

## "Roof Off"

*"Destruction is difficult; It is as difficult as creation." Antonio Gramsci*

J'ai compris assez récemment cette incroyable obstination de Platon à démontrer que le philosophe est heureux. Le philosophe est plus heureux que tous ceux qu'on croit plus heureux que lui, les riches, les jouisseurs, les tyrans. Ce que cela signifie est assez clair : le philosophe expérimentera, de l'intérieur de sa vie, ce qu'est la vraie vie. Alain. Badiou

*"Rain does not fall on one roof alone." Proverb*

"Roof Off" is a new kind of sculpture. This kind of sculpture hangs from the ceiling, it comes from the top, it falls from the top. The critical space I considered in the 'Sala A' of the central pavilion is its ceiling, where the sculpture "Roof Off" found its place. The ceiling is not only the unique "free" space, it is also the place where force of gravity can be exerted with the greatest logic. Gravity is what makes things fall from the top and provokes an attraction towards its center, a dynamic which I use and transform into an upward movement. I don't want to fight against this central force, I want to intensify it, towards heights, toward endless heights. "Roof Off" is a break-through. This break through is only possible as a downfall, with a violence which nothing can oppose or resist. A roof collapse occurs by an external force, an abyssal, incommensurable force. It could come from a leak, a flood, an explosion, a bomb, an earthquake, a material failure, an accident, inattention, misconstruction - in any case causing a powerless, helpless situation.

The ceiling collapsed and everything hidden above fell down with it, making un-shown and concealed elements visible. Suddenly, because of the hole in the roof and gravity force, everything spreads out and appears to view, shedding new light on the hidden links and connections, bursting into a new dynamic. Mechanics are revealed. It is up to the visitor to look, to look up and see the chaos, to pay attention and keep wide awake. To make visible the invisible, this is what "Roof Off" wants to give form to.

As reference to the exhibition's thematic "Reading, Rehearsal, Recital", there will be text material, texts coming from books of ancient Greek philosophy, from Thales to Aristotle, Plato to Socrates, in Greek. All these texts are photocopied sheets of paper, integrated into "Roof Off" as insulating material formerly stuffed in the space above the fake ceiling. The falling out will be strongly lit with powerful spot lights (above a technical fake ceiling). The texts, visible but not readable as entire texts, are determined by their use as insulating material and want to resist consumerism and neutralization. These Greek philosophical texts, needed for stuffing empty space in the roof, stand for things we are aware of, but don't want to use or use in an incoherent and incongruent way, keeping out of sight their real power and possibilities. Here, in "Roof Off", these texts make no compromise towards a possible reader they stand for what they are; I want the spectator to see them as sheer filling material. And I also want the spectator to confront the question of use of philosophy, of ancient Greek philosophical texts today; understanding them as possible way-out of our situation. It's not about understanding what is written, understanding is never the point. The point is to experience something. Philosophy like Art is about experiencing - not understanding - something I don't know. To make an experience, to try to find – with the help of philosophy, ancient Greek philosophy – a way to face the complex, conflictual and contradictory world we are living in, and its reality. Philosophy, like Art, wants me to look up and figure out another understanding. This can happen thanks to "Roof Off" - because there is a failure, there is a

blast. "Roof Off" is the form standing for insolence, art's insolence, which refuses to have its own freedom restricted.

"Roof Off" wants to be a critical sculpture, a critical corpus. As an artwork, "Roof Off" reaches towards its own borders, against itself. The sculpture is about to fall on my head, I cannot run away from its logic, its implacable logic. "Roof Off" is pitiless and makes me raise my head, I have to open my eyes, I have to pay for it. I have to confront what I don't want to see. This is the logic and this is the mission of "Roof Off".

Thomas Hirschhorn, January, 2015