

Nina Fischer & Maroan el Sani.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Migration, freedom of movement, reception
in the video installation by the two German artists
on show for the first time

11 March – 17 April 2017

#FreedomOfMovement

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Rome, 10 March 2017. Over 50 years ago a virtually unknown marathon runner named Abebe Bikila left Ethiopia to participate in the Olympic marathon in Rome. On the 10th of September 1960 he ran 42 km barefoot in two hours and 15 minutes, setting a new world record under the Arch of Constantine and becoming an enduring sporting icon, a symbol of that Africa freed from colonialism.

This magnificent feat is an important point of reference for the artists **Nina Fischer** (1965) and **Maroan el Sani** (1966) and for their work ***FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT*** which tackles the all too topical issue of mass migrations and the space destined to receive them, on show at MAXXI from **11 March to 17 April**.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT – as the artists explain - is a revisiting of the 1960 Olympic marathon in Rome, when the first black African runner won the gold medal.

The artwork (3 channel video installation, HD, 9:45 min, 2017) consists of **3 simultaneous projections**. On the **first screen**, an African runner inscribes once again episodes and architectural scenarios of the historical marathon into the streets of Rome. **On the second**, a choir of African refugee teenagers moves across the spaces of the Colosseo Quadrato at EUR and step on its roof to perform a song about their own identity and that of the country now hosting them. **On the third screen**, sequences of a contemporary night run are superimposed with footage of the 1960's marathon and intertwined with archive material of the construction of the EUR and Foro Italico.

The narrative aims at linking the stories of the 1960's marathon, the current migration crisis and the silent language of Rome's controversial modernist architecture.

Today's migrants and refugees also run barefooted among the monuments of the city. They claim their right to "freedom of movement", in sports and in the possibility to find space in another country, starting living again. The video highlights the role that sport and culture play in peace and integration processes and in civil progress.

The wonderful treble voice chorus of the Emmaus Christian School of Maenza moves through the spaces of the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, thereby giving shape to such culture, and sings a revisited version of the famous sentence carved in the façade of the building.

The project, **presented for the first time at MAXXI** and **curated by Pippo Ciorra** and **Elena Motisi**, falls within the ambit of the research by artists who have always been interested in the most extreme conditions of the relationship between architectural and human space. It addresses the pressing question of mass migration and sheds light on the function of sport in the processes of peace and integration, assigning it an important role in terms of social innovation and the civic and cultural progress of a community.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT is a work **commissioned** and **coproduced by MAXXI**, on the confine between video art, photography, installation and research and which will be added to the architecture collection of a museum intent on investigating the confines between architectural idioms and their relationships with the visual forms of artistic expression.

During the course of 2016, the artists worked closely with the museum team to shoot and produce the films at various locations around the capital with the support of associations and institutions such as **Liberi Nantes**, **Emmaus Christian School of Maenza** and **FENDI**.

Born out of the museum's desire to investigate the relationship between the history of the city, that of its sports facilities and the artistic idioms, thanks to the artists the film has taken the form of an essay on Rome, its architecture and the humanity inhabiting and passing through it.

The project was also financed by **Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH**, **Galerie Eigen+Art** (Berlin/Leipzig) and **Galleria Marie-Laure Fleisch** (Rome/Brussels).

Nina Fischer & Maroan el Sani (Germany, born respectively in 1965 and 1966) are visual artists and directors. Both live and work in Berlin. Between 2007 and 2010 they taught Film and Media Arts at Sapporo City University in Japan. Since 2015 Nina Fischer has been a lecturer in Experimental Film and Media Arts at the Universität der Künste in Berlin. The work of Fischer & el Sani is the fruit of continuous research and negotiation with the transitory nature of time. They explore historic trances and utopian visions of social developments, as well as the political culture and artistic avant-gardes that represent such transitions. Fischer & el Sani have participated in numerous international exhibitions, including Seoul Media City (2012, 2014), the Istanbul Biennale (2007), the Gwangju Biennale (1995, 2002, 2008), the Sydney Biennale (2002) and various other events. Their solo shows have been hosted by, among others: K21 - Kunstsammlung NRW, Düsseldorf (2015), the Berlinische Galerie – Museum of Modern Art, Berlin (2012), the Hiroshima Museum of Contemporary Art (2010) and the Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam (2007).

The press kit and images of the exhibition can be downloaded from the Reserved Area of the Fondazione MAXXI's website at <http://www.fondazionemaxxi.it/area-riservata/> by typing in the password **areariservatamaxxi**

MAXXI – National Museum of XXI Century Arts

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opening times: 11.00 AM – 7.00 (Tues, Weds, Thurs, Fri, Sun) | 11.00 AM – 10.00 PM (Sat) | closed Mondays
Admittance free for students of art and architecture from Tuesday to Friday

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