



ARCADIA — Juergen Teller — Anafi — Martin Kippenberger — Temenos

SOUTH

AS A STATE OF MIND

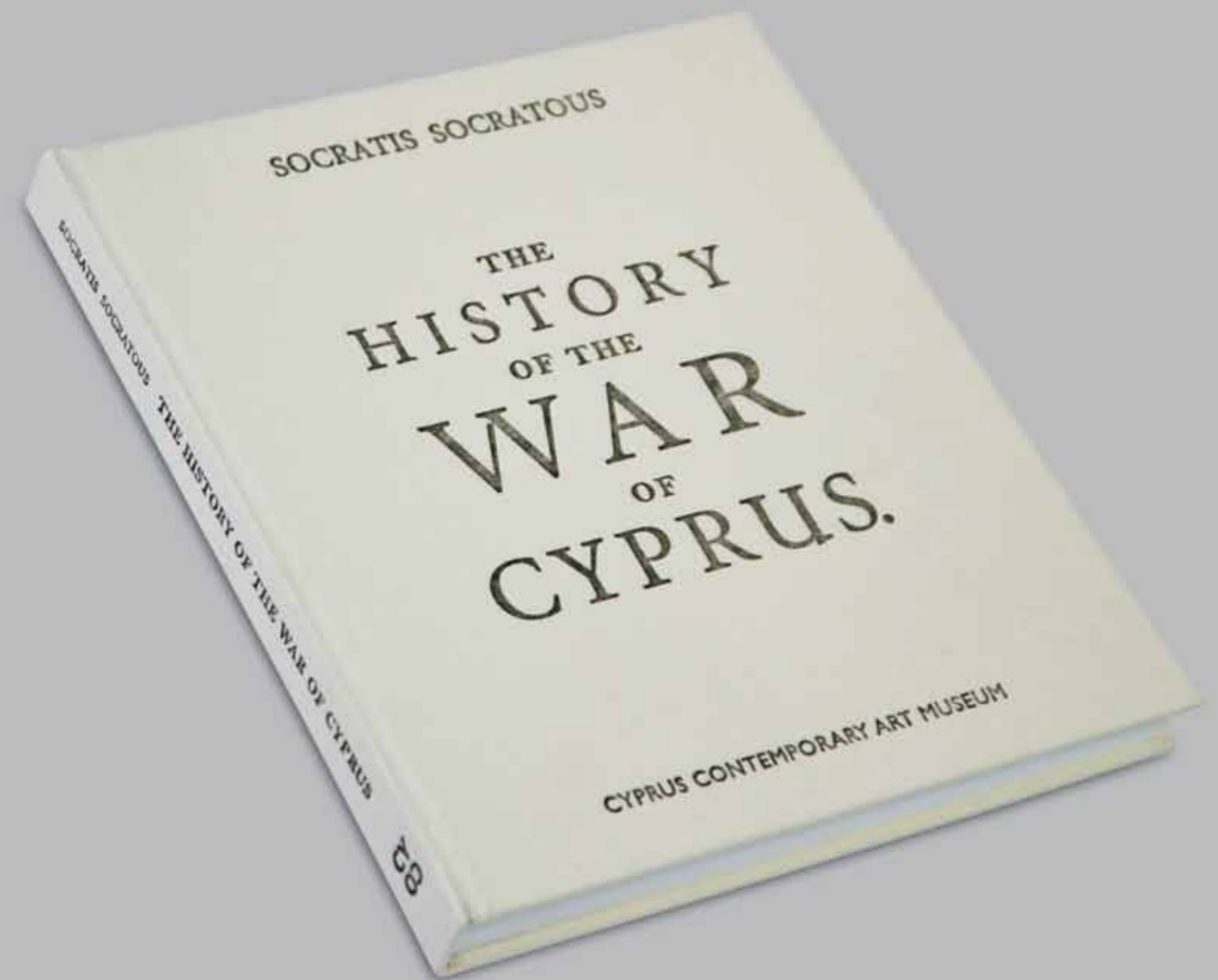
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Angeliki Roussou, Christina Stamou

