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Press Release

PALAZZO STROZZI, FLORENCE,
ANNOUNCES THE EXHIBITION
EMOTIONAL SYSTEMS
FROM 30 NOVEMBER 2007 TO 3 FEBRUARY 2008

The event marks the inauguration of the **CCCS – CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY CULTURE CENTRE LA STROZZINA** at the **Palazzo Strozzi**, a space: created as a platform for the vast range of practices that characterise contemporary art and culture.

The inaugural exhibition develops in three clearly distinct, yet complementary phases: an **exhibition**, a **publication** and a **programme of lectures** designed to investigate the topic of emotions, proposing a reinterpretation of the correlation between the contemporary artist, the work of art and the user, in the light of the latest discoveries in the neurological sciences about the human brain and its effects on the emotions.

The artists invited to take part in this first appointment are: **Bill Viola (USA)**, **William Kentridge (South Africa)**, **Yves Netzhammer (Switzerland)**, **Katharina Grosse (Germany)**, **Christian Nold (Great Britain)**, **Maurice Benayoun (France)**, **Teresa Margolles (Mexico)** **Andrea Ferrara alias Ongakuaw (Italy)** and the poets **Elisa Biagini**, **Antonella Anedda** and **Valerio Magrelli**.

On November 29th, 2007, the Palazzo Strozzi Foundation in Florence inaugurates the new **CCCS – Centre for Contemporary Culture la Strozzi**, a space dedicated to exploring the different approaches and diverse practices that make up contemporary culture. The Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi is a public/private institution founded by the City of Florence, the Province of Florence, the Florentine Chamber of Commerce, the CR Bank of Florence and the Association of Private Partners of Palazzo Strozzi. The Association of Private Partners includes some of Italy's leading enterprises: Ferragamo, Fingen (Corrado and Marcello Fratini), Gucci Group, the Rocco Forte Collection, Intesa Sanpaolo, The Boston Consulting Group, Banca Toscana, Eni, GE Oil & Gas Nuovo Pignone, Emilio Pucci, and Saatchi & Saatchi.

As the Foundation's Director General, **James Bradburne**, writes in his foreword to the ***Emotional Systems*** catalog: *"The Centre for Contemporary Culture la Strozzi (CCCS) aims to be an open platform for the vast array of approaches shaping contemporary culture. Open in the sense that the intent is not just to develop one single interpretation, but to stimulate critical debate and a far-ranging discussion of the multiple layers that make up the complex and at times apparently contradictory reality we live in."*[...]

The exhibition space is located in the recently restored rooms under the magnificent inner courtyard in Palazzo Strozzi known as *La Strozzi*. In the past, these spaces housed the cellars of the Palazzo, a veritable jewel of the Italian Renaissance. From the end of the Second World War until the great flood in 1966, these rooms hosted the most important exhibitions held in Florence. The new centre has a total of eleven rooms of different sizes, with a total floor area of 850 square metres.

The approach chosen by the CCCS is to present a programme that features not only thematic exhibitions, but also regular installations by independent curators and, film and video cycles, workshops, performances and lectures.

"The CCCS is a place for contemporary culture," stresses **Franziska Nori**, the new centre's Project Director, *"where projects will tackle aspects of town planning, economics, social and political development, the sciences, technology as well as aesthetics and ethics, as contemporary art itself has already broken free of the individual disciplinary approach. The programme thus developed will enable visitors to experience and examine both the heterogeneity of contemporary art and a range of different curatorial and interpretive standpoints."*

The inaugural installation – **Emotional Systems, contemporary art between emotion and reason**, 30 November 2007 to 3 February – develops in three clearly distinct yet complementary phases: an **Exhibition**, a **Publication** and a **programme of Lectures** designed to investigate the topic of emotions, proposing a reinterpretation of the correlation between the contemporary artist, the work of art and the user, in the light of the latest discoveries in the neurological sciences about the human brain and its effects on the emotions.

Curated by Franziska Nori and Martin Steinhoff, the exhibition is the focal point of **Emotional Systems**. The exhibition presents works by contemporary artists who engage, in different ways, and some more explicitly than others, with the corporal and sensorial, but also rational and cognitive aspects of the experience of emotions, both in creating the works and in perceiving them.

The artists in the exhibition include: **Bill Viola (USA)**, **William Kentridge (South Africa)**, **Yves Netzhammer (Switzerland)**, **Katharina Grosse (Germany)**, **Christian Nold (Great Britain)**, **Maurice**

Benayoun (France), Teresa Margolles (Mexico) Andrea Ferrara alias Ongakuaw (Italy) and the poets Elisa Biagini, Antonella Anedda and Valerio Magrelli.

The participating artists all work with different media. They have been chosen for the different ways in which their works emotionally affect the public, a process in which empathy often plays an significant role. Visitors will find themselves being involved at sensorial, cognitive and emotional levels as they experience the multimedia installations, videos, digital animations, monumental paintings and other visual, audio and corporal stimuli.

Throughout the exhibition, visits will be accompanied by an **art education programme** (especially created for the project by Barbara Campaner) that will enable visitors to interact with the various different works and explore the exhibition's themes.

In addition to essays by the two curators, Franziska Nori and Martin Steinhoff, the bilingual published by Silvana Editoriale, comprises original writings and excerpts from specialised publications by internationally renowned scholars, including the neurologists and neurological scientists **Antonio Damasio** and **Joseph LeDoux**, philosophers and anthropologists **Ronald De Sousa**, **Peter Goldie**, **Martha Nussbaum** and **William Reddy** and the art historian, **David Freedberg**. The theme they explore in their interdisciplinary comparison is the rationality of emotions and, in Freedberg's words, the *"relations between the formal aspects of an image and the emotional responses"* of the user.

The **lectures** develop the exhibition's theme from a multidisciplinary and scientific standpoint, achieved in direct encounters between Italian academics and experts from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. Thursday evenings will be dedicated to psychologists, philosophers and anthropologists, who will present their theories, while Fridays are earmarked for poetry readings and musical performances. The programme involves researchers such as **Giovanni Lucignani**, **Andrea Pinotti**, **Emilia Barile** and **Luigi Pagliarini**, while the poets include **Elisa Biagini**, **Antonella Anedda** and **Valerio Magrelli**

EMOTIONAL SYSTEMS

Florence, CCCS, Palazzo Strozzi

30 November 2007 – 3 February 2008

Opening hours: 11.00 a.m. – 8.30 p.m. Closed on Mondays.

Tickets: € 5.00 single entry; € 7.00 multiple entry (up to five times in one month, including lectures)

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