

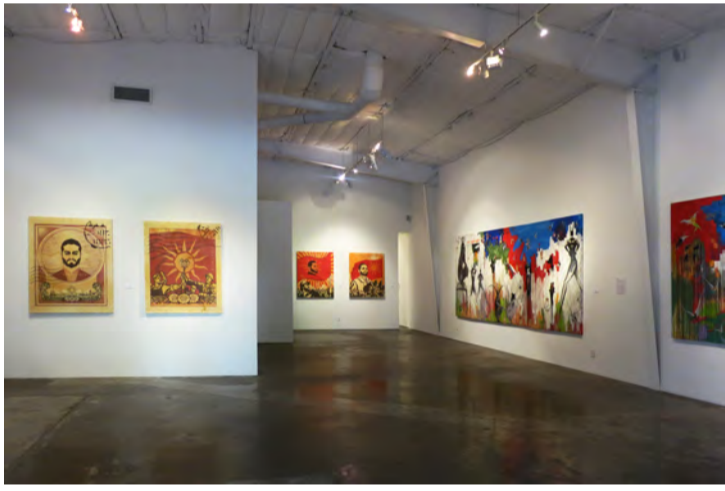
Deborah Colton Gallery Gallery Artists at the 2015 Venice Biennale

Deborah Colton Gallery is pleased to announce the participation of three of our artists in celebrations and related events for the **2015 Venice Biennale**. Artistic works from **Khaled Hafez** (Egypt), **Mahmoud Obaidi** (Iraq - Canada) and **Jonas Mekas** (USA - Lithuania) will be featured at this 56th international art exhibition that takes place at the Giardini, the Arsenale and in various locations across the City of Venice in Italy. Over 200,000 visitors will be able to view the work of these artists during the exhibitions that run from May 6th to November 22nd, 2015.

KHALED HAFEZ AND MAHMOUD OBAIDI: *IN THE EYE OF THE THUNDERSTORM IN VENICE*

The exhibition *IN THE EYE OF THE THUNDERSTORM: EFFERVESCENT PRACTICES FROM THE ARAB WORLD AND ASIA* will include works from two Arab-world artists represented by Deborah Colton Gallery: **Khaled Hafez** of Egypt and **OBAIDI** (Mahmoud Obaidi). Curated by **Martina Corgnati**, this exhibition is commissioned by **Contemporary Practices Journal**, a publication - or rather a textual project space - that has for ten years positioned itself as tireless and open-minded watchdog on the reality of the artists who are acting in this area of the world. Not forcibly accommodating towards aesthetic and commercial trends, this journal has confirmed itself as a rich and demanding scenario for polycentric observations and debates, open both to the theoretical and critical analysis, more academic than journalistic, and to the researches on actual personalities, their practices and their evolution during time. The exhibition itself explores the artists' creative practice as influenced by and reactionary to turbulent, violent, even catastrophic geo-political, social, and economic occurrences in history and the present: art-making presented as the serene eye of a cyclonic and turbulent storm of - separate, yet resultant from the context in which these artist create work.

In the Eye of the Thunderstorm: Effervescent Practices from the Arab World and Asia will be presented at this iteration of the Venice Biennale, with an opening reception on **May 6, 2015** at **Zattere 417**. The exhibition will run through **November 15, 2015**.



Khaled Hafez and Mahmoud Obaidi in *MAPPING STRIFE: PERCEPTION AND REALITY*, Deborah Colton Gallery, 2014

Khaled Hafez was born in Cairo, Egypt in 1963 where he currently lives and works. His practice spans the mediums of painting, video, photography, installation and interdisciplinary approaches. Hafez's work has been exhibited extensively worldwide, including in biennales and film festivals in Venice, Antonin, Havana, Bamako, Merciful, Guangzhou, Shara, Singapore, Dakar, London and Sarajevo, among others. He has been featured three times in the Dubai Art Fair and the Abu Dhabi Art Fair, twice in the Marrakesh Art Fair in Morocco, the MENSA Art Fair in Beirut and Paris Photo in Paris France. He has also been a featured artist at Art Basel Miami in the convention center. Solo presentations of his artwork have been hosted in numerous countries worldwide including in Egypt, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, Cameroon, and France. Additionally, he has participated in group exhibitions in the United States, Sweden, Turkey, Bosnia Herzegovina, France, Italy, Greece, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Russia, Japan and the Netherlands in addition to many more presentations of artwork in various metropolises worldwide.

Khaled Hafez has received various awards and fellowships for his work, including a Fulbright in 2005, the Rockefeller Belladonna Fellowship in 2009, the Francophone Prize in 2004 and the Foundation Bleacher Prize in 2011. His artwork has been included in such public collections worldwide as the Chitchat Collection in London, the Muhammad Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, the Mali National Museum, and the State Museum of Art in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Mahmoud Obaidi, born in 1966 in Baghdad, is an Iraqi-Canadian contemporary artist. After leaving Iraq in 1991, he obtained his Masters of Fine Arts at the University of Guelph in Canada, and completed diplomas in New Media and Film in Toronto and Los Angeles. Since his first international solo exhibition in 1995, his work has been exhibited in a number of museums and galleries around the world, including the National Museum of Bahrain, Manama; Musée de l'Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman; Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, Texas; and Musée d'Art Contemporain de Baie-Saint-Paul, Quebec, among others. His work is part of the permanent collection of a number of significant museums, foundations and private collections.

