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Closing Event of the Sommerakademie Paul Klee 2017-19: BLOCC web launch

The first two-year cycle 2017-19 of the restructured Sommerakademie Paul Klee is coming to an end in April 2019. During their time in Bern, the eight Fellows worked on a collective project within the curatorial framework REALTY, which deals with the role of Contemporary Art in the context of gentrification. The web launch of BLOCC, the Fellows' collective project, will take place on 25 April 2019 at 6 p.m. at the Grand Palais in Bern.

Through generic infrastructures, rationalized public spaces and homogenized public spheres, late capitalism produces a global monoculture that undermines the city as a social form. How can we cope with gentrification as planetary development, parallel to its many local manifestations? So how can we form international alliances when their legitimacy and ways of working are based on certain components of neighbourhood? Does Contemporary Art have the capacity to catalyse, exploit, amplify or capitalize the phenomenon of gentrification?

BLOCC (Building Leverage Over Creative Capitalism) is derived from 'block': a component of the building material, a quarter or division within a city, or a deliberate cross-over of an opponent's intentions. It is a strategy to address the relationship between Contemporary Art and the current global phenomena of gentrification.

During this web launch BLOCC will present their position - a system of learning, a chimera. It tackles the relationship between Contemporary Art and gentrification by building on an initial curriculum - the BLOCC curriculum - tapping into and inviting local possibilities and struggles. The system reflects a new way of teaching, templates are introduced from afar, adapted to any setting, and remain open-ended as the process builds. As the project teaches and learns from collective experience, its form crystalizes differently in various environments. The idea is to alter Contemporary Art's relation to gentrification through education, one generation at a time.

BLOCC's public web launch will take place on Thursday, 25 April 2019 at 6 p.m. at the Grand Palais (Helvetiastrasse 1 in Bern) where BLOCC will present their platform and joint educational project. The artists will discuss their educational strategies, experiences, and future plans for BLOCC with artistic director Tirdad Zolghadr.

BLOCC consists of Johanna Bruckner, Crystal Z Campbell, Luiza Crosman, Alexandros Kyriakatos, Alexis Mitchell, Bahar Noorzadeh, Heather M. O'Brien, and Jonathan Takahashi. BLOCC is an international cohort that includes a geographer, a social worker, organizers, artists, filmmakers, designers, scholars, and educators based in Belgium, Brazil, Germany, United Kingdom, Lebanon, Switzerland, and the USA. They met in summer 2017 and 2018, as Fellows of the Sommerakademie Paul Klee 2017-19 in Bern under the artistic direction of Tirdad Zolghadr.

For more information: www.sommerakademie-paul-klee.ch

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