in Pistoia, Tuscany
August 8, 2015



Walchensee Hydroelectric Power Station
June 22, 2013



Light Bulb
November 23, 2013



Shrine in Lower Bavaria
January 1, 2017



Pilgrims' Crosses at 'Maria Eck', Upper Bavaria
September 24, 2016



Hand-Carved Crib, Oberpfalz, c.1930, with Anchor Stone
Blocks, c.1900
December 12, 2014



Easter Postcard Created by the Artist (Gilded Egg, Clay
Rabbit made from a Chocolate Mould, Real Grass)
April 17, 2014



The Artist's Great-Grandmother (Maria Käberich)
July 25, 2014



Offspring
December 31, 2012



Venice - Santa Maria della Salute and San Giorgio Maggiore
November 27, 2016



The Bavarian State Library on Munich's Ludwigstrasse
April 25, 2015



Terme Tettuccio in Montecatini Terme
September 27, 2013



Statue of Zeus, Grand Parterre in Nymphenburg Park,
May 17, 2016



Staircase at the Altes Nationalmuseum in Berlin
March 1, 2016



Venetian Gondola on a Canal in Nymphenburg Park, Munich (detail)
August 18, 2015



Salon-Style Wall in the Artist's Apartment
January 28, 2017



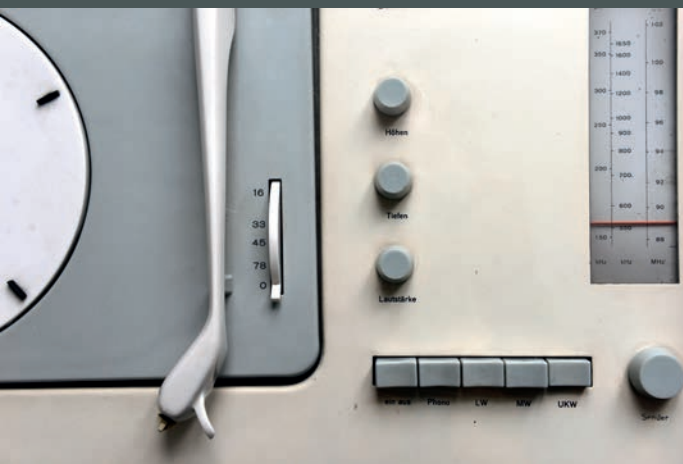
An Art Object in the Artist's Art-History Library
January 26, 2011



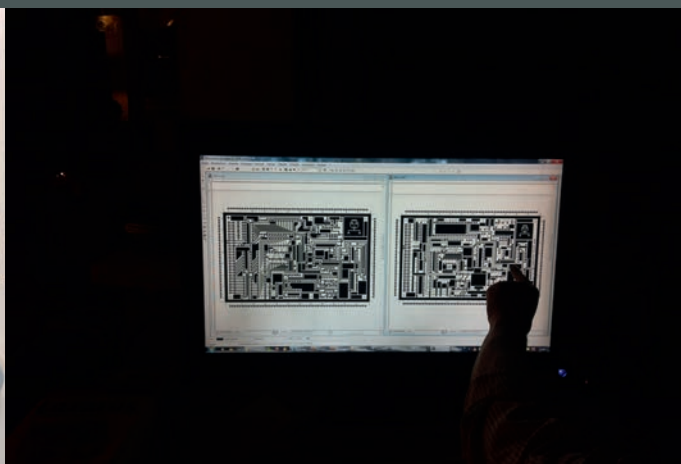
Engraving by Barthel Beham (1502-40) and Hans Sebald Beham
(1500-50): "The Penance of St. John Chrysostomus", c.1525-45
Scan of the original



Wristwatch by 'Eisenegger', La Chaux-de-Fonds, with
'Valjoux 88' Movement, c.1947
January 28, 2017



