

« the amazone project »

2016

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- Contact: paula.anke@orange.fr
- **This project is a collaboration of male and female artists to emphasize the importance of communication and of artistic dialogue, in particular.**
- **The center of the work is composed of small figurines called “amazones” or “shadow amazons”, which suggest female force. The “amazone project” uses the French way of spelling amazon.**
- **The dialogue operates within different areas of collaboration with other artists:**
 - The field of scenography (set design)
 - The field of photography
 - The field of writing
 - The field of dance
 - The field of film

« shadow – amazones »

The "amazones" are a group of female figurines 20 - 30cm high, made of faience, fabric, beads, pearls and found objects.

There are about a hundred or more; each one is different from the other, dressed with precious and decorated costumes from ancient and present times, with ethnic and imaginary jewelry, all created by the artist Paula Anke.

They are presented hanging on a nylon thread, turning around themselves with the movement of the air. By assembling more than fifty "amazones," a strange force of attraction, persuasion and seduction emanates from those small creatures.

These dolls and their staging allow different levels of interpretation:

They seem to identify female qualities beyond time and beyond all origins. They concentrate qualities of femininity, like beauty and strength, tenderness and courage, loyalty and independence, pride and adaptability.

Paula Anke refers to them as her "army of shadow amazones," referring to the strength of women fighting from time immemorial, and for the time of their lives, their invisible battles.

These little women do not belong to any known civilization. Paula Anke uses various references of traditions and distinguishing ethnic marks, mixing and crossing them in order to permit the broadest possibilities of identification.

Their presence, in a large numbers, will disseminate an almost magical feeling, and will draw upon American Indian, Asian and African ritual dolls.

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Aim of the artist's project:

« I try to re-create a dialogue from a strong female point of view. This is for me a necessary dialogue between both sexes in search of a high-quality melting point of common interest, which is not based on the lowest common denominator. This dialogue has to be established upon confidence and mutual respect and affinity »

Origin of the project:

« The idea came from the fact that there are now less female than male human beings on Earth and that the natural and more than fragile balance is being dangerously threatened.»

It was necessary for me to find a way of suggesting female strength without repeating feminist postulation on one hand.

And on the other hand exploring the natural force of seduction without using sexual attributes.»

Paula Anke

WORK

This residency should facilitate continuous work on the “Amazones Army” to produce a quantity of 300, within the limited possibilities that offer variations on the same faience head.

This residency is the succession of encounters with artists working on the different aspects of the project.

In preparation of the residency, a photographer will take pictures of the existing amazons, so they can be sent to the Bergen Art students or to other artists who might be interested in collaborating on the project.

The collaboration with Norwegian artists is not contradicting the close teamwork with the French artist Paul Duc on the set, which will be the basis of the project. Paula Anke and Paul Duc have frequently collaborated as a team for 20 years now and will share one studio.

The very next step would be to collaborate with the writers.

I am very open to collaboration with Norwegian artists or students in the aforementioned fields of Writing, Film, Dance and Music.

Expected results of the residency :

1) the field of set design

the first and determining dialogue with a designer and metalworking sculptor.

We expect to create "the home of the amazones" a sophisticated and [mobile] metal structure for an open stage or exhibition hall. This set will house the "amazones" and the different interdisciplinary aspects of the project.

It will show the amazons hanging and will integrate a projection screen, which will provide a backdrop for the dancers and a display zone for text projection.

2) The field of photography:

The second dialogue will take place with a photographer in order to produce a series of portraits as a complement to the exhibit of the amazons themselves.

The dialogues with writers, the choreographer and the filmmaking imply a more complex organization and will follow in the progress of the work inside, OR outside of the residence-project.

3) The field of writing:

This will be more than one dialogue of male and female contributors, which will give meaningful names to the “amazones” and invent their personal biographies or written expression.

4) The field of dance:

The dialogue with a choreographer, transferring the elements symbolized by the “amazones” into the dimension of human movement.

This will take place two different times, the first time being the work with the choreographer and the second, the work with several dancers.

The result will be choreography of bodies dancing without arm movements, without leg movements, which will reiterate the Amazon puppets, who, in spite of their physical limits, exude persuasion, seduction and force.

This work does not necessarily take place during the residency.

5) The field of film:

We expect to film the images for a documentary-style film related to the work -in-progress, including the artistic and handcrafted production of the figurines, the dialogue between Paula Anke and the different artists working on the structure, photography, dance and written stories of the “amazones”.

The production of the documentary film will take place at the end of all the (afore) mentioned dialogues, after and outside of the residency.

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Technical and logistical requirements of the “amazone project” residency:

A well-lit white space

A workshop that allows for welding

3 month in the Spring or Autumn, or several weeks at different times.

(If possible, a second studio for 2 weeks for the collaboration with the photographer)

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“La beauté est encore plus difficile à expliquer que le bonheur”

“Beauty is even more difficult to explain than happiness”

Simone de Beauvoir