

PLEURAD XHAFA

A monument to failure

Inauguration of the monument / Thursday, January 28 2016, 09.00 am
Tirana, sidewalk in front of the President Building (Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit)

The artist Pleurad Xhafa in his first collaboration with MAPS - Museum of art in public space, donates Tirana a monument dedicated to one of the most controversial events in Albanian modern history. The “Gerdec” suit.

The Albanian government in cooperation with the United States of America and some private companies, were responsible for the dismantling of Russian-Chinese ammunition from the communist era inside the expressly dedicated factory in Gerdec a village in the municipality of Vora, Albania. In breach of contract and through false documents by the parties, at the factory, the ammunition were removed in miserable conditions by the inhabitants of Gerdec, unqualified people, women and children who lived near the factory. As a consequence of all this at noon local time on Saturday, March 15, 2008, 14 kilometers from the city center, a large explosion caused the death of 26 people and injuring over 300 people. Nearly five years later, the Supreme Court of Albania classified the case of the explosion in the factory in Gerdec as a “technological accident”.

It was indeed a technological accident considering the conditions in which it was carried out the dismantling of ammunition? Or maybe the problem exceeds the authority of a fragile justice?!

Following in the footsteps of this accident the work “Monument to failure”, embodied on the basis of a cut tree, in itself a dead object with long roots hidden under the asphalt of the Dëshmorët e Kombit Boulevard, 15 km from the crater of Gerdec. Pleurad Xhafa brings attention back on the avenue where the most important institutions of the Country are located and where are consumed some of the most emblematic events of the Albanian history. Only raised a few centimeters from the sidewalk in front of the Presidency Building, the trunk, once witness of the past, with the addition of the bronze plaque turns into a monument, a symbol of the failure. In front of this monument the viewer is unprepared as unprepared were the families of Gerdec victims, facing the final blow of the hammer of justice.

About the artist

Pleurad Xhafa is an visual artist who lives and work in Tirana, Albania. After studies in Bologna, he graduated with an MFA at the Academy of Fine Arts, Bologna in 2012. Through his work he attends to the legacies of conceptual and documentary approaches in art, making it relevant in the landscape of contemporary art research. He has participated in International group shows including: Every revolution is a throw of dice, Genoa, Italy (2006); Onufri Prize, Albania (2008); Tirana Biennale, (Satellite Project) Albania (2009); Berlin Biennale, Germany (2010); Lavoro/Work/Vore, Udine, Italy (2013); Ardhja Award, Tirana, Albania (2013); Shame on you, Celje, Slovenia (2015); Les Rencontres Internationales, Paris, France (2016). His work as been awarded first prizes at Ardhja Award in 2013 by Tirana Institute of Contemporary Art (T.I.C.A)





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About MAPS - Museum of Art in Public Space

MAPS - Museum of Art in Public Space is a artist's run platform founded in 2014 with the aim of promoting contemporary art research that has as its theater, public space in all its forms and derivations. A museum exploded in the city, which allows invited artists to compete each time with different zones, each representing historical and contemporary connotations of city's iconography.

MAPS is a museum that overwhelms / engages / transforms through the production of exhibitions / video screenings / conferences whose focus is always the discussion and dialogue with an area of the city and its social or territorial issues. Because the encounter with art can have the thrill of an uprising, or vice versa art is an uprising because it contains the emotion of people and places met.

