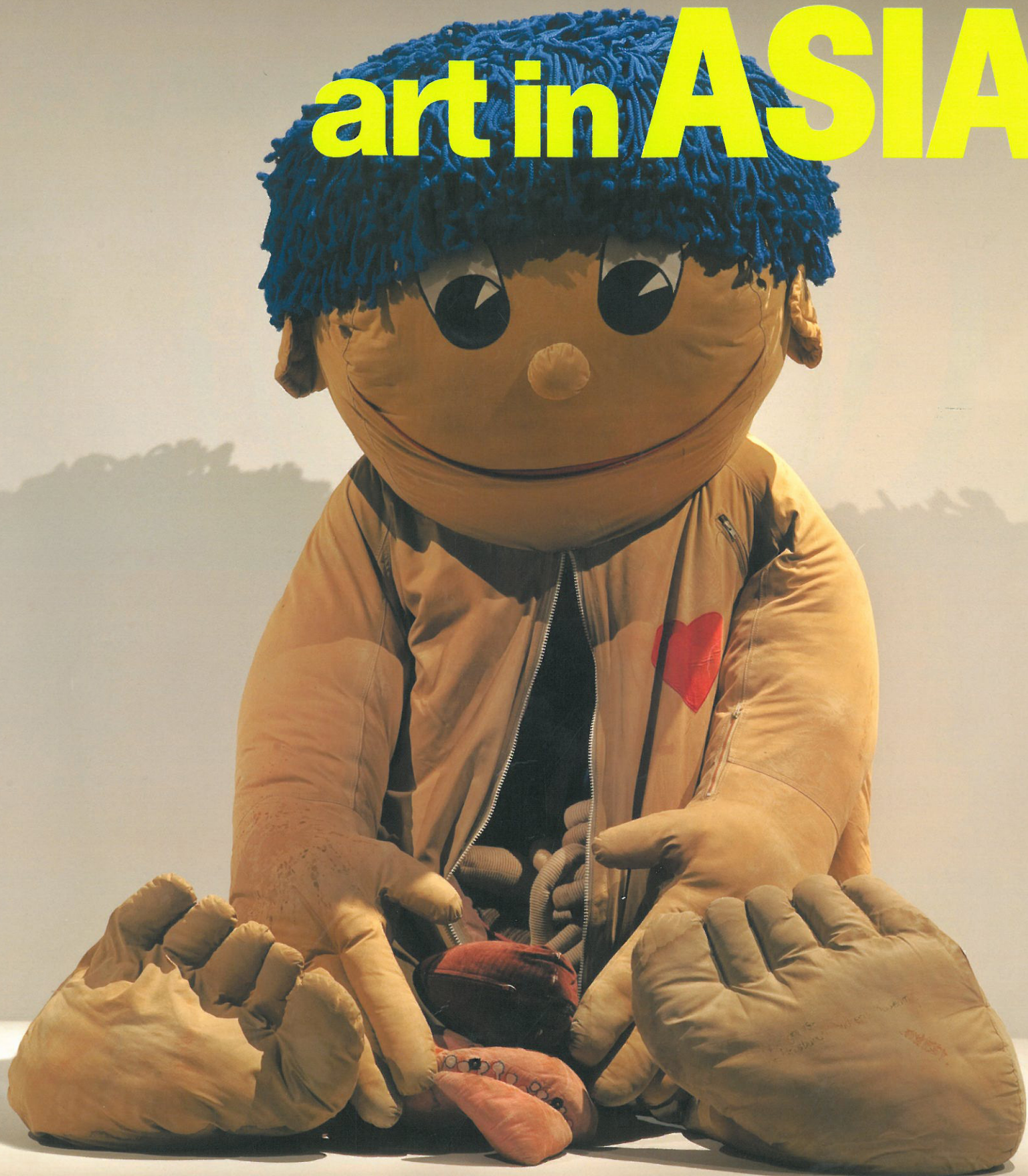


art in ASIA



55th La Biennale di Venezia Review

Report Art Fair Tokyo Artist Youn Myeung-Ro, Miguel Angel Iglesias July-Aug 2013

Francis Aljys

June 29 – September 8
Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo,
Tokyo

This exhibition shows Francis Aljys' oeuvre, from his earliest works to his most recent. The first stage, Part 1 *Mexico Survey*, held from April 6th until June 9th, provided an overview of his artistic activity, and introduced approximately fifteen projects that were put up in Mexico, mainly with videos, but also photographs, paintings and sculptures. The second stage, Part 2 *Gibraltar Focus*, opened on June 29th and focuses on his new, large-scale project held in the Strait of Gibraltar. This section includes nearly a hundred pieces, ranging from documentary footage, paintings, drawings, installation, sculptures and photographs.