Braun 'Schneewittchensarg'
January 26, 2017



Circuit Diagram of a Printed Circuit Board on a Computer Screen
April 26, 2012



Dashboard of a Pre-War Maserati Racing Car
July 25, 2011



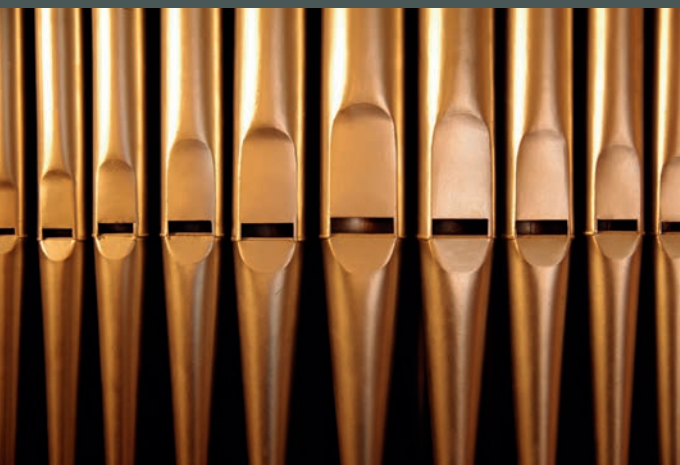
Opalescent Blue S-Type Jaguar, 1966
May 31, 2012



Mannequin, Coburg
April 18, 2012



Shoe Shop Display in Munich
March 19, 2011



Organ in the Wieskirche, Upper Bavaria (detail)
July 2, 2011



'Maiwein' in a Garden in Nymphenburg, Munich
May 8, 2016



Head of a Pikeperch in Fish Stock
October 30, 2016



Chicken Risotto Milanese (Made by the Artist)
August 1, 2016



Cannelés Bordelais (Baked by the Artist)
December 24, 2014



Still Life of Bitter Oranges, with Biedermeier Glasses
April 13, 2014



Table Laid for the Artist's Family in the Hirschgarten
(a Munich Beer Garden)
May 30, 2015



Railway Tracks, Oberfranken
May 8, 2013



Street in Stockholm
July 16, 2016



The Allianz Arena (Football Stadium) in Munich
March 13, 2012



Supermarket Trolleys at a Garden Centre in Obermenzing, Munich
May 13, 2012



Plastic Bottles in a Tuscan Supermarket
June 11, 2016



Shop Window in Vienna
March 2, 2016



Stacking Chair outside a House in Montecatini Terme, Tuscany
May 14, 2016



Cruise Ship, Stockholm
July 16, 2016



Underground Train at Munich Airport
July 18, 2016



Olu Nuclear Power Station near Landshut
December 30, 2013



Hong Kong Underground, China
Photo: Emanuel C. N. Schuster
November 27, 2016



Hong Kong Skyline, China
Photo: Emanuel C. N. Schuster
November 29, 2016



Mobile Phone Charging Station, Museum Fotografiska in Stockholm
July 17, 2016



Taipei City, Taiwan
Photo: Emanuel C. N. Schuster
December 20, 2016



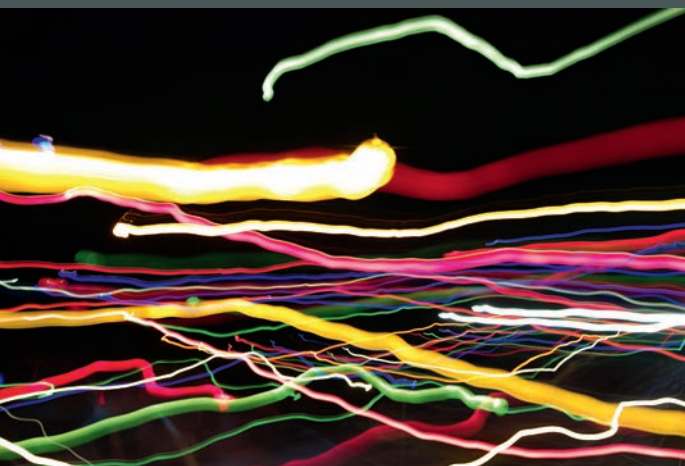
Central Bus Station (ZOB) in Munich
July 20, 2014



