

MEDIA RELEASE

May, 2015

**JUMP**  
INTO THE UNKNOWN

**NINE  
DRAGON  
HEADS**



la Biennale di Venezia

56. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte

Eventi Collaterali

## Collateral Event for the 56th International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia

**“Jump into the Unknown”** presents the works of 40 international artists and marks the 20th anniversary of the International Environmental Art Symposium – Nine Dragon Heads.

Nine Dragon Heads is an interdisciplinary platform where artists from across the 5 continents work in locations that may be environmentally, economically or politically troubled, following important cultural, historical and geopolitical routes. Initiated in South Korea in 1995 in response to the destruction of an important historical site, Nine Dragon Heads has evolved to address varying crises and transitory situations in localized and situation-specific ways.

The title of the project **“Jump into the Unknown”** refers to the inherently spontaneous nature of the International Environmental Art Symposium which will react to the particular geographic and environmental situation of Venice and la Biennale di Venezia.

**“Jump into the Unknown”** in Venice reiterates the nomadic practice of Nine Dragon Heads – a form of open air research which engages the city of Venice and three islands in the Venetian Lagoon; Murano, Lido, Pellestrina. The project will be accompanied by an exhibition of working traces, artifacts and performances at the Palazzo Loredan dell’Ambasciatore from 9 May to 18 June, 2015.

**“Jump into the Unknown”, an official collateral event of the 56th International Art Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia, will be inaugurated with an opening ceremony on Thursday, May 7 at 18:00 at Palazzo Loredan dell’Ambasciatore. The project will be presented at a press conference on Thursday, May 7 at 16:00. The opening of “Jump into the Unknown” will be accompanied by a ‘Nomadic Party’, one of the traditional features of Nine Dragon Heads events.**

**“Jump into the Unknown”** brings together site-specific work, installation, video, sculpture, photography and performance. It synthesizes and facilitates joint and individual works, while threads of overlapping artistic inquiry are produced in a process of evolving collaborative association. Participating artists do not aim to place full stops or to answer specific questions. Rather, they look for the creation of a space where experimental open air and public art-practice results in an ethical artistic message.

Against the background of Nine Dragon Heads wider practice, **“Jump into the Unknown”** is *un-curated*. Working for the past twenty years without a dominant curatorial figure, the un-curated format is a touchstone of the self-organizing ability of Nine Dragon Heads. It is a truly artistic enterprise, where research-based activity does not look for the creation of an immediate visual effect. The strength

of “Jump into the Unknown” is not the production of a final work but the provisional, unfinished, incomplete, and ongoing search for meaning.

“Jump into the Unknown” is not supported by any formal umbrella institution or major foundation. The majority of organizational functions are implemented directly by the Nine Dragon Heads participating artists, with directorial overview and coordination provided by Park, Byoung Uk, the project’s artistic director.

“Jump into the Unknown” is organized in collaboration with the Venice based Nuova Icona – “*associazione culturale per le arti*”, a non-profit cultural association, founded in Venice in 1993, and dedicated to the support and promotion of contemporary visual arts.

Scientific Advisors to “Jump into the Unknown” in Venice include Luca Pes – historian, VIU Assistant Dean and Director of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences – and Francesca Zennaro, environmentalist and researcher, TEN Research Center.

The project is commissioned by Magda Guruli (Georgia), Vittorio Urbani (Italy) and Kim Jae Kwan (S.Korea). The artistic director of “Jump into the Unknown” is Park Byoung Uk, an initiator, producer and artist based in South Korea. He is the founder and creative force behind Nine Dragon Heads.

**“Jump into the Unknown” Artists:**

Ali Bramwell (NZ), Alois Schild (AT), Bedri Baykam (TR), Channa Boon (NL), Charlotte Parallel (NZ), Choi, Ik Gyu (KR), Christophe Doucet (FR), Denizhan Özer (TR), Diek Grobler (ZA), Enrique Muñoz García (RCH/CH), Erika Batdorf (CA), Gabriel Edward Adams (USA/NZ), Goo, Sung Kyun (KR), Gordana Andjelic Galic (BA), Iliko Zautashvili (GE), Jusuf Hadžifejzović (BA), Kazunori Kitazawa (JP), Kim, Dong Young (KR), Lim, Hyun Lak (KR), Phil Dadson (NZ), Seo, Bak Ei (KR), Sim, Jea Bun (KR), Song, Dae Sup (KR), Suh, Yoon Hee (KR), Susanne Muller (CH), Yoo, Joung Hye (KR), Yoo La Shin (KR).

