

## **FALSTAD KUNST SEMINAR 2010: "ART AND THE PAINFUL HERITAGE"**

On Thursday September 9, there was held a seminar at the Falstad Center about contemporary art and "The Painful Heritage".

The term "the painful heritage" is often used about the mass of individual experience in the German camps during World War II. The term may also be extended to include experiences in other war and conflict situations.

It is difficult, for many even impossible, to talk about traumatic war experiences, severe humiliations and abuse connected with taboo and shame. This seminar will deal with how artists have approached the painful heritage during the last 20-25 years.

Speakers at the seminar:

Katarzyna Bojarska (Poland), Nikola Suica (Serbia), Jon Reitan (Norway), plus the two artists who have made artworks for this year's Falstad Kunst: Anna Baumgart (Poland) and Darko Stojkov (Serbia).

Katarzyna Bojarska's talk is titled *"Facing Past Terror: Polish Art after '89"*.

Synopsis: "In my presentation I would like to concentrate on what I consider most interesting strategies of critical representation and rethinking of the traumatic past in Polish contemporary art. I have chosen 1989 as a caesura which opens new discursive, political practices and therefore triggers new artistic strategies in the context of traumatic past, especially of World War II and the Holocaust. I will try to argue for the unique character of this situation as well as present and discuss most prominent examples of artistic approaches to historical events, sites and narratives."

Nikola Suica's talk is titled *"GENERATING REMEMBRANCE - Memorials of imprisonment and mass murder in South Slavic region: representation, nonvisibility and oblivion"*.

Synopsis: "This presentation makes an urgent cause, due to a certain dispersive issue of remembrance and a neglect of such heritage that reshaped the historical memory of WW II and the experience of Holocaust in ex Yugoslavian Republics. The culture of trauma is bred with images and video excerpts showing a consequences of neglect but also certain hidden aspects inside contemporary artistic practise. There is a brief survey of cultural significance both in hints of artistic production as well as the historical sites and spaces. By examining a contemporary Serbian way of dealing with the Nazi occupation events of persecution, imprisonment, torture, mass murder is juxtaposed with a more recent events of war trauma, humiliation and isolation."

**Jon Reitans talk is titled: *"Along the traces to Auschwitz. Holocaust in the Norwegian Historical Culture"*.**

The artists Anna Baumgart and Darko Stojkov will talk about their own works for Falstad Kunst 2010, the films "Fresh Cherries" and "Second Journey". What were their thoughts about this commission at the beginning, and what do they think now after finishing the work?