

YADEGAR ASISI – WORLD OF PANORAMAS

A medium of the 19th century with the technical capabilities of the 21st

The artist Yadegar Asisi was born in Vienna, grew up in Saxony and has been living in West Berlin since 1979. Since 2003 he has been creating the worldwide largest 360° panoramas, measuring up to 32 metres in height and with a circumference of up to 110 metres. What started in a listed, former gasometer in Leipzig has become an artist workshop with panorama houses in three cities. Asisi's latest giant panoramas can be seen in Leipzig, Dresden and Berlin. More exhibition venues are in planning. Locations in Pforzheim in Baden-Württemberg and Rouen in Normandy have been opened in 2014, in Lutherstadt Wittenberg in 2016. Further venues in Germany and abroad are currently being discussed.

In 1993, as the exhibition architect of "Sehnsucht - Das Panorama als Massenunterhaltung des 19. Jahrhunderts" (yearning - the panorama as mass entertainment in the 19th century) at the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn, Yadegar Asisi discovered the art space panorama for himself. Since then he has been studying the possibilities offered by the panorama medium and he continues to develop the art form. As a graduate in painting from the Academy of Arts (today's University of the Arts) in Berlin Asisi cultivates an academic appreciation of art. He places great emphasis on perspective, and on the theory of shape, colour and pigment, among others. "Once you have drawn an object you have truly understood it", believes the admirer of the Renaissance painters Andrea Mantegna and Leonardo da Vinci.

Asisi composes his visually stunning panoramas from his project-specific research archive containing up to 50,000 photographs, drawings, sketches and paintings. To gather material, he often undertakes extensive research and photo expeditions on the different topics: for example to Brazil for AMAZONIEN, to the Himalayas for EVEREST, to Australia for GREAT BARRIER REEF, to Turkey and the entire Mediterranean region for PERGAMON; he also travelled through Germany and Central Europe for LEIPZIG 1813 and the baroque DRESDEN. Based on a storyboard that has been discussed with scientists he also does elaborate photo shoots with amateur actors, extras and other elements to obtain scenes that Asisi incorporates into the basic architectural and topographical structure of the panoramas.

With plenty of attention to scenic, historic, architectural and topographic details Asisi creates his works on the computer, working with many different image levels, based on his own groundwork and the preparatory work of his core team of around 15 staff. They are then printed on 3 times 32 metre fabric panels, fitted, and mounted in the round buildings. At the pinnacle of the creative process, which is often accompanied by an introductory exhibition at the exhibition venue, the inspired panorama artist puts the finishing touches on the giant panoramas by hand using brush and paint. At the same time light and sound and the different day and night sequences are set up to produce the desired underlying atmosphere.

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