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Guest: Paolo Colombo

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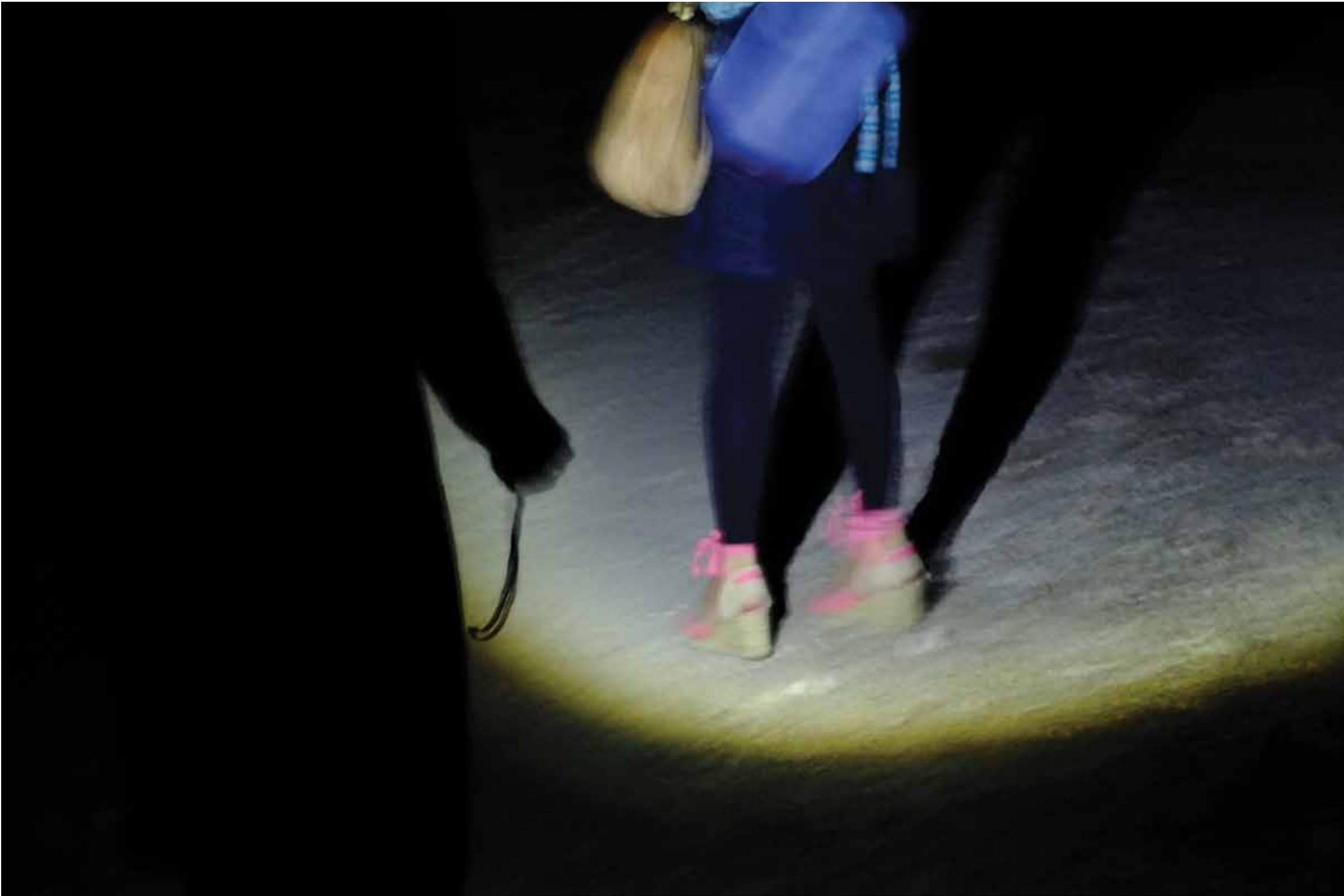


Photo by Yannis Karlopoulos

THE BAR IS CALLED HEAVEN

This past summer, we went to work on the construction of arcadia. With the help of a few friends from nearby and faraway, the spirit of absurd authority visited our chaos once more – as if for the first time – to introduce a dynamic climate of creative lethargy. It was not about a holiday. We did not leave anything behind. We took the ‘polis’ with us to locations that permit carefree tranquillity, easier access to sensual pleasures, and harmony with a mythical state of mind and the possibility of contentment. Green mountains, abundant flowing water, bucolic nature, sun-drenched valleys – all these induced a sense of the belief, which has endured since the ancient times, that arcadia is an ideal place. Arcadia is both a region in the middle of Greece and a land where apparently ‘simple’ people lead virtuous lives. Maybe our arcadia, for now, is a tiny dry Aegean island surrounded by the most seductive sea. Anafi – a place that every year replenishes our desire to continue, no matter what. This ‘South as a State of Mind’ issue was composed in that context. We drew from the ‘tradition’ of the Museum of Modern Art Syros (MO-MAS) created by Martin Kippenberger and his friends, and we joined up and paid tribute to Gregory Markopoulos’s Temenos project, an ecstatic experience that made arcadia a bit more palpable. We invited responses to the idea of ‘arcadia’, while the ‘Anafi Summit’ event infused many of the magazine’s columns. Let us disambiguate the meaning of ‘arcadia’. In a time of crisis it could be about a momentary liberation from the need for possessions, a connection with an inexplicable feeling of internal wholeness. Something that comes out of community, togetherness, sun, sea, beautiful nature, fewer possibilities, simple living, love, humane routine, and (a little) alcohol. Arcadia might not even exist for long, but if and when it does it could provide a glimpse of an alternative to the more serious solutions to this crisis. Rather than going for more, a quest for less in the right environment might be it.

