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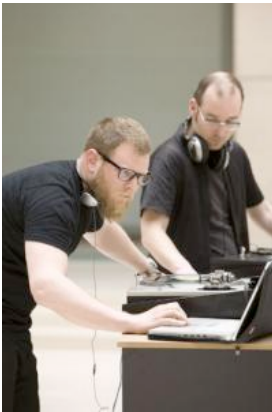
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## Seasonal Unrest Dani Gal at the Luigi Pecci Centre for Contemporary Art

The current situation in the Middle East lends a heightened sense of urgency to Dani Gal's most recent project. His video installation "Seasonal Unrest" uses a TV film about the Gaza Strip to investigate how political conflicts are documented. The show, sponsored by Deutsche Bank, marks the beginning of an exhibition series at the Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci in Prato introducing the 2008 Villa Romana prizewinners.



Dani Gal and Achim Lengerer performing „The Ballot or the Bullet! – voiceoverhead in atrium of the Deutsche Bank building at Unter den Linden in Berlin, Photo Mathias Schormann



Important politicians holding speeches, sound footage of demonstrations and war scenes, reports on the Symbionese Liberation Army's kidnapping of Patty Hearst — these are the kinds of documents Dani Gal uses to investigate the way history is presented in the media. For the Deutsche Guggenheim exhibition *Freisteller* featuring the four 2008 Villa Romana fellows, he created the interactive sound installation *Architecture regarding the future of conversation*. The work is based on interviews with famous modernist architects; Mies van der Rohe, Eero Saarinen, and Walter Gropius describe their concepts for a future-oriented architecture. A movement sensor activates the installation, causing exhibition visitors to trigger the speeches while at the same time disturbing them. The documentary is turned into a collectively generated sound collage. The fact that the inaudibility of the historical discourse causes it to continuously elude the listener is part of Gal's intention. This strategy of irritation is typical for the works of the artist, who was born 1977 in Jerusalem and currently lives in Berlin. His works undermine expectations, pose questions, and resist being rechanneled into positive statements. For Gal, only one thing appears to be certain: that the media cannot be trusted.

Gal also remains true to this tenet in his latest work at the Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci, a private museum for contemporary art in Prato, Tuscany that has been showing contemporary art since 1988. *Seasonal Unrest* explores the themes authenticity and fiction. In the dual-channel video installation, he combines a portrait of a Foley artist producing a sound track for a film in a recording studio with an Israeli documentary on the Gaza Strip.

In the 1970 film *Grenade in Gaza*, an Israeli TV crew portrays everyday life in the territory, which had become occupied three years previously. The production also addresses the misuse of the medium of film to create anti-Israeli propaganda, itself claiming to provide an objective image of the reality of life in Gaza. For *Seasonal Unrest*, Gal provides the historical film with a new soundtrack. A video projected together with the new version of *Grenade in Gaza* shows the film in the making: Gal watches the Foley artist at work, who seems chiefly concerned with making the historical film material seem "even realer" with the help of his artificially generated sound effects. The juxtaposition of the two films exposes the mechanisms of political documentation. At the same time, *Seasonal Unrest* points to the role the media play in the conflict between Israel and Palestine — then as now.

**Dani Gal: Seasonal Unrest**  
 January 31 - March 1 2009  
 Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci  
 Prato



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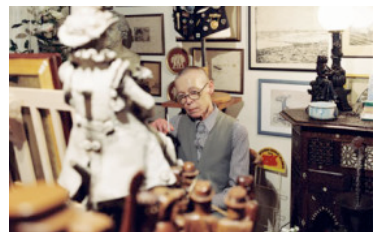
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