

**RÉPUBLIQUE GÉNIALE**

A cooperation of Kunstmuseum Bern and Dampfzentrale Bern

17.08. – 11.11.2018

**Together, the Kunstmuseum Bern and Dampfzentrale Bern are proclaiming the République Géniale, which unites the fields of LIVE ART, TEACHING & LEARNING, and EAT ART with an exhibition of national and international artists' collectives to form an interdisciplinary event. A unique programme of art, music, performance, dance, and architecture has been put together, based on an idea of the French artist Robert Filliou (1926-1987) when he proposed a new concept of art and art education. The République Géniale pursues the goal of bringing people together and providing sustenance to the genius intrinsic to each and every one of us.**

For three months, the Kunstmuseum Bern is morphing into unique territory. While limited spatially, ideas will be set no restraints; it is a place where the public interacts with performers, exhibitors, and makers, where teachers transform into students, and hierarchies dissolve. The République Géniale is an idea that goes back to the French artist Robert Filliou. Influenced by the spirit of social change in 1968, he developed a new concept of art and art education: «The idea was to create my own territory, in which I said people living on that territory will give their time developing their genius rather than their talents.»

Some 50 years later, Filliou's République has again been proclaimed. In keeping with the times and using artistic means with an interdisciplinary focus, it has been modified to address current socially relevant themes such as territory, climate, education, and living together. In this way a place is created as a melting pot for art, the sciences, and play, where accident and chance are acknowledged factors and permanent transformation is the ruling principle. The *création permanente*, as Filliou called it, contradicts notions of stable, finished artworks and the pursuit of perfection and the finished. Therefore the République Géniale is everything but your classical exhibition. At the same time it is neither a festival nor dedicated only to participatory art. Instead it unites a diversity of artistic approaches, collaborative projects, scientific and academic events, as well as epicurean delights into an all-embracing experience. In doing this it remains true to Filliou's ideals in comprehending artistic production as an ongoing, interdisciplinary, and potentially creative process and function of life, so that it is no longer important if something is done or made well, badly or not at all (*bien fait, mal fait, or pas fait*). In the end, so said Filliou, everything is art and everyone is an artist.

Spread out like an archipelago where an animated exchange of ideas and bodies takes place as they flow from one island to the other, most of the events will be taking place at the Kunstmuseum Bern with only a few exceptions. The ambitions of the République Géniale, however, go way beyond Bern and Switzerland. The pressing need for Filliou's elementary idea of living together in a diversified society is again very relevant today, when talk of borders and walls is in everyone's mouths and reactionary discourse is becoming alarmingly socially acceptable. In this sense the République Géniale, as a place for encounters, seeks also to offer a space in which everyone is welcome, without any exceptions, to learn from one another and with one another in a playful way the necessity of being a progressive genius.

**EXHIBITION**

Robert Filliou believed that collectively practicing art is a solution to establishing the right conditions for making and presenting art. The République Géniale's exhibition programme brings together five high-calibre artists' collectives (Forensic Architecture, SUPERFLEX, U5, RELAX, Louise Guerra Archive), whose engagement extends into areas that transcend the visual arts. On display are works and methods of working that explore and represent the various principles of collective collaboration.

**LIVE ART**

LIVE ART involves performances that adapt elements from dance, music, and theatre or unite them, making it possible to experience the idea of permanent creation in keeping with Robert Filliou, art that is in a constant state of flux and not static, by artists like Adam Lindner, Alvin Curran, the Ballet Rambert, John Cage, The Kingdoms of Elgaland-Vargaland or Florian Feigl, Jörn J. Burmester & Guests.

**TEACHING & LEARNING**

The République Géniale sees itself as a platform and territory, offering insights into theory and practice workshops, where artistic methods and skills can be exchanged, passed on to others, and developed further. For this reason various modules will be taking place at Bern University of the Arts as well as several symposia. The IKG international committee of artists, which was founded by artists such as Joseph Beuys, Jochen Gerz, and Klaus Staeck, will be holding its annual conference there, and it will also be the venue for many other events and presentations, such as a performative and didactic transcription of audio documents of Rivolta Femminile, a movement of feminist activists in Italy of the early 1970s, or The Phantom Limb Studiolo, a variation on the Renaissance invention of a room for contemplation.

**EAT ART**

In the République Géniale food artists are inviting the public to a special aesthetic and sensual experience involving food. Food has a long tradition as a motif in painting. Cooking and eating soon became established as artistic practices when interest grew in the social components of art after the 1960s. An art and culinary food stall awaits the public in front of the Kunstmuseum Bern.

More information about the exhibition as well as the complete programme including LIVE ART, TEACHING & LEARNING and EAT ART is available online at [www.republiquegeniale.ch](http://www.republiquegeniale.ch).

The press office will update on regular bases press-, photo-, and video material, which can be downloaded for free at [www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/presse](http://www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/presse). For press coverage, in general or regarding a particular event, feel free to contact the press office at any time.

**Curators**

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