Because heaven is a place, a place where nothing, nothing ever happens.

Marina Fokidis

P.S. Thank you South for keeping it together.

‘THE SYRIANS ARE RECORDING THEIR OWN DEATH’

by Nikos Papastergiadis

When the viewfinder of the gun and the lens of the camera are aligned in deadly symmetry: the ambient perspective of contemporary civil war

In the contemporary war, the image has gained a status unprecedented in history. Never before has the story of war been told from so many angles, and been made to feel so close. This ambient perspective was powerfully presented in a work by Rabih Mroué installed at documenta 13 in 2012. The piece situates the archival nexus of documentation alongside the experience of complicity and mystery. It is situated in two rooms. The first contains a set of flicker books and audio recordings of riotous street scuffles and gunfire. You are given the task of trying to match sound and image. It is a mesmerising but ultimately futile act. The books sit inside blue inkpads, and your thumbs and fingers get stained. There are also four large photographic prints with ambiguous silhouettes that sway slightly and cast a strange flowing reflection at your feet. Opposite is an abstracted video image of a man who keeps falling. The closer you look the more you realise that each time there is a subtle change in the details – a different personal item also falls as he falls – cigarettes, phone, lighter.

In the second room there is a video lecture by the artist entitled *The Pixelated Revolution*. It commences with the comment that inspired the project: “The Syrians are recording their own death.” Mroué explains that he has been investigating the phenomenon of people recording the violence of the civil war on their mobile phones, and that he is fascinated with a perplexing instance in which the witness with the camera comes into eye contact with a person whose rifle is pointing straight at his body. The viewfinder of the gun and the lens of the camera are aligned in deadly symmetry. Remarkably, the unarmed civilian continues recording, remains stationary and is shot dead.

This dreadful event provokes many questions. Was it a futile act of sacrifice, an expression of immunity of the virtual from the real, an opportunity for photography to reveal the truth – to discover that fabled last image that was captured on the witness’s retina, can art make justice? Mroué becomes obsessed with these questions. He replays the scene countless times. He isolates the frames and analyses each detail like a scientist. He then comes to the conclusion that the exact, or what he calls the “vital” moment of the occurrence of death, is not visible to the naked eye. It can only be seen as a blank: a void. This seems like a reasonable conclusion, but then he makes a truly astonishing aesthetic proposition on the invisibility of the vital scene: “The vital moment is stretched in two dimensions simultaneously, towards life and death.”

In an ambient space, information has no clear beginning or point of termination. Data is received not just along multiple tracks of delivery, but through unpredictable and almost indiscernible sources. Where do these bits and pieces of information come from, where are they heading, when do they end? According to Scott Lash, information is assembled in “a succession of jolts as ‘nows’”. It is neither structured through the fusing of the local story within a hierarchy of known archetypes, nor is the part lifted out of its own context to confront a negative outside space. In an essay called “Being After Time: Towards a Politics of Melancholy” in *Time and Value* (1998), Lash argued that information now circulates in an ambience “overwhelmed by the violence of the rush of images, of events, of commodities in the city”. In the contemporary context this means that perspective needs to be grasped not from a singular position but through a mode of ambient awareness. This kind of awareness cannot be defined by a clear point of origin within prescribed boundaries. It is instead formed in the accumulation of ‘bits’ of information and through the relationships between participants and their objects in the ‘clouds’ of complex information systems.

