

World of Noon #3

On Urbanism and the Cultural Cold War

With:

Carola Hein (DE)

Lene Berg (NO)

Elian Somers (NL)

Olesia Vitiuk (RU)

**Thursday 22nd of November
7 - 10pm**

Berlinische Galerie

Alte Jakobstraße 124-128, Berlin



With this third edition of *World of Noon* we aim to cast an eye into the future of the city by unraveling the past. Our point of departure is the city of Berlin and the **Cultural Cold War** it had been subjected to in the post-war years. In focus stands the battle of ideologies between East and West that was fought out by means of cultural production; particularly urban planning and architecture.

Along with her film *The Man in the Background* and publication *Encounter: Gentlemen & Arseholes*, the artist and filmmaker **Lene Berg** (NO, 1965) will give us an insight in the centerpiece of an American secret program of cultural propaganda in Western Europe, funded by the CIA: **The Congress for Cultural Freedom**, founded in West-Berlin in 1950. *The Man in the Background* focuses on the CFF and the role and fate of its director Michael Josselson. *Gentlemen & Arseholes* is a reprint of one of the undertakings of the Congress for Cultural Freedom: the cultural journal *Encounter*.

Carola Hein (DE, 1964) is professor and head of the History of Architecture and Urban Planning Chair at Delft University of Technology. She will talk about the urban design competition *Hauptstadt Berlin* (1957-58) and its counter competition (1959) as cultural instruments in Cold War politics. In 1990 Carola Hein curated the exhibition *Hauptstadt Berlin* at the Berlinische Galerie and is main author of the accompanying publication.

Through a lecture-performance by the artist **Elian Somers** (NL, 1975) we will get to know her film in progress *A Stone from the Moon – Ecumenopolis* through which she extrapolates the *Hauptstadt Berlin* urbanism to a worldwide scale. *Ecumenopolis* is a blueprint for a world-encompassing city of the future invented by the Greek architect and urban planner Constantinos Doxiadis (1913-1975). The film gives various

perspectives on Doxiadis' extensive research network, his theory of *ekistics* and its ultimate manifestation *Ecumenopolis*, in and outside the context of the Cultural Cold War.

After sketching out ideological power struggles and utopian ideas of the past, we would like to shift our perspective towards the present, and - together with the audience - try to unravel how we are entangled in new geopolitical power struggles and upcoming ideologies, and speculate, hypothetically, on new cultural production deriving from it.

Guiding us in this discussion on understanding the present will be **Olesia Vitiuk** (RU, 1993), curator and project-coordinator of the project *"Rethink open-form: 60s / 70s residential areas as settlements for micro-democracies"* from ZK/U - Center for Art and Urbanistics (Berlin).

Vitiuk will give us an insight on the first steps of the team research, which examines residential areas designed in the 60s and 70s, with a focus on the status quo of the Karl-Marx-Allee (section II) in Berlin.

World of Noon is a series of salons organized by Susanne Kriemann, Aleksander Komarov and Beatrijs Dikker from the artists-initiative ABA (AiR Berlin Alexanderplatz). This 3rd edition is created in collaboration with the Dutch artist Elian Somers.

As research is increasingly influencing artistic practices, the aim of the *World of Noon* salons is to outline forms of ephemeral investigations and widen the boundaries of what is defined as research.

World of Noon is sponsored by **Berlin Senate for Culture and Europe**. The project *A Stone from the Moon* is generously supported by the **Mondriaan Fund**, Amsterdam and **CBK**, Rotterdam (NL).