

PRESS RELEASE

Andro Wekua

A Neon Shadow

Curated by Andrea Bellini

May 3 – September 4, 2011

Castello di Rivoli is presenting a special project by Andro Wekua (Suhumi, Georgia, 1977) conceived specifically for the Museum and created thanks to the support of the CRT Foundation.

In the prestigious and historical spaces of Castello di Rivoli, visitors will come into contact with the refined imagination of this young Georgian artist, through collages, paintings, wax sculptures and an architectural model. The latter is inspired by a building in Suhumi, his native city, from which he was forced to flee with his family in 1990, due to episodes of ethnic cleansing that were devastating the Abkhazia region. As Andrea Bellini, curator of the exhibition, states, "For Andro Wekua, Suhumi, today a semi-abandoned city, is a city mirage, an unattainable city, an oneiric place of memory. These memories – in the artist's work – take shape in part thanks to refined collages, images in motion, and a disquieting series of figurative sculptures, in ceramic or wax, of children and adolescents, figures that seem to come from a remote zone of dream and trauma."

The exhibition *A Neon Shadow* fits within the broader context of an exhibition project created in collaboration with the Kunsthalle Wien in Vienna and the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel, which are hosting, respectively, the exhibitions *Never Sleep with a Strawberry in Your Mouth* and *Pink Wave Hunter*. The title of the latter is also the title of the publication – both catalogue and artist's book – that accompanies the exhibition project.

Andro Wekua has been invited to participate in the 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, entitled *ILLUMInations*, curated by Bice Curiger, on the occasion of which he will show the film *Never Sleep with a Strawberry in Your Mouth*, 2010, a preview screening of which will be presented at Castello di Rivoli in conjunction with this exhibition.

Andro Wekua (1977) lives and works in Zurich and Berlin. He studied at the National Art School in Suhumi from 1986 to 1991, then continued his studies, from 1993 to 1994, at the Study at Phil. Institute Gogebashvili in Tbilisi, and finally at the Visual Art School in Basel, from 1995 to 1999.

The artist has participated in numerous publications and international projects.

His solo exhibitions include *Workshop Report*, Centre d'Art Contemporain Wiels, Brussels, 2009; *Sunset: I Love Horizon*, Le Magasin, Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble, 2008; *Wait to Wait*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2007. Group exhibitions include *10.000 Lives*, 8th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, 2010; *Skin Fruit: Selection from the Dakis Joannou Collection*, curated by Jeff Koons, New Museum, New York, 2010; *Abstract Resistance*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2010; and *Contemplating the Void: Interventions in the Guggenheim Museum*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2010.

It is possible to download images of the artist's work from the WEKUA directory at <http://www.selektaweb.com/cgi-bin/ftp/index.cgi>, username: rivolift02, psw: rivoli02

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