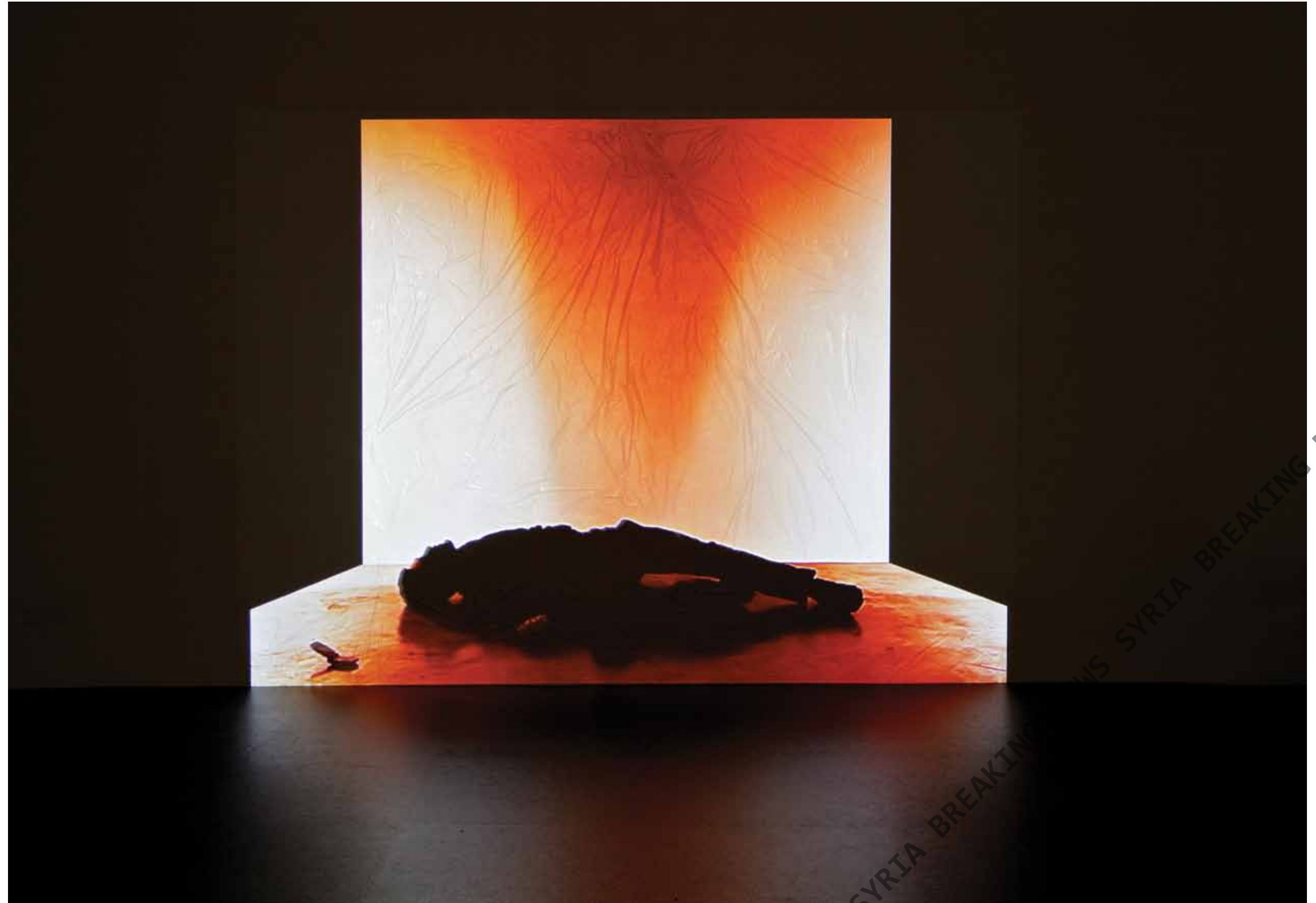
Rabih Mroué, *The Fall of a Hair*, 2012

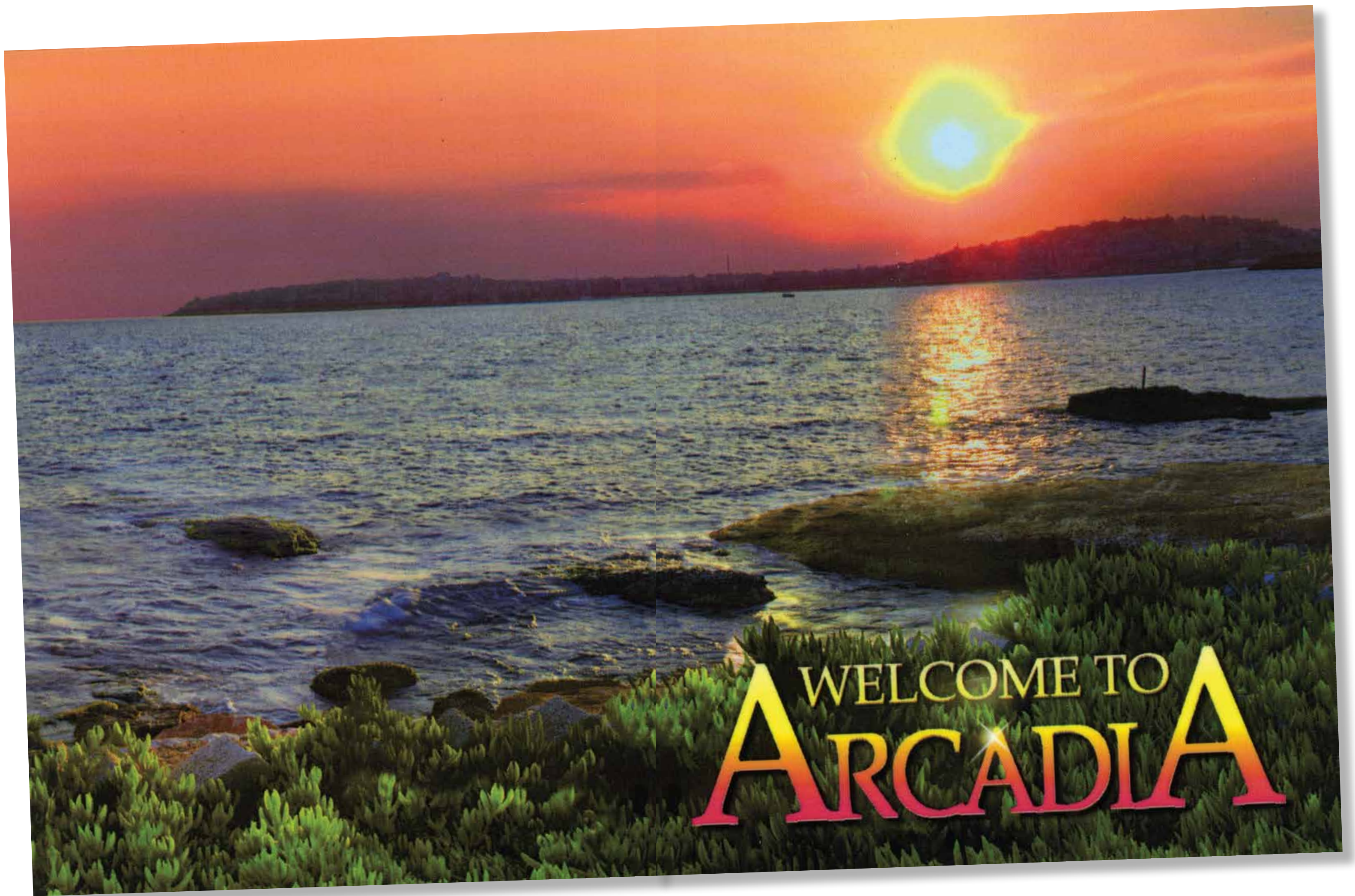
Part 1: The Pixelated Revolution, Room with video projection

Courtesy of Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut/ Hamburg

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Beirut/Hamburg. Photo by Henrik Stromberg





main focus

WINTER THOUGHTS

by Agustin Pérez Rubio

Arcadia is the place of resistance which rises as a political entity from each and every one of the actions and movements we produce

It is very hot on this earth, but even so its people try to go about their business knowing that the earth provides light, sun, heat but also shade, fruits, steep temperature changes and luminous nights, with the moon over the sea a familiar motif of daily life...

I use every summer to take stock, to summarise past events even though it is only the middle of the year. I contemplate the situation we are experiencing here in the South of Europe. Where have we got to? How did we get here? It is something like that scene from the *Planet of the Apes* I remember from childhood: in the end, the escape to the future was in fact a return to the past. We now find ourselves in a situation so extreme that the only escape we can imagine is to our own Arcadia. Yet where is this place for each of us? Where is this place for us as citizens, as entities, as people devoted to culture and the arts? Where is it for me – a curator and museum director who was forced to quit due to political intervention, lack of proper management and a distrust towards a social system that wears people down? It may well be that Arcadia is as spacious, vast and special as we are, one and all.

