

N O M E

S A M I Z D A T A
EVIDENCE OF CONSPIRACY
JACOB APPELBAUM
SEP 11 - OCT 31, 2015
CURATED BY TATIANA BAZZICHELLI

NOME Gallery presents *SAMIZDATA: Evidence of Conspiracy*, Jacob Appelbaum's first solo show in Germany, curated by Tatiana Bazzichelli. In cooperation with Disruption Network Lab.

The title of the show references the Russian word *samizdat*, an important form of dissident activity throughout the former Soviet bloc in which censored literature was clandestinely reproduced and distributed. Transferred to the 21st century, the activity also resonates with aspects of the Snowden Affair and WikiLeaks as regards the distribution of information that places involved people at risk.

With *SAMIZDATA* Jacob Appelbaum presents artworks that are a critique of the progressive loss of liberty, evolving from within a context of investigative journalism and document-leaking aimed at the higher goal of transparency.

For the first time, the artist is showing a series of six color infrared photos as cibachrome prints, portraits of his own network of colleagues and friends: Laura Poitras, Glenn Greenwald and David Miranda, Julian Assange, Sarah Harrison, William Binney and Ai Weiwei. The works were originally created as a sign of admiration and respect for the portrayed people and for their work that led to the "Snowden Affair" and beyond. Appelbaum uses color infrared photography film that was originally produced to detect camouflaged targets and for use in agricultural surveillance and forensics investigations, to produce pictures that reveal more information than standard film.

The second exhibition piece is *P2P* (Panda to Panda), a collaboration with internationally acclaimed artist Ai Weiwei, commissioned by Rhizome and the New Museum in New York in 2015. For the work, the two artists shredded NSA documents once given to Laura Poitras and Glenn Greenwald and stuffed them into panda bears in Ai Weiwei's hometown of Beijing. Inside each panda, Weiwei and Appelbaum placed a micro SD memory card containing a surprise. The pandas were smuggled out of Beijing and traveled around the world, thus building a human network of smuggled information: Samizdat/a. „Panda to Panda“ makes reference both to a slang term for the secret police in China and to peer-to-peer communication (P2P), a distributed communications architecture that partitions tasks or work loads between peers.

The third work, *Schuld, Scham und Angst* consists of pieces of jewelry filled with mixed media, shredded journalistic notes and historical, unredacted classified documents from the Summer of Snowden and the following years. The title relates to the emotions of journalists working with these materials: "fear", the

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feeling that leads to the shredding of documents, “guilt” and “shame” in cognizance of the fact that journalists, too, have become collaborators in a culture of secrecy. The work was created in collaboration with Manuela Benetton, Berit Gilma and Lusi Tornado.

SAMIZDATA: Evidence of Conspiracy is presented in collaboration with the conference by Disruption Network Lab, *SAMIZDATA: Tactics and Strategies for Resistance*, curated by Tatiana Bazzichelli at Kunstquartier Bethanien. The two-day conference (11-12 September 2015) brings together hackers, artists and critical thinkers who, in light of the Snowden revelations, apply the concept of resistance and social justice from many different angles. Among the participants, Jacob Appelbaum, Laura Poitras, Jaromil, Jørgen Johansen, Theresa Züger and Sophie Toupin.

<http://www.disruptionlab.org/samizdata>

JACOB APPELBAUM

Jacob Appelbaum is a post national independent computer security researcher, journalist and artist. He lives and works in Berlin.