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Kunstpreis der Deutschen
Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken

Press Release

Berlin, 22 November 2007

blauorange 2007 prize winner's exhibition: Danh Vo presents his installation 'Untitled'

Danh Vo, winner of the 2007 blauorange art prize awarded by the Deutsche Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken (German Cooperative Banks), has created a new installation - 'Untitled' - for the prize winner's exhibition. In the search for his own roots, Danh Vo had found, in a presumably "unspoiled" hinterland of Vietnam, numerous signs of Western culture. From Berlin, he did further research and purchased parts of a collection of an American military advisor at auction on eBay, including everyday objects and artworks of tribes who live in the mountains of Vietnam.

These included an antique sword with a wooden shaft; a coin bearing the words 'Republique Française 1878' is nailed to its handle. Other objects include a woven blanket from the 1950s, dyed in various shades of brown, with an abstract geometric pattern, and a newer blanket dating from the 1970s, in which stronger colours such as red or violet dominate. The motifs of the borders represent bombs and helicopters.

Four wooden crates are also part of the 'Untitled' installation. Danh Vo built them from the wood of the original shipping box, which was marked with customs stamps and declarations. They contain roughly hewn sculptures made of weathered, reddish-brown wood - a monkey and three human figures. Two of the human figures are shown bareheaded, while the third wears the uniform cap of the French Legionnaires.

Veit Loers, director of the blauorange art prize, said of this year's prize winner: 'Danh Vo's new conceptualism takes as its theme his own role and his view of cultural identity under the conditions of his situation: He is an artist living in Berlin, a Danish citizen born in Vietnam. When he lets documents, souvenirs and commemorative

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objects speak for themselves, it is within an artistic fiction which makes use of paradox in order to be able to present the value of the inherited, prescribed and purchased objects quasi as ready-mades in ever-changing contexts.

Danh Vo, as the first winner of the blauorange art prize, represents a new breed of young, international artist whose work mirrors his socially critical, individualistic, ironic and melancholy reflections on his role as a member of minorities and as a member of the art world.'

The art prize of the Deutsche Volksbanken and Raiffeisenbanken (German Cooperative Banks) has been redesigned: it focuses on encouraging and supporting young artists living in Germany. A jury composed of art association directors selected the winners from nominations by professors at German art academies. The blauorange art prize is awarded annually and is endowed with € 20,000.

'We are pleased to present the 2007 blauorange art prize to Danh Vo and to continue to support him in his professional work with this award. The commitment to providing funding to enable young artists to pursue their careers is very important to the German Cooperative Banks and has always been an integral part of the banks' philosophy,' said Dr. Christopher Pleister, president of the National Association of German Cooperative Banks (BVR).

In addition to the prize money, the blauorange art prize also provides the funds for the individual exhibition and the production of an art book. The artist's book by Danh Vo presents a collection of printed objects in a slipcase; each of these shows an aspect of the artist's work, while their diversity documents his multi-faceted practice.

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Danh Vo artist's book: 'Untitled'

Published by: National Association of German
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Kerber Verlag, Bielefeld/Leipzig 2007
ISBN: 978-3-86678-120-7
Price: € 29.80

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**blauorange art prize: Prize winner's exhibition by
Danh Vo, 'Untitled' installation**

Brandenburgischer Kunstverein (BKV) Potsdam e. V.
Brandenburger Str. 5/Luisenforum, 14467 Potsdam
24 November 2007 – 20 January 2008, Tues - Sun 12:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Opening of the exhibition and awards ceremony:
23 November 2007, 7:00 p.m.

Further information is available at www.blauorange.bvr.de.

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