One thing is certain: Arcadia could be the ideal place to live and create, away from consumerism and capitalism, where harmony reigns untouched by the control and neo-liberal stress imposed on our societies. Indeed, I cannot contemplate any other way of thinking because to me Arcadia is a mode of resistance for all of us. Arcadia is the place of resistance which rises as a political entity from every act, every transaction and the whole chain of events; in each and every one of the actions and movements we produce. It gladdens me to think that these parts or ‘islands’, as I like to call them – because they are in fact experiential extensions of land: personal, social, artistic, political, and so on – can retrieve memories from a comprehensive series of spaces designed with common sense, honour and dignity. In this sense I call to mind the French intellectual Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and his structures in which the honour in people’s actions could become clear in the most perfect way. These structures were self-sustained agricultural communities, which aimed to be the basis for subsequent social change. Created by volunteers, these communities would not exceed 1,620 members who would live all together, with shared services. Everyone would be free to choose their preferred occupation and change it whenever they wished.

More than any other utopian socialist, Fourier attempted to resolve all of society’s problems by devising a well thought out structure in which every individual, action or idea had its properly defined place. Fourier believed that human beings are good at core, as holders of the natural harmony that reflects the harmony of the universe. The problem lies in a society which hinders the totally free development of man’s gifts. We are witnessing gradually around us a feeling of totalitarianism and social disintegration - not just in the European South but in so many other societies as well. In order to address this, Fourier designed a strictly liberating group. The phalanstery was a community of some 1,620 individuals with its own land for cultivation and other economic activities, housing and a large communal building. Everything was regulated and had to follow a specific order, even love or sex.

