

DIEHL + GALLERY ONE

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opens in Moscow with Jenny Holzer's solo show

18 april - 18 мая 2008

Berlin/Moscow, 11 March 2008 - In April 2008, Volker Diehl will become the first western art dealer to open his own exhibition space in Moscow. DIEHL + GALLERY ONE will be focusing on contemporary international and Russian art. The opening exhibition is entitled Like Truth, a solo show by US artist Jenny Holzer, in cooperation with Monika Sprüth Philomene Magers, Cologne, Munich, London. In contrast, the Glasnost/Perestrojka exhibition planned in May offers an overview of Russian Soz-Art from the 1980s and 90s.

The gallery, centrally located on Smolenskaya with a view of the Moskva River and nearly 600 square meters of space, is run as a cooperation with the Kira Foundation, a Moscowbased art foundation. The venue has a chequered history as an art location: it opened as Gallery No.1, Moscow's first gallery, which from 1978 until well into the 1990s housed the state art trade outlet; it was also used for meetings of the State Committee on Culture.

Over the last years, the space has again been home to a gallery. DIEHL + GALLERY ONE is in the direct vicinity of the British Embassy and the famous Russian White House, the present Russian Federation parliament building.

For many years, Volker Diehl has been closely following developments on the Russian art scene. His main Berlin gallery has shown, for example, works by artist duo Blue Noses, the enfant terrible of the Russian art scene, and Chechen graphic artist Alexey Kallima.

Volker Diehl is an Art Moscow fair consultant and a member of its Expert Committee. Volker Diehl founded Berlin's Art Forum international art fair and was Managing Director of the event from 1996 to 2001. For over 20 years, GALERIE VOLKER DIEHL has been exhibiting internationally relevant contemporary art in Berlin.

Apart from the Russian artists mentioned above, the gallery's programme includes up-and-coming names such as Indian artist Shilpa Gupta (Mumbai), Chinese artist Zhang Huan (New York/ Shanghai) and American conceptual artist Susan Hiller. In September 2007, GALERIE VOLKER DIEHL moved to a new location, a spreading 400 square meters in a freshly refurbished gallery house on Lindenstrasse in Berlin-Kreuzberg. Since then, the former space on Zimmerstrasse in Berlin-Mitte has been run under the DIEHL PROJECTS label, showing young, emerging artists and guest-curated shows.

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Diehl + Gallery Number One, in collaboration with Monika Sprüth Philomene Magers Cologne/Munich/London, is pleased to present new works by Jenny Holzer for its inaugural exhibition entitled Like Truth. The installation and artworks have been conceived not only as site-specific studies of the Moscow space but as reflections on the legacy of the Russian avant-garde and its influence on contemporary art production.

The centerpiece of the installation will be Monument, an LED (light emitting diode) artwork comprised of 22 semi-circular elements arranged as a 5-meter tall tower. Programmed with Holzer's early texts Truisms and Inflammatory Essays, Monument will embody language that speaks to power and belief in pulsing red, blue, pink, and white light. Monument is positioned in an historical lineage of objects that enliven, broadcast, and memorialize ideologies. By taking the work of Tatlin as a point of departure, the artist holds in balance the tenuous relationship between utopian ideals and historical eventualities. Holzer also has created a frieze of sixty delicate, curved electronic signs that will display a selection of her writings in blue and white. Perhaps her signature medium, electronic signs have been part of the artist's practice from the early eighties, beginning with her 1982 installation on the Spectacolor sign in New York's Times Square. Since then, Holzer has created major LED installations for the Guggenheim Museums in New York and Bilbao, the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., to name a few.

In addition to the electronic artworks that touch on truth and power, the installation will include a series of her newest paintings that follow the aesthetic of Suprematist works. These paintings, part of Holzer's series of declassified government document paintings that she began making in 2006, deal with secrecy—what one is forbidden to know. Silkscreening documents onto oil-on-linen grounds, Holzer simply presents the pages—she makes no substantive changes or adjustments. The pronounced markings on the paintings are the censors' original redactions on the documents. The introduction of color as a substitute for the censor's black blockings is Holzer's way of making these works more formally analogous to those of Malevich. But more than a study of likenesses, Holzer's allusion to Malevich and the language of abstraction references the entanglements of aesthetic form and political formations and deformations.

A gallery in the Italian Pavilion of the 2007 Venice Biennale was devoted to Holzer's paintings. A large-scale traveling exhibition of the artist's work, focusing on her output from 1990 to the present, will open first at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago in October 2008 and later go to the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Fondation Beyeler in Basel.

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Jenny Holzer has presented her ideas, arguments, and sorrows in public places and international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale, the Bundestag, and London's City Hall, among others, since the late seventies. Her medium, whether formulated as a T-shirt, as a plaque, or as an LED sign, is writing, and the public dimension is integral to the delivery of her work. Starting with the New York City posters, and up to her recent light projections and paintings, her practice has rivaled ignorance and violence with humor, kindness, and moral courage. Holzer received the Leone d'Oro at the Venice Biennale in 1990. She lives and works in New York.

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вторник-суббота 11-20

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