Part 1 was filled with a presentation of Aljys' representative works, such as *Paradox of Praxis 1 (Sometimes Doing Something Leads to Nothing)* (1997), which documents the artist pushing a huge block of ice through the city until it melts. As well, in other segments he repeatedly charges into a sand storm with a hand-held camera; and strolls around downtown Mexico with a gun



in his hand only to get caught by the police. As such, the scenarios of Aljys' works are non-sensical, even comical. His slender physique and detached demeanor, as the performer of these actions, adds humor to the work. Part 2 introduces Aljys' most recent work: *Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River*. This new project was made in 2008 across the Strait of Gibraltar, which separates Africa and Europe, and in Part 2 it was its first comprehensive presentation in the form of videos, installations, paintings and drawings. Alluding to the issue of immigrants, Aljys engages children, in an imaginative attempt to connect the two continents.

As global society faces a pivotal moment of change, the role of art in society is once again one of questioning and challenging. Francis Aljys' interventions in reality translate social issues into allegorical filled narratives that provide an opportunity to explore anew the potential of art in confronting real world problems.

Born in Antwerp, Belgium in 1959, Francis Aljys currently resides in Mexico City. His works often deal with the social circumstances of Mexico and by extension Latin America, which he translates into allegorical narratives that are delivered in the form of actions, videos, paintings, photographs, etc. The artist has enjoyed international recognition through presentations at the Venice Biennale and the Istanbul Biennial, among others. In 2010, the Tate Modern in London hosted a large-scale solo exhibition which traveled to the MoMA, New York. www.mot-art-museum.jp



Haegue Yang: The Family of Equivocations

June 8 – September 15
Aubette 1928 and Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Strasbourg

Haegue Yang's first comprehensive institutional exhibition in France, features works within two venues. In the Cine-Dancing at the Aubette, Yang shows a group of *Sonic Sculptures* (2013), which visitors may activate by wearing. In the Salle des Fetes, one can find two *Dress Vehicles – Yin Yang* (2012), which are mobile sculptures consisting of Venetian blinds, bells, knitting and macrame. One such installation, *Blind Curtain–Flesh behind Tricolore* (2013), built with aluminum Venetian blinds, leads visitors into the exhibition space, at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art and into Yang's uniquely constructed language, and methods of expression. The use of the insides of used envelopes in *Diagonal Composition in Flow, and Trustworthy #183* (2013), combines poetically conceived geometric composition in a finely wrought blend of the commonplace and the extraordinary. As an emblem

of this poetry, the clothing rack motif is presented as the focus in the photographs *Gymnastics of the Foldables* (2006), thereby fully unfolding its formal potential. Objects thus occupy a special place in Haegue Yang's corpus. She gives them protagonist roles such as *Non-Indepliable, azure* (2010), highlighting their otherwise unobserved beauty in *Hardware Store Collages* (2012) or deforms them in *Non-foldings'* origami compositions). Yang's work is irresistible in its originality and intricate blend of strength and delicacy. By building on multiple, self-reflexive references to cultural, social and political history as well as reinterpreting archetypal forms of the historical avant-gardes, she creates work of protean unconventionality. Also, Haegue Yang designed Galleries Lafayette window display, as part of this event in Marseille, Strasbourg, Nantes et Bordeaux from July 3rd through the 31st, and in the Paris Haussmann store from July 8th through the 31st. www.musees.strasbourg.eu



Top Left to below: Francis Aljys, *Paradox of Praxis 1 (Sometimes Doing Something Leads to Nothing)* 1997, video, 5 min (Photo: Enrique Huerta) | Francis Aljys, *Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River*, 2008, video and photographs (Photo: Jorge Golem) | Top Right to below: Haegue Yang, *Non-foldings – Scenarios of Non-Geometric Folding*, 2013, origami mounted on frame; Haegue Yang, *Sonic Sculptures*, 2013, plated ring, bell.