Everything was designed for comfortable living and maximum pleasure. Individuals would work according to their skills and be remunerated according to their needs. Thus a young person would work more than an elderly one, but the latter

would earn more because of his or her greater needs. Much later, this model would inspire a large number of hippie communities around the world.

In this sense, looking back but also aware of the reality around us, we can confirm that Fourier was a guru, as he is described by one of the heroes in Michel Houellebecq’s *The Map and the Territory* (2011) – a book I read this summer: “It’s incomprehensible if you try to see him as a *thinker*, because his thought is completely incomprehensible, but fundamentally Fourier isn’t a thinker, he’s a guru, the first of his kind, and, as with all gurus, his success came not from intellectual adherence to a theory but, on the contrary, from general incomprehension, linked with an inexhaustible optimism...”

As Houellebecq’s hero observes, Fourier was not really interested in the sexual aspect, which is arguably the best-known part of his work, but in the organised production of the phalanstery system which tried to resolve issues that are once again important in our time: Why do we work? What makes us occupy a certain place in the social structure and accept commands, and what is it that we contribute through our own work? Fourier’s utopian islands, those small Arcadias, never achieved a satisfactory output of goods; there was an attempt in Spain that failed instantly, and another in Spain was initiated by Joaquin Abreu in Jerez de la Frontera. But while Fourierism in Europe soon lost its pace, in South America it was warmly embraced and proved successful. The idea of cooperative living was attractive to many at a time of economic crisis. It is something that may flourish again at the present juncture, which is why I recalled Fourier and rediscovered Arcadias.

In any case, the general failure of Fourier’s phalansteries and other alternative ways towards paradise, such as do-it-yourself to punk communes, was due as much to inherent difficulties as to a sudden onrush of large numbers of people who were little prepared and even less committed to the idea.

Nevertheless, marginalisation, isolation and, even more, voluntary retreat allows one to create personal harmony according to one’s own profile; and this is why at times like this, so challenging for freedom of expression, culture and the economy, we find a host of propositions in art and culture based on self-determination, self-expression and self-organisation. As Maria Lind notes in her paper “Restaging the Institution” (in *(Re)Staging the Art Museum*, 2011) on institutional criticism as a motivating factor in art and culture: “we must be particularly conscious about this choice and the risks it entails. The danger of a ‘do-it-yourself’ institutional criticism is that it leads to isolation. One is protected from the outside world, but may end up egocentric as a ‘survival strategy’. Personally, I see this development as a state of awareness which may be changed or revised when circumstances demand it.”*

I also look forward to a return to the search for harmony; to create an islet amid the chaos, to find this Arcadia and modify it as much as possible so that there remains some ways out, some places and conditions where we can achieve the desired exchanges – the kind of exchanges that can be found within the system as well, since the system is not perfect, either. Surely amid this imperfection hope may still exist as a place or an island where we can really find the common and equitable place of our dreams.

Lefkada, August 2012.

* Maria Lind, “Restaging the Institution”, in Tone Hansen (ed.), *(Re)Staging the Art Museum*, Revolver Publishing 2011, p. 32.

THE SOUL OF THE GREEN BEAST

by Yorgos Tzirtzilakis

Every return to Arcadia is neither a sensual representation
nor a charming symbolism, but a way of becoming Other

— 1 —

Why would one speak today of Arcadia and the Arcadian myths, i.e. about the fantasy of a bucolic paradise and a primitive nature at the antipode of contemporary urban life? One answer could be the heightened interest in the natural environment and the “goodness of nature” which Michel Serres describes with anthropological precision as “being-in-the-apartment, since it only goes out, sometimes in shorts, for holidays in Arcadia”.¹

The pragmatological evidence, however, redefines the issue: the proportion of people whose work is associated with the toil of ploughing and herding (like *The Arcadian Shepherds*) has fallen sharply in just a few decades. The shepherds’ disappearance naturally turned the pastoral imagery and the Arcadian alterity into a place of nostalgia and desire in the Western imaginary. If there are any chances for a reversal of this trend, these will only be promoted by the spread of the current crisis. The shrinking of cities as a result of the rapid decline in urban jobs and the post-Fordist forms of production are the factors that may promote a counter-balancing exodus towards rural life.

Of course, this is not to say that people will go back to a happy life under the midday sun in the company of nymphs and fauns. And they certainly will not achieve harmony with nature by being photographed in the nude in meadows or cool brooks. Our relationship with nature was never safe and painless, and this is something we can all sense but are loath to admit. Let me remind you that in the mid-seventeenth century the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes described what we idealise as the “natural condition” with the Latin phrase *bellum omnium contra omnes*—“the war of all against all”.