Street Cafe Scene in Pescia, Tuscany
September 25, 2011



Light Effects
January 1, 2017



Light Effect
August 11, 2012



Driving through the Petuel Tunnel in Munich
August 22, 2014



Light Effects (Fire)
June 4, 2015

Identity – Heritage – Globalization

Prof. Dr. Christof Rapp
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Identity, in some sense, is often thought to be dependent on heritage – on what we inherited, as it were, from our forefathers. Globalization is often seen as a threat to the kind of identity we inherited in this way. It is owing to these two claims that the concepts of identity, heritage and globalization are regularly connected. There might be some truth in both claims – depending on what we mean, most notably, by “identity”. All talk of identity, one might say, requires that something remains the same. If we understand, at the same time, heritage as what was always the same since time immemorial, and if we associate globalization with rapid change and with the violent disruption of what used to be the same, then both claims become true; however, they become, so to speak, overly true, they become truisms, truths without informative content. What sense of identity is required, then, if we want to turn the trio of identity, heritage and globalization into a suggestive triangle and our two leading claims into informative and perhaps even explanatory statements?

Obviously, what we are speaking of here is not numerical identity (consisting in the matter of fact that someone or something is or remains numerically one and the same), but “identity-as”, i.e. a description or self-description in the sense that someone regards him- or herself (or is regarded by others) as being of a certain kind or as having or displaying a certain quality or characteristic. Probably, not any sort of quality or characteristic, but the sort of quality or characteristic that is thought to be essential to, or explicative of, the sort of person we are, the wishes and thoughts we typically have and the kinds of things we do. For example, one might find it enlightening to frame and to justify one’s preferences, interests, accomplishments in terms of one’s traits of character, in terms of one’s profession, in terms of one’s religious or political community, or in terms of a cultural tradition one happens to live in. Factors like these are obviously taken to be “identity-building”. Identity, thus conceived, might justly be thought to depend on heritage – in some cases more, in some less. Religion based on revelation e.g. could not be conceived without heritage. A proficiency or craftsmanship we learn during our lifetime has often been shaped by practitioners of previous generations. The standards of excellence inherent in all kinds of proficiencies, arts and sciences are inherited, in that they

have been defined by predecessors, who themselves have managed to gain excellence in these fields. Identity thus conceived is certainly informed by heritage and vulnerable to the sudden disruption of extant traditions, and thus also to globalization – to the extent that it actually is the cause of disruptions of this kind.

Still, even if we suppose that our identity-as has been informed by heritage and tradition, there is no reason to accept versions of cultural determinism, saying that we cannot escape the tradition we come from. For, first of all, our identities-as are often the result of an intentional arrangement of pieces of different traditions and influences. The increase of insight into different traditions (facilitated, inter alia, by some of the effects of globalization) might encourage us to include more facets in our identity-as and to better understand what is peculiar and valuable about the specific tradition we come from. Second, identities-as, paradoxical as it may seem, might change, and they do change, as a matter of fact, in the course of a rich biography, e.g. by taking on new facets, by strengthening or weakening extant aspects or by shifting into another, unforeseeable direction. People’s identity-as may change for the better or for the worse. Neither the preservation nor the abandonment of a received identity is valuable per se. The expectation of stability, at any rate, for what we are prepared to call “our identity” does not require immutability, but only continuity – in the sense that one step in such a developing identity reasonably follows from the previous ones.

That being said, we are now in a position to accommodate our third player, globalization. Seen as the increasing tendency towards a worldwide interchange of products, information and worldviews, it is likely to bring about changes in virtually everyone’s environment; changes imposed by globalization may or may not affect our identities-as, and if they affect them, it might be for the better or for the worse. The bad effects on our identity-as that we usually associate with globalization are those that abruptly separate people from the kind of heritage that they need for a continuous development of their identity-as or, again, those subtler effects in virtue of which people content themselves with developing their “global” identity as worldwide travellers, consumers of globally accessible products and thinkers of globalized thoughts.