

TOPOGRAPHY OF TERROR (19.12.2016)  
ELISA CALDANA and DIEGO TONUS

08.09 - 18.11.2017

Opening: 07 September 2017, 6:30 pm

Curated by Emanuele Guidi

ar/ge kunst opens the new season with parallel exhibitions at its own venue on the Via Museo and at the Civic Museum, organised to coincide with the opening of Transart Festival.

On Thursday 7 September at 6:30 pm, at its main premises on the Via Museo, ar/ge kunst will present *Topography of Terror (19.12.2016)* by Elisa Caldana and Diego Tonus, a two-person exhibition centred on the the film of the same name - this being its Italian première - together with a series of drawings and mental maps produced during the making of the work.

The film *Topography of Terror (19.12.2016)* is set in the unrealised building of the "Topographie des Terrors" in Berlin, which was initially planned by Swiss architect Peter Zumthor in 1993. Zumthor's design won a competition for the construction of a Documentation Centre on the site where the Gestapo, the SS and the Reich Security headquarters were all located during the Nazi era, but the project was never realised due to its high costs and the architect's radical and uncompromising attitude.

Starting from Zumthor's original drawings and plans, Caldana and Tonus produced a CGI-rendering of the Topography of Terror building; an image of a present-day future which never came into being and therefore provides the perfect stage for a narrative that asks how forms of terror operate now and how they might operate in future.

Informed by a series of conversations with psychoanalysts and journalists from Reuters and the BBC, the film tells the story of a news agency journalist who suffers from secondary traumatic stress disorder as a result of overexposure to violent imagery in the newsroom. Through the fictive first-person account conveyed by actor and activist Khalid Abdalla's voiceover, the work explores ways of constructing information in contemporary journalism, articulating a reflection on that role and on the value of images as tools for perpetuating terror and manipulating the perception of reality.

The empty building is resignified via the impossibility of defining a unique topography of terror, the schizophrenic nature of contemporary terrorism echoing through the non-places of the internet and the media. In these terms, *Topography of Terror (19.12.2016)* 'is at once an entirely compelling reconstruction of a seminal building that never was, a profound investigation of our damaged and damaging mediation of conflict, and a striking exploration of the complex relationship between personal and public ethics'.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gareth Evans, film producer and moving image curator at the Whitechapel Gallery, London.

A series of sketches and mental maps produced by the artists during the making of the work are drawn on large-scale prints of Zumthor's plans of the Topographie des Terrors, revealing how the 'architecture' of the script has been planned and at the same time entering into a conceptual dialogue with the history of ar/ge kunst, where Zumthor himself had his first solo exhibition in Italy in 1990.

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Gallery hours

Tu - Fr 10 am - 1 pm and 3 pm - 7 pm  
Sa 10 am - 1 pm  
Free Entrance