This may be one of the reasons why in our time the environment is subjected to the most absurd impulses and at the same time to merciless destruction. It may also be the source of the currently popular mystical expansion of the natural paradigm, the rise of non-anthropocentric approaches to contemporary civilisation, the attraction of the unfamiliar and the uncanny, the post-anarchic revival of primitivism, ‘ethnographic surrealism’ and that paroxysmal process of transition that Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari described as *becoming-animal*² or plant, and which we could change here into *becoming-Arcadian* or; *if you wish, becoming-shepherd*.

In view of this, I am tempted to venture a definition of these last two concepts as a set of words (and images) with which we can process our desires and fears towards nature, alterity, the erotic experience or anything that reminds us of our savage roots. To these traits I could add an anti-classical attitude and the attraction to alien forms and pre-civilisational relics. Above all, however, the *becoming-Arcadian* is the quintessential territory of the repressed. Hence every return to Arcadia - every “Arcadisation”, if you’ll forgive the neologism - is neither a sensual representation nor a charming symbolism but a literal deterritorialization, where all established meanings are dismantled in favour of a series of repressed flows and signs - it is a way of becoming other.

— 2 —

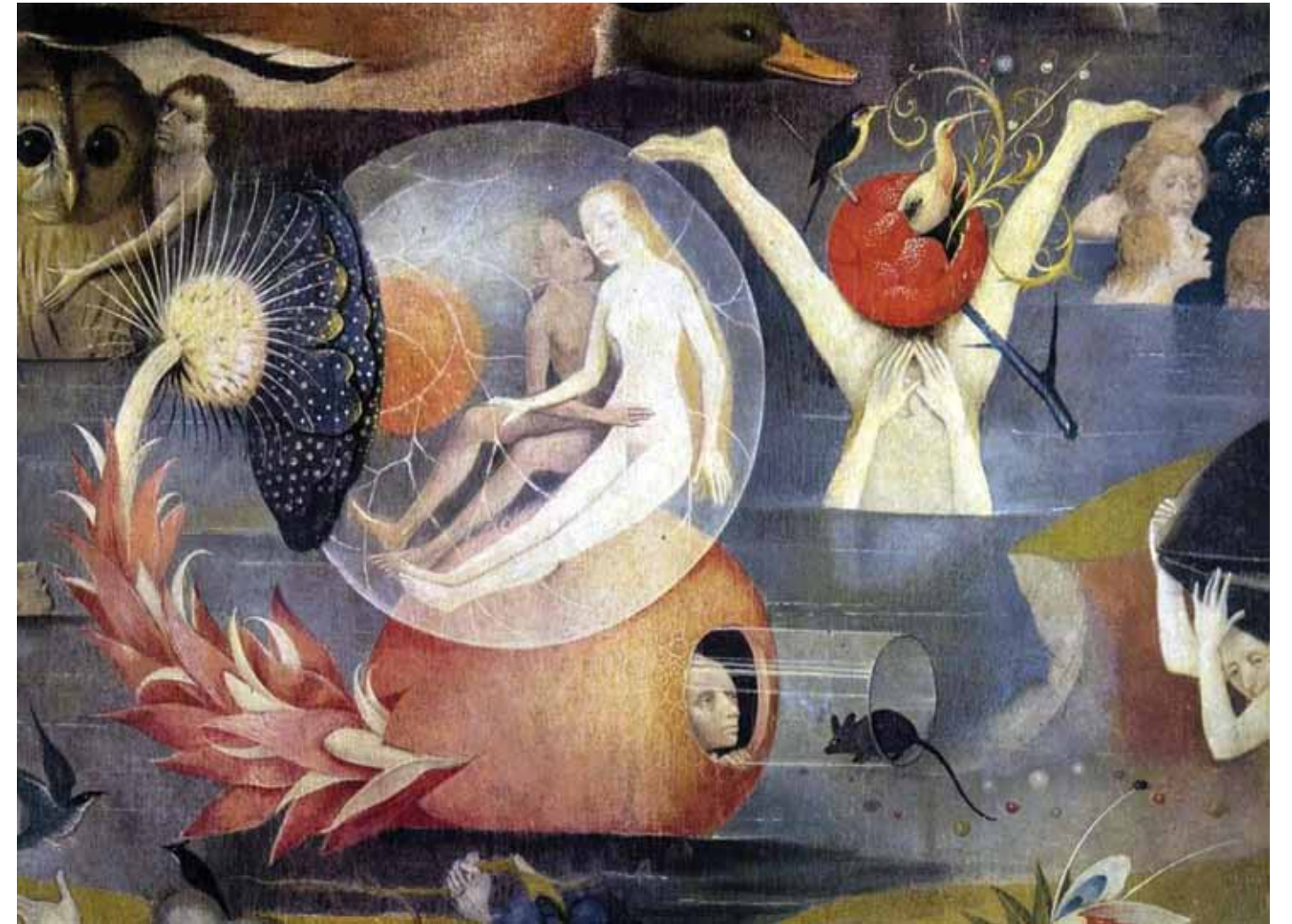
It was literature that acquainted us with the weird ‘erotic mania’ that emerges in Arcadian nature. See how an otherwise sober novelist of the 1930s generation, Stratis Myrivilis, presents it in *Life in the Tomb* (1924): “Then, subtly and invincibly, they got inebriated by the erotic mania that sizzled and simmered from all sides in there... The soldiers may not have understood it, but they were already subdued by the dominant soul of the green beast. The beast now treated them like the thousands of other souls that inhabited it and made up its terrible life, caught in the gale of Priapic mania... But here all sorts of repressed instincts were at once unbridled. The troops played, rolled in the ground, lustfully rubbing their hairy faces on the untrodden grass as if to chew it. They writhed like aroused satyrs.”³

