



MENSCHLICHKEIT

**THEMENMONATE
08.01. - 08.05.2015
BOURBAKIPANORAMA.CH**

Humanity Months in Bourbaki Panorama from 8 January to 8 May 2015

The centrepiece of this 4-month series is the exhibition parcours “Path to Humanity” curated by the lawyer Marco Stoffel. Together with accompanying events, it forges links between the postulates of humanity, international humanitarian law and art.

The Bourbaki Panorama by Edouard Castres, which dates from 1881, places the viewer in the middle of the humanitarian disaster of February 1871, when in the Swiss Jura region 87,000 soldiers sought humanitarian aid during the Franco-Prussian War and were granted asylum in Switzerland. The theme of the 4-month series address the issue of “being right in the middle of it”. As visitors make their way along the exhibition parcours, they learn more about how humanitarian disasters have a direct effect on us, even when they are far away.

Lighthouse outside

On the square in front of the panorama building stands the “Lighthouse for Lampedusa” by the German artist Thomas Kilpper. It serves as both a symbol of this 4-month series of events and exhibitions and a metaphor for humanitarian refugee policies. Just as a lighthouse points the way for those in need, the curatorial concept includes the path to humanitarianism.

Tent City in the Mall

The exhibition parcours leads from the lighthouse in front of the building to the ground floor of the panorama building where five tents, modelled after a refugee camp, have been set up. The theme of this part of the exhibition is “Humanity affects us directly.”

International Humanitarian Law

The tents on the ground floor have been set up by the Henry Dunant Museum, Swiss relief agencies and the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences. The achievements of the Geneva Conventions are presented in the Dunant tent; the ICRC, SRC, Caritas Switzerland and World Vision provide insights into their work with refugees in their tent.

Escape and Presumed Paradise

Students from the Lucerne University of Social Work illustrate migration backgrounds and circumstances, spanning such topics as growing up in a conflict-ridden country, as well as escape, “arrival in paradise” and protracted asylum processes. Conversely, photos taken by five asylum seekers showing their everyday life in Switzerland are on exhibit in Lucerne’s Public Library. In addition, discussion evenings with the asylum seekers will be held on 19 February and 12 March.

Memory of Solferino

As prologue to the Humanity Months the Kunsthalle Lucerne is showing a big wooden sculpture of Max Hari. Inspired by the book of Henry Dunant “A Memory of Solferino”, the artist has created an installation in the form of a panorama. On the outside it shows the Battle of Solferino in woodcut and on the inside abstracted scenes from the Bourbaki Panorama in paint.

Terrain Humain in Panorama Room and Museum

The Path to Humanity continues from the ground floor to the viewing platform and museum on the upper floors of the building. Inspired by the panorama element of the faux terrain, contemporary artworks examine Edouard Castres’ artistic strategy of immersion more closely. A sense of discomfit arises for visitors, for it is doubtful as to whether they find themselves “inside or outside” of humanitarian disasters.

Fiction or Reality

The Canadian artist Jeff Wall presents a large-format transparency which he created in 1993 during the restoration of the Bourbaki Panorama. His photographic translation of the circular painting into a two-dimensional photograph is a work of fiction about fiction which brings the viewer even closer to reality. In the style of the Bourbaki Panorama painting, the Swiss artist Christoffer Joergensen has constructed a foto-panorama depicting the refugee camp in the Spanish exclave of Mellila in Morocco. The spherical sculpture evokes the feeling that the viewer is standing on the wrong side of the fence. The Swiss artist Christoph Rütimann created the video work “Bourbaki handrail,” enabling viewers to experience the panorama in a completely new way.

Breaking News

With his panorama painting in 1881, Edouard Castres had chronicled his own service as a Red Cross volunteer in February 1871. He was inspired by his friend Henry Dunant, whose humanitarian visions represented in diagrams dating back to 1890 can also be seen in the exhibition. Also on display is the artist’s original painting “Ambulance Internationale” (1872), which led to his commission for the panorama painting. With his work of art, Castres was able to provide the Swiss populace with an account of this humanitarian act carried out by the civilian population, the Red Cross and the Swiss Army, using the mass medium of his time, the panorama (as the precursor to the cinema and television). Nowadays, this occurs with breaking news from embedded journalists. Curatorially, this aspect is pointed out with photographs and art performances. Artistically processed fotos from the ICRC archive presenting current humanitarian campaigns are on display. Artists from the various disciplines of performance, improvisation and spoken word contribute to the series with interventions throughout the entire panorama building over the course of four months.

Supporting Programme

The thematic focus during each of the 4 months is augmented with accompanying events, featuring socio-cultural and art events, including film and literature programmes:

January: International humanitarian law

February: A look at migration and asylum

March: Humanity in everyday life

April: Art on the subject of humanity

May: Ideals of humanity

Detailed information about the programme of the themed series can be found at (as of 29 December 2014): www.bourbaki-panorama.ch.

Note:

The Humanity Months are an implementation of the Masterthesis of Dr. iur. Marco Stoffel with the title “Humanity”, Exhibition in the Bourbaki Panorama Lucerne on the subject of Art and Humanitarian Law, Zurich University of the Arts, 2014