

Coming Soon to a City Near You...

# PARANOIA

Curated by Predrag Pajdic

**LAUNCH:** Leeds City Arts Gallery, Leeds, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**TOURING:** Focal Point Gallery, Southend, Oct/Nov 2006  
Freud Museum, London, Jan/Feb 2007

For further information: [www.aionarap.org](http://www.aionarap.org)

...the proximity of art and life against the backdrop of contemporary politics exploring issues of distrust, suspicion, delusion, fear and terror.

The world is witnessing dramatic and shocking events, which create an atmosphere of uncertainty and unease. The destruction of the World Trade Center and more recently the London Underground attacks sparked the chain reaction of events that are shaping future prospects of the world through horror and terror. Fictional apocalyptic stories are worryingly similar to everyday reality, causing increasing fear and creating a climate of anxiety. When does the mind become paranoid?

**Paranoia** is the terrifying fear of being hurt.

**Paranoia** is a false accusation pretending to be real.

**Paranoia** is the accuser side of the false or unreal self. The feeling is real but the characters are displaced and substituted. The accused is merely a stand-in for the real person.

**Paranoia** needs an enemy, but can't seem to find the real persecutor. So, anyone will do.

**Paranoia** victimizes the innocent by accusing them of being guilty of harmful actions that never occurred in the first place.

**Paranoia** claims that you are guilty before the trial and the probability of your innocence is denied and rejected.

**Paranoia** thrives in an inner universe of intensely walled off, suppressed and repressed hurt and pain.

**Paranoia** is based on the rejection, denial and suppression of vital parts of the self.

Presenting works of international artists exploring the essence of paranoia as one's deluded interpretation of events, not the perception of the events themselves. Artists exhibiting in **PARANOIA** are from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, many from the world's areas of conflict. The exhibition incorporates digital technology, conceptual work, performance, photography, video, installation and drawing.

Oreet Ashery, Mireille Astore, Franko B, Maja Bajevic, Daniel Baker, Rana Bishara, Lisa K Blatt, Tim Blake, Laurie Halsey Brown, Mircea Cantor, Norman Cowie, Jeremy Deller, Martin Effert, Amy Feigley, Doug Fishbone, Juan del Gado, Catherine Graham, Sagi Groner, Hatice Guleryuz, Juul Hondius, Helmut Loehr, Avi Mograbi, Ricardo Giraldo Montes, Vesna Milicevic, Hillary Mushkin, Diane Nerwen, Jean-Gabriel Periot, Khaled D. Ramadan, Karst-Janneke Rogaar, Paul Ryan, Jackie Salloum, Larissa Sansour, Nike Savvas, Santiago Sierra, Tatjana Strugar, Doron Solomons, Emilia Telese, Milica Tomic, Akram Zaatari, Katarina Zdjelar, Rachel Wilberforce, Roel Wouters

A full colour catalogue will accompany the exhibition, with essays by Glenn Bowman, Dr Bernadette Buckley, Dr Elizabeth Cowie, Michael Hodges, Jane Hunter-Yetton, Antonio Pasolini, Khaled D. Ramadan, Christel Vesters, introduction by Predrag Pajdic and interviews with selected artists. Available from [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)



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## Excerpts from Artists' Interviews and Essays in the 'Paranoia' Catalogue

Instead of limiting ourselves, and staying stuck in our private realms, we must face up to the challenges present in today's society. We must contemplate our fears and carefully examine our attitudes. We must speak out.  
(From 'Stuck in the Middle' by Christel Vesters)

Gypsies are still very much seen as unreal people. They are seen either as a romantic ideal from the past or as the thief, the villain, the dirty people that will pull their trailer onto your cricket ground and make a mess, a personification of evil if you like.

(From an interview with Daniel Baker)

Paranoia names two kinds of not-knowing. In psychosis it is a kind of not-knowing through the creation of a belief system that responds to the foreclosed. It is what returns from without the subject, in contrast to neurotic repression, which returns as an irruption in the subject as symptoms, slips of the tongue, jokes etc. In anxiety, paranoia is another kind of not-knowing in being experienced as a dreadful anticipation. Anxiety is different from fear because it exceeds the response proper to the circumstance, or because it is experienced even where there is no ostensible cause for fear or its anticipation.

(From 'The Art of Paranoia' by Elizabeth Cowie)

Haneke's study of paranoia shares with those of Freud and Lacan an attention to the structures of *verwerfung* or *forclusion*. Laurent, like the bourgeois French society he so convincingly exemplifies, has buried beneath the comfortable and confident life he shares with friends and family a brutal injustice.

(From 'Paranoia and the Gaze of the Self that is Other' by Glenn Bowman)

As the world looks today, I can confidently say that I am an unidentified subject. That is the way it is, if you are an Arab living in the West, in a time where words have lost their meanings and significance, in a time where human rights means torture and egalitarianism means authoritarianism.

