



AKSIOMA
Institute for Contemporary Art
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

► ► **Gazira Babeli: ACTING AS ALIENS**

Exhibition curated by Domenico Quaranta

Galerija Kapelica, Ljubljana, Slovenia
November 3 – 15, 2009

Opening and performance: November 3, 9.00 PM (CET)

Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art and **Kapelica gallery** are proud to announce “Gazira Babeli: Acting as Aliens”, the first solo exhibition of the avatar artist Gazira Babeli in Slovenia. Internationally renowned for her activity in the digital reality of Second Life, **Gazira Babeli** is born there in spring 2006. She is a character in the *Matrix*, something in between the Oracle and Neo. What she does has been either dubbed as bug, virus, performance or art; what we can say about it is that it subverts the traditional notions of space, time, body, identity and behavior we inherited from our daily experience.

The show borrows its name from the opening performance, in which Gazira and the audience will share the same space and will play through material means, in an unprecedented overlap between digital reality and physical reality. The remains of the performance will be put on show after the event.

The exhibition will also feature a consistent video documentation of Gazira's previous performances, including *7UP* (2008), a clockwork orange of twelve micro-performances made in complicity with **Patrick Lichty**, in a compulsive mix between slapstick comedy and Fluxus scores. Also on show two brand new works in which a self standing doll house – be it a desert or a prison – is built around some characters performing a singular, repetitive, sometimes destructive action.

In the occasion of the show in Ljubljana, the Cultural and Congress Center **Cankarjev dom** and **Odyssey Art and Performance Simulator**, Second Life, will host the round table “*ACTING AS ALIENS. The ways of Performance Art in Digital Realities*” in the frame of the Reflection on Contemporary Art / Seminar of Contemporary Performing Arts IX, organized by **Maska, Institute for Publishing, Production and Education** and the Cankarjev dom.

▶ ▶ **Gazira Babeli and Patrick Lichty**
ACTING AS ALIENS
the ways of Performance Art in Digital Realities

Round table moderated by Domenico Quaranta

Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, Slovenia, hall M3/M4
and Odyssey Art and Performance Simulator:

<http://slurl.com/secondlife/Odyssey/122/45/25/>

November 2, 2009 at 7 PM (CET), 10 AM (Second Life Time)

What happens to performance when the place is a computer screen and time is better described as the timelessness you experience in front of it, as both a performer and a spectator? When reality fades into the background to be replaced by a simulated scenario where physical laws are disregarded and almost anything is possible? When the body itself becomes a software (and cultural) construction? On the occasion of the exhibition of Second Life performer Gazira Babeli hosted by Kapelica Gallery in Ljubljana, this panel will try to answer these questions involving some of the most important practitioners and theoreticians in the field.

From the seminar room, curator Domenico Quaranta will moderate a round table that will alternate theoretical discourse and performances, involving:

- **Helfe Inhen**, Manager of Odyssey Art and Performance Simulator, the place where the most active community of art practitioners in Second Life gathers. Odyssey will host the panel in Second Life, too;

▶ ▶ **Join the lecture in Second life** [HERE](#) ◀ ◀

▶ ▶ **How to create an account on Second Life:** [HERE](#) ◀ ◀

- **Patrick Lichty**, artist, theoretician, curator and (as Man Michinaga) founding member of the performing art collective Second Front;

- **Gazira Babeli**;

- and other **members of the Odyssey community**.



► PRESS ◀

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Gazira Babeli
Self-portraits - Russian Roulette
Courtesy the artist

► **Gazira Babeli** (<http://gazirababeli.com/>) has been living and working as an artist, performer and film-maker in Second Life since spring 2006. In September 2006 she published records of a number of “non authorized performances” on the web, capturing the attention of art critics and artists. Artists above all. She then became part of Second Front, an international group of artists/performers dedicated to the formal, aesthetic, cultural and social exploration of a reality dubbed “virtual”. She was involved in the launch of the first native artistic community in Second Life: Odyssey. In April 2007, after filming the movie/performance *Gaz of The Desert*, she staged an exhibition entitled [*Collateral Damage*]. Gazira Babeli has taken part in various festivals and events outside Second Life, including: Peam2006 (Pescara), DEAF07 (Rotterdam), Fabio Paris Art Gallery (Brescia), iMAL (Brussels), PERFORMA 07 NYC (with Second Front), DAM Gallery (Berlin). Most of Gazira Babeli's works are currently archived in the Locusolus region of Second Life.

► **Patrick Lichty** (<http://www.patricklichty.com/>) is a conceptually-based artist, writer, curator, and activist. He has been exhibiting internationally since 1990, and is best known for his 3D animations with the activist group, The Yes Men, and as Editor in-Chief of *Intelligent Agent Magazine* in NYC. Venues in which Lichty has been involved with solo and collaborative works include the Whitney & Turin Biennials, Maribor Triennial, Performa Performance Biennial, Ars Electronica, and the International Symposium on the Electronic Arts (ISEA). He is currently a member of the faculty of the Interactive Art & Media Department of Columbia College, Chicago.

► **Domenico Quaranta** (<http://domenicoquaranta.com>) is a contemporary art critic and curator based in Italy. PHD, he lectures internationally and teaches at the Accademia di Brera in Milan. With a specific interest in digital culture, Domenico regularly writes for *Flash Art* magazine. His first book titled, *NET ART 1994-1998: La vicenda di Äda'web* was published in 2004; he also co-edited, with Matteo Bittanti, *GameScenes. Art in the Age of Videogames* (Milan, October 2006) and edited or contributed to many other books. As a curator, he organized several exhibitions in Europe, including: *Connessioni Leggendarie. Net.art 1995-2005* (Milan 2005); *GameScenes* (Turin 2005); *Radical Software* (Turin 2006); *Holy Fire. Art of the Digital Age* (Bruxelles 2008); *For God's Sake!* (Nova Gorica, 2008); *RE:akt! | Reconstruction, Re-enactment, Re-reporting* (Bucharest – Ljubljana – Rijeka, 2009); *Expanded Box 2009* (ARCO Art Fair, Madrid 2009); *Hyperlucid* (Prague Biennial, Prague 2009).

► **Credits:**

Gazira Babeli
ACTING AS ALIENS
(Exhibition and performance)

Curated by Domenico Quaranta
Produced by Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana
Co-produced by Kapelica gallery

Gazira Babeli and Patrick Lichty
ACTING AS ALIENS - the ways of Performance Art in Digital Realities
(Lecture)

Moderated by Domenico Quaranta
Produced by Aksioma in the frame of the Seminar of Contemporary Performing Arts organized by Maska and Cankarjev dom
Co-produced by Odyssey Art and Performance Simulator

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► **Links**

Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana | www.aksioma.org
Kapelica gallery | www.kapelica.org
Odyssey Art and Performance Simulator | <http://odysseyart.ning.com>
Maska, Institute for Publishing, Production and Education | www.maska.si
Cankarjev dom - Cultural and Congress Centre | www.cd-cc.si
The Seminar of Contemporary Performing Arts |
www.maska.si/en/symposium/seminar_of_contemporary_performing_arts



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GALERIJA KAPELICA

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