



A mysterious inscription by Joël Andrianomearisoa, a visual artist from Madagascar, illuminates the façade of Kunsthalle Praha

FANDIKAN-TENIN'IREO
FAHABABOAM-PONTSIKA
EFA LEFY SY IREO
IRINTSIKA VAO HITSIMOKA

An enigmatic sentence inviting us to consider otherness. Glowing neon letters on the facade of the future Kunsthalle Praha surprise passers-by with the artist's mother tongue – Malagasy. For Joël Andrianomearisoa, a multicultural artist, scenographer and poet who was the first artist to represent his native Madagascar at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019, the sentence, which translates into English as *Translations of all our lost passions and future desires*, reflects the current crisis and the urgency of the moment. The striking light installation is the central output of a Mail Art project which viewers will be able to follow on Kunsthalle Praha's social media from February till June 2021.

“When he first came to Prague to visit Kunsthalle, Joël Andrianomearisoa found the city as it had not been since the Velvet Revolution. Deprived of tourists it looked like a frozen stage set. This was in June 2020, a few weeks after the first lockdown restrictions were lifted. Planning an international exhibition in such a context seemed a risky endeavour. Ordinarily simple questions, such as the transportation of art pieces, or the artist's participation in the installation, became complex problems,” says Christelle Havranek, Kunsthalle Praha's Chief Curator, about the beginnings of the project.

Conscious of this unprecedented situation, Andrianomearisoa decided to turn to the Mail Art movement which developed in the 80s during the Cold War. In the following months the artist will be sending us regularly “letter-works” – objects created in an economy of means from materials of our time and spanning from drawings and paintings through textiles and assemblages to sound-based pieces. As soon as the object arrives in Prague, it will be temporary distributed throughout the spaces of the currently developing Kunsthalle Praha.

“By establishing a temporary correspondence between Paris, Antananarivo and Prague, *Joël* offers us a chronicle of his work. In the spirit of the Mail Art movement, he sets up a new type of exchange between his works and the public, between his convictions and the reality of the world,” adds Christelle Havranek, speaking about Andrianomearisoa’s creative process. The artist graduate with a degree from architecture, and his artistic approach always focused on language and polysemy. In other words, Joël Andrianomearisoa works with words in the same refined way he works with materials.

ARTIST’S BIO:

Joël Andrianomearisoa (*1977) lives and works between Paris and Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar. He is turns visual artist, scenographer, poet. As a “total artist” he is sensitive to the essence of space. It is only after gaining a physical awareness of a city, its architecture, its energy, that he can begin to elaborate a story. Within the given spaces and times, he then imagines sequences and itineraries and fills them with artworks, movements, texts, and, most importantly, emotions. As a multicultural artist he assembles, combines and interprets textures and texts from here and elsewhere, creating a protean, polyphonic work.

In 2019 Andrianomearisoa was the first artist to represent his native Madagascar at the 58th Venice Biennale. In 2020 he participated in the 22nd Sydney Biennale. Four years earlier he received the Arco Audemars Piguet Prize in Madrid. He has worked with the influential fashion brand Dior, among other things.

His multi-layered works are represented in numerous public and private collections, including the National Museum of African Art in Washington DC; Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa; the Studio Museum in Harlem in New York; and the Collection Revue Noire in Paris, France.

VOCABULARY:

Facade Project: While its building is being renovated, Kunsthalle Praha presents a series of commissioned outdoor artworks entitled The Facade Project. Selected artists regularly transform the facade of the emerging cultural institution with site-specific installations. First was Federico Díaz’s video mapping that appeared on the building in September 2017 followed in June 2018 by a text-based work by the Greek artist Antonis Pittas. In February 2019, the façade featured Adéla Součková’s installation *Exit the Loop* and in 2020 Aliona Solomadina’s light object *Lightness*. The current fifth project is a light installation by the Malagasy artist Joël Andrianomearisoa entitled *Translations of All Our Lost Passions And Our Future Desires*.

Kunsthalle Praha: A new cultural space in the historical centre of Prague. Located in the converted building of the former Zenger Electrical Substation, the

gallery creates a modern venue for exhibitions, educational activities and cultural events. Its mission is to contribute to a deeper understanding of Czech and international art of the 20th and 21st centuries and approach various generations by offering a varied programme. Kunsthalle Praha is a non-profit organization founded by The Pudil Family Foundation and it will open its gates to the public at the beginning of 2022.

Mail-art: Published in 1982 during the Cold War, the International Mail Art Manifesto proclaimed that “Mail Art spreads through the international mail (its medium) which is employed as a resonance box, with its crises, troubles and precariousness”. This movement, which grew out of Neo-Dada and Fluxus, brought together thousands of correspondents around the world. For some, the appeal of mail art lay in its experimental dimension. For others, living under dictatorships, it represented the only means of communicating and interacting with foreign countries. This was the case of artists from Eastern Europe and Latin America.

CONTACT FOR MEDIA:

Ondřej Čížek

PR & Marketing Manager

ocizek@kunsthallepraha.org

+420 605 921 770