EVIDENCE

(co-written by Jeonghun Lee, Dora Vasilakou and Rosalie de Boynes)

Could the historical and collective memory be reconstructed through an artwork? Could the designation of alternative interpretations of historical and social facts, occur through an art video, with primarily aim to reveal an overshadowed truth? And under which terms and conditions does an artwork carry the burden of an evidential truth? These are the fundamental questions that the video exhibition "Evidence", curated by Seoyoung Kim, will raise at DNA – *Die Neue Aktionsgalerie* in Berlin, from November 27th.

Why does the dead hair keep growing?
The Seoul-based artist and filmmaker**, Jeamin Cha** presents the *Autodidact* (2014), a film based on real events, which shows thirty years of the anguished efforts of a father to detect the clouded death of his son, as he was serving at Korean Army in 1984. The vital need of the father to shed light on the uncanny death of his son, leads him to taught himself forensic medicine and to use this knowledge to reveal the truth as a weapon in "an endless battle against the shameless authorities". In *Hysterics* (2014), another video by Jeamin Cha, the artist weaves a bizarre story of a dead couple, in a deep dark, atmospheric single channel video, reminiscent *film noir* aesthetics. A male body lay on the floor, crazy neon lights, grotesque sounds and a camera on an unstoppable, uncontrolled spinning, making "hysteric" rounds. In the end, a melancholic funereal song comes to confirm the death as a foregone conclusion.

An evidence deals with events, not only facts
A Brief History of collapses is the   title of **Mariam's Ghani** video. The New York born artist and educator is the daughter of the President of Afghanistan and she returns to her mother country roots through her artistic research. In this film, which was a commissioned artwork for Documenta 13, Mariam Ghani juxtaposes two different buildings, each one carrying a different symbolical and semiotic weight. On the one hand, the Museum Fridericianum in Kassel, Germany, the first public museum in Europe, completely restored, with clean and white walls, and on the other hand, the abandoned Dar Ul-Aman Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, a former luxurious palace, and a present ruin, which remains a living "evidence" and leftover of a rich past. The artist explores similarities and differences between those two buildings and charts a story of collapses and restoration of people's dreams and ideas.

How many people got the chance to be photographed or filmed?
The Austrian artist **Clemens Krauss** presents, in his video (*The Taster*) an old lady, who has worked as a personal food taster of Adolf Hitler. She used to taste his meals, to prevent him from a food poisoning. In the video, we watch the old lady, as a true booming evidence herself, to have a meal, reminiscent her past work in the Nazi Regime.

"Some sort of record": constructing evidences
"*When people are being killed by bombs and bullets everyday, are we going to sit around and drawing nudes and pretty flowers? We have to be heartless to do something like that .We must call upon our people to rise upon and fight"* reports a Vietnamese painter, who fought   in the Vietnamese War, in *Light and Belief,* a video created by **Dinh Q. Lê**. The

video artist is a collector himself of drawings of Vietnamese artists who were on the forefront of the war, and with this video-document the confessions of the artists during the upset period of Vietnamese resistance. The artist describes how these paintings deeply changed his artistic perception "*These works helped me to understand the role those artists played in the war, and it gave me perspective on the role I play now, even though the context has changed, and may not be as difficult as it once was. So the work is motivated partly by a desire to understand what they went through in order to help me deal with the Vietnamese government today, and think about the choices I need to make now and the choices I might have made had I been active during that time*". In another video by Dinh Q. Lê *Vision In Darkness* (2015) we follow the personal life voyage of the pioneer painter Trang Trung Tin, through the narrations of his friends and people that surrounded him. The short documentary film directly enthralled the viewer and introduces to the audience the radical artistic vision of a painter who inevitably changes the Vietnamese art history.

Just a game

The politically charged Russian city of Kronstadt, is on the forefront of **Mariana's Vassileva** video, *Kronstadt (2014).* A piano explodes under a canon shoot in a graceful snowing landscape. The brutal explosion contrasts with the purity of a ballet dancer, appearing as a dreamlike vision. The extremely powerful visual and sound contradiction highlights the genuine status of the weapon footage; for some people, shooting with guns is, as the artist would say, "just a game".

Memory is promoted to the centre of history

The vision of **Yao Jui Chung** on the video *Long Live* approaches the dystopian, catastrophic and abandoned war zone of Kinmen Island, the bulwark of Nationalists, who fought against Communists during the Hsinhai Revolution. The living actor standing and shouting creates a contrast with the deserted setting. But all this remains a representation, a fiction being told in a dramatic way. The artist becomes an historian in a etymological sense of witness and arbitrator comfortable with his subjectivity (gr. *histôr*). His work is critically engaged, and reintroducing the place of fiction as a legitimate way to tell an historical memory. Art is thus claiming its persuasive status; reaffirming the traditional double function of *placere* and *docere* (pleasing and teaching).

These eight videos featuring at DNA's exhibition, function as evidences and living leftovers of a forgotten past, trying not to prove but to set another interpretation of the history, with a bold transformative narration and presentation.

DNA Berlin, Auguststraße 20, Opening 26.11. Exhibition on view 27.11.2015 - 27.01.2016