

POWER STATION

Sense of belonging, nationalism, economy, and global village

A Public Art Project by STEFANO CAGOL

A SATELLITE EVENT OF THE SINGAPORE BIENNALE 2006

1st to 2nd September, 2006

Various public spaces throughout Singapore

Presented by the IIC - Italian Cultural Institute in Singapore, this satellite project by Stefano Cagol is the only Italian presence at the Singapore Biennale 2006.

POWER STATION takes the form of public intervention, highlighting contemporary influences, beliefs, pre/misconceptions and belonging. Power, in various forms extends its influence to our daily lives yet our notion of power and its extent of influence is often, perhaps deliberately, overlooked. The project challenges our understanding of identity in relation to authority, nation-hood and globalisation. Moving and interacting within/outside "centres of power", be it cultural, political or financial, POWER STATION aptly questions their authority and invites reflexivity yet inevitably becoming an accomplice to these power games.

POWER STATION in Singapore will feature a white van traveling and stopping at various spots throughout the island. During each stop, the national anthems of selected countries will emanate from the van, while badges bearing words such as "Art Power", "Money Power" and "Media Power" will be distributed to the public. And with the words "POWER STATION" emblazoned on the van, a term associated with the generation of power, this project continues Cagol's investigations into contemporary influences.

Taking place during Singapore's inaugural international biennale of contemporary art, which also coincides with Singapore's hosting of the Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group, these events provide a highly appropriate context for POWER STATION's investigations. POWER STATION's interventions into the city's political, financial and cultural "centres of power" invites the public to re-examine our understanding of identity in relation to authority, nation-hood and globalisation. Inviting reflexivity, it pertinently questions the authority of these power centres while highlighting their significance in framing a sense of belonging, pride and unity.

Suspended in-between the negative and positive, familiar and implied meanings of the term "power", Cagol's engagement with the public underlines the complexity of power and authority. Neither definitive nor univocal, the concept of "power" is infinitely expanded. However, this multiplicity is subverted by the distribution of badges, once a symbol of rank but now playfully utilised as an accessory. The broadcasting of anthems of "nations in power" juxtaposed with those of the "aspiring powers-to-be" hints at the universal appeal for power, at once resisted yet irresistible. In this way the project highlights how "power", as manifested through the visible centres of respected authority, inhabits every aspect of contemporary society and is silently rooted in every individual.

POWER STATION is part of Cagol's ongoing research investigating influences, symbols, and mass manifestation. The series of projects saw its pivoting moments with the "White Flags" action at the 51st Venice Biennale with an ethereal Marianna and a white flag – the synthesis of all colours. It continued – with the support of the Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea di Trento (Civic Gallery of Contemporary Art of Trento, Italy), Museion Modern and Contemporary Art Museum of Bolzano (Italy) and Kunstraum of Innsbruck (Austria) – with the intervention of "Bird Flu" at the 4th Berlin Biennale. "Bird Flu" is a trip into physical and mental state of influences, taking an ironical use of the term "influenza" as a starting point in suggesting multiple levels of interpretation.

Following Cagol's presentation in Singapore, Cagol will continue this research in Tokyo with a work-in-progress lasting six weeks, called "Harajuku Influences". Consisting of installations, video and web-based work on <http://www.tokyospace.com>, it will be realised in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute in Tokyo, Japan.

The results of his investigations will be documented in a book published by CHARTA (Milan) and released internationally in January 2007.

DETAILS:**POWER STATION – Sense of belonging, nationalism, economy, and global village**

ARTIST: Stefano Cagol

VENUE: Various public locations in Singapore

CURATOR: Ong Puay Khim, Ms

For updates on the project, visit <http://www.powerartifice.com>

ARTIST WEB SITE: <http://www.stefanocagol.com>

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Interviews with Stefano Cagol may be arranged upon request

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