Aleksandra Janik & Magdalena Hlawacz (PL), Anna-Lea Kopperi & Heini Nieminen (FI)  
Harold de Bree (NL) & Mike Watson (IT), Yoko Kajio & Jason Hawkes (AU)

Quartair Group (NL)  
Geeske Harting, Jessy Theo Rahman, Pietertje van Splunter, Thom Vink.

**Exhibition dates:** 9th May – 18th June, 2015

**Inauguration:** 7th May, 6 pm

**Press conference:** 7th May, 4 pm

**Opening hours:** 11 am – 6 pm, except Monday

**Location:** Palazzo Loredan dell’Ambasciatore, Dorsoduro 1261, 1262, Venice

**Nearest Vaporetto stop:** Ca’ Rezzonico, line 1

**Website:** [www.9dragonheads.com/](http://www.9dragonheads.com/)  
[9dh-venice.com/](http://9dh-venice.com/)

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## **On 'Et in Arcadia Ego' - a film by Channa Boon**

A famous quote by Joseph Stalin, 'Propaganda is the strongest and most important weapon of our party and our battle, and in this battle the visual arts are the infantry while the cinema is the air force', was one of the inspirations for the film 'Et in Arcadia Ego' (2015, 30':00" HD video).

For its entire length, the film follows a chess game, played by two residents of Odessa, Ukraine, sitting near the city's Arcadia Beach.

Channa Boon's 'Et in Arcadia Ego' makes visible the heritage of Stalin's totalitarian power game across the entire band of countries situated between Russia and Western Europe tangible through the analogy of this game.

Whilst historical events are the carrier of the film, the chess game is the physical link connecting the different places shown in it (the Aral Sea, Odessa and Tbilisi). The chess game symbolises, at a micro level, the large-scale power game that has been and still is being played out in the former Soviet Union.

With this work, Boon investigates the idea of 'location' as a 'carrier of information', which any individual or being can tap into, just by being present at a given spot. Conversely, the film aims to show the system of thoughts and ideas that, throughout history, has created both the physical landscape and those who live in it, how it has affected the way they think and act, and how a collective consciousness has been formed in the past and is still being formed in the present.

The phrase 'Et in Arcadia Ego' is derived from a text by Virgil, and is the title of a famous painting by Nicolas Poussin. The painting shows a group of shepherds who discover the phrase on a tomb, and thereby become aware of the existence of death in their Arcadian existence. This gives them the capacity to reflect and thus develop self-awareness. In the film Boon connects this loss of innocence of the Arcadian shepherd – signifying the 'Candide' state of an ideal world that is destroyed forever – with the present and past of the former Soviet Union. Hence, the phrase becomes a reference to the ideal world that Communism aimed to bring about in this whole region and the nostalgia that it still invokes in many people.



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## INTO THE UNKNOWN

### NINE DRAGON HEADS



Nine Dragon Heads

NUOVA ICONA

makes things happen

Ali Bramwell, NZ / Alois Schild, AT /

Bedri Baykam, TR /

Channa Boon, NL / Charlotte Parallel, NZ /

Choi, Ik Gyu, KR / Christophe Doucet, FR /

Denizhan Özer, TR / Diek Grobler, ZA /

Enrique Muñoz García, RCH/CH / Erika Batdorf, CA /

Gabriel Edward Adams, USA/NZ / Goo, Sung Kyun, KR /

Gordana Andjelic Galic, BA / Iliko Zautashvili, GE /

Jusuf Hadžifejzović, BA /

Kazunori Kitazawa, JP / Kim, Dong Young, KR /

Lim, Hyun Lak, KR / Phil Dadson, NZ /

Seo, Bak Ei, KR / Sim, Jea Bun, KR /

Song, Dae Sup, KR / Suh, Yoon Hee, KR /

Susanne Müller, CH /

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Geeske Harting / Jessy Theo Rahman /

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Thom Vink /

Palazzo Loredan dell'Ambasciatore  
Dorsoduro 1261, 1262, Venice

Exhibition dates  
6<sup>th</sup> May – 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2015

Inauguration  
7<sup>th</sup> May, 6 pm, Nomadic Party

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Ca' Rezzonico, line 1