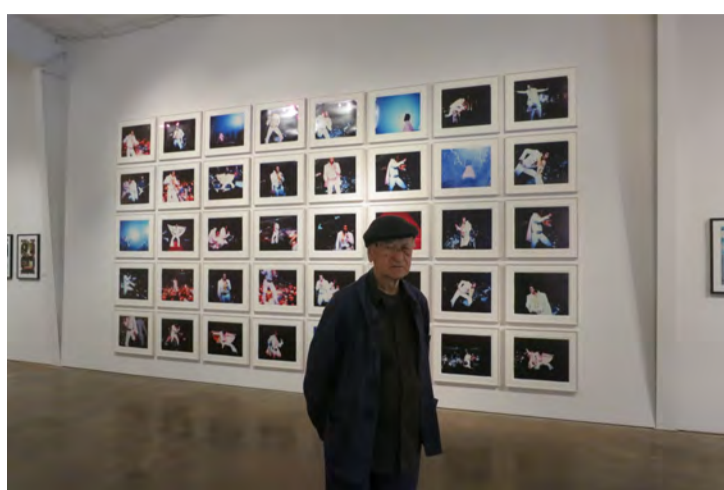


Deborah Colton Gallery at the 2014 Houston Fine Art Fair

Both Hafez and OBAIDI, along with Ferhat Özgür (Istanbul), were featured in a 2014 exhibition at Deborah Colton Gallery entitled, *MAPPING STRIFE: PERCEPTION AND REALITY*, and at the Gallery's booth at the 2014 Houston Fine Art Fair. *MAPPING STRIFE*, a provocative conceptual exhibition that introduced multimedia artworks from the perspective of three lauded Arab-world artists, featured paintings, photography, works on paper, video works and installations that checked the pulse of the charged geopolitical, socio-political, and humanitarian crises proximate to the exhibiting artists and highlighted the great divide between the

public perception and the "reality" of represented social climates, as influenced by the global politico-media complex. *MAPPING STRIFE* encouraged its audience to consider the indeterminate boundaries of perception and reality as well as mass-media influence upon the collective consciousness.

JONAS MEKAS: THE INTERNET SAGA



Jonas Mekas at *LIFE GOES ON... I KEEP SINGING*, Deborah Colton Gallery, 2013

Multimedia works from Lithuanian filmmaker **Jonas Mekas** will be included in *THE INTERNET SAGA* project. *THE INTERNET SAGA*, created on the premise of perpetual, evolutionary connectivity to the Internet, is the only project dedicated to digital culture on the occasion of this Venetian event. This edition's main protagonist Jonas Mekas, founder of the New American Cinema in 1960 and Anthology Film Archives in 1969, started experimenting with new audiovisual languages in 2006 with his online video-diary, which now includes more than 500 short films. Mekas, thus, is a pioneer not only of American independent cinema, but of web-based digital art as well.

Curated by the **Francesco Urbano Ragazzi** duo and in collaboration with **Zuecca Projects**, *The Internet Saga* will have two official sites, new in the city's landscape: **Palazzo Foscari Contarini**, a sixteenth century noble residence overlooking the Grand Canal now a Burger King restaurant, and the **Spazio Ridotto**, a brand new project space for video art, just 100 meters from Piazza San Marco.

This project offers a calendar full of events:

- **May 6th May, 7:00 pm at Palazzo Foscari Contarini:** the inauguration of Jonas Mekas' solo exhibition will take place and will be composed of three novel interventions linked to the artist's production on Internet.
- **May 7th May, 7:00 pm at My Art Guide Meeting Point:** a press conference open to the public will take place and will become a real performance thanks to the presentation of the online editorial project (titre(and the Skype call of Argentinian born artist Amalia Ulman.
- **May 7th, 10:30 pm at the Spazio Ridotto** the third and last part of the project will open with the projection of *Birth of a Nation*, a film made by Mekas in 1997, portraying the community of film-makers who, with Mekas, has revolutionized the American independent cinema. *A Sleepless Night*, which will last until dawn of the following day, will be launched with a poetic declamation by the Lithuanian-American artist dedicated to Internet and will end on the terrace of Hotel Bauer.

On view now at the **Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art** in Eugene, Oregon, **Deborah M. Colton** and **Richard Herskowitz** have co-curated an exhibition of "still framed" photographs that Mekas created from his films, entitled *Frozen Film Frames: Portraits of Filmmakers by Jonas Mekas*. This museum project is an excerpt of the 2013 Deborah Colton Gallery solo exhibition of Jonas Mekas, entitled *LIFE GOES ON... I KEEP SINGING*. During the time of the Deborah Colton Gallery exhibition, Jonas Mekas was a featured artist and special guest of the 2013 Houston Cinema Arts Festival, which presented his film *Sleepless Night Stories* as part of the festival's "Cinema on the Verge" programming that highlighted film and installation work by experimental media artists. *Sleepless Night Stories* debuted at the Berlin Film Festival in February 2011 and continues to enthrall audiences with Mekas' recording the seemingly mundane happenings in his life.



Barbara Hammer, Richard Herskowitz, Jonas Mekas, Deborah M. Colton, and Trish Rigdon at the Opening Party and First Screening of the 2013 Houston Cinema Arts Festival

Deborah Colton Gallery first debuted Jonas Mekas in Houston in the solo exhibition *Film Framed*. In 2007, Jonas Mekas was also included in the group exhibition at Deborah Colton Gallery, *Chemical City*. Since then Deborah Colton Gallery continues to represent Jonas Mekas in various venues nationwide, including a one-man solo exhibition at Paris Photo Los Angeles in April of 2013 and through projects via the Gallery's OUTPOST NYC DCG.

Deborah Colton Gallery is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance, conceptual future media and public space installations. The gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to make positive change.

As part of the Gallery's continued commitment to its artists and the arts, Deborah M. Colton will be attending the above events and preview parties in Venice.

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