(From an interview with Khaled Ramadan)

I think that there is no difference between artists and the "others": Responsibility concerns everybody. We are all responsible. In certain historical and political moments of great importance, engagement expressed in either grand political statements or in personal narratives and comments, are merged. There is no difference.

(From an interview with Milica Tomic)

I used some most disturbing material imaginable, which curls even my toes when I watch it, I can't believe I did that. My idea was to offend the audience and manipulate the viewer by giving them a sub-story and winning them back.

Something like: I was abused when I was a kid, my mum was a drunk, all these things. I wanted to see how much one could get away with using a visual overload. There are about 480 images squeezed in 11 minutes. It is a kind of video barrage, like being bombarded with ads while on tube escalators, which I can't stand. This is why I use a satire way of critique while narrating but in a way that is hardly noticeable.

(From an interview with Doug Fishbone)

As he moves around the house he is silent in his slippers, creeping Jesus we used to laugh about his silence, now we don't laugh. We haven't laughed for years and years and years. Look at him sitting there now; he doesn't take bites out of his food any more he just nibbles. Takes little ibitty bitty nibbles and it makes me want to scream and shout TAKE A PROPER FUCKING BITE WHY DON'T YOU?

(From 'Rat' by Jane Hunter-Yetton)

I think that inasmuch as 9/11 was an affront to Americans personally as individuals and to their country it was almost that they were embarrassed to be caught out like that. This is a way for them to feel better about being themselves in that country. It's a real celebration about America and American values. When you look at the photographs, that comes out. You can either interpret it as being incredibly sinister, or quite funny, or both. When I show the photographs to Americans they laugh, but when I showed them in France the French gasp.

(From an interview with Jeremy Deller)

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What struck me most during my travels is that, at the end of the day what unites people, no matter where they come from, is the struggle to survive and to try to make the best of it along the way.  
(From an interview with Juul Hondius)

The Arab media learned from the western media that democracy is not that essential in contemporary broadcasting. Not in terms of war, nor in terms of peace. What matters is how to serve and mobilize your community against outside messages.  
(From 'Cyber and Air Sphere Colonialism' by Khaled Ramadan)

Links roll: homophobia + racism + apocalyptic dialectics + status anxiety +celebrity culture + drug abuse + obsession with newness + the internet + security checks + CCTV cameras + alarm systems + cocaine + weight problems + erectile dysfunction + premature ejaculation + shopping addiction+ ageing pop stars+ size matters + soundbites + morbid obesity + machismo + newspaper headlines + tyrannical democracies + calories + perpetuation of the species+ monogamy + new year's resolutions + right-wing people + sections of the left + teenage boys on steroids + tube drivers + panic syndrome + drug cartels + misogyny + anti-Semitism + censorship + jealousy + competitiveness + supermarkets + megalomania + born again Christians + the pope + mobile phones + SMS + Godzilla + film Noir + conspiracy theories + hypochondria + radioactivity + Parliament + pharmaceutical industry + reality TV + the police + passport control + life coaching + broken condoms + fear of silence + witch hunts + consumer choice + plastic surgery + viruses + voodoo dolls + gun culture + error messages + Captain hook + Vikings + the talking mirror + howling dogs + creaking doors + robotic doctors + Airport 77 + Natural Born Killers + Jodie Foster + Scientology + 24-hour supermarkets + Obsession + EU + neon lights...  
(From The Paranoia Paper Blog by Antonio Pasolini)

Whenever you read Lonely Planet or any other travel guides in relation to India, they mention that you can take your favourite garment to an Indian tailor and they will replicate it. This notion off course only makes sense because of the cheap labour in India in relation to western money exchange.  
(From an interview with Oreet Ashery)

In light of such contradictions, perhaps it is useless to attempt to give to paranoia a social and/or political determination? For the moment, let's return to psychiatry where we're sure to get an unambiguous definition of the term. But no, here also, divergences persist across the different schools and individuals attempting to characterize paranoia.  
(From 'Everybody's Going to Die' by Dr Bernadette Buckley)

It becomes a habit, so if you are used to having a daily cycle where you are terrified or worried by the things around you, and then seek out the details about it, you will begin to look forward to your little bit of terror every day. It's a habit.  
(From an interview with Paul Ryan)

What particularly interests me is actually what isn't said. What my friends don't talk about. For example how it is to be living in a reality where bombs go off just outside your door, or whether what happened is wrong or not. They don't discuss feelings or politics. Instead they talk about the technical details, the mindset of the suicide bomber before he goes in, the special unit whose only job it is to collect body parts so that the victims can be identified. I am fascinated by what brings on this psychological buffer.  
(From an interview with Sagi Groner)

My hope is that different realities, or sides of a story, can be displayed side-by-side, so that viewers can, without any pre-conception or judgement, think for themselves. With respect to these vital issues today how long until we seek out methods for this dialogue, and to adopt a question by Primo Levi, 'If Not Now When?'  
(From the introduction by Predrag Pajdic)