The epitome of this attitude in our country’s artistic culture was the *Untitled* triptych presented by Thanassis Totsikas at the exhibition *Outlook* in 2004, where the Larissian artist is ‘copulating’ with fruits. Not a few people were affronted by this work - and perhaps still are - preferring instead a conventional, ‘tasteful’ hedonism or the green immaturity of an erotic scene in an idyllic setting which surprises even its own protagonists (*Daphnis and Chloe*).

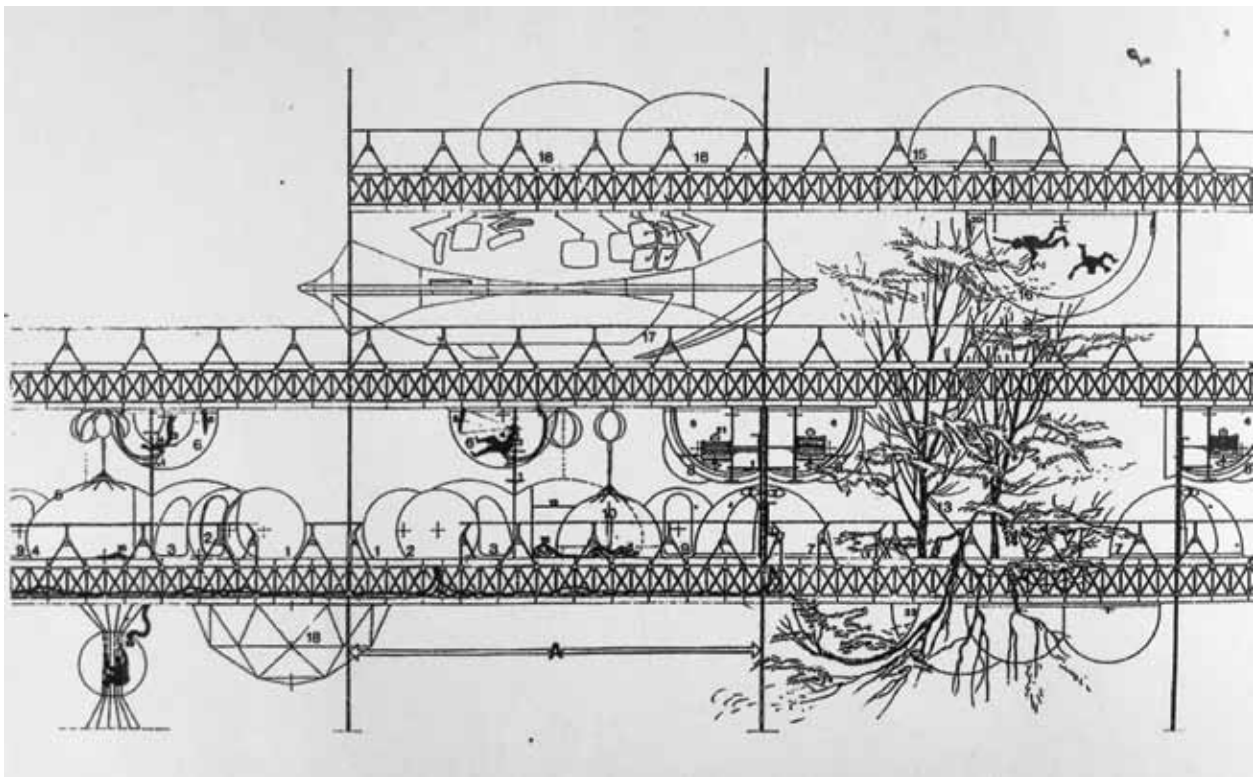
I have said elsewhere⁴ that the art of Totsikas seems to draw inspiration from certain repressed beliefs and impulses of rural life. It lies, in other words, in a zone of exaggeration, the zone of a grass-roots, coarse eudemonism juxtaposed with the established forms of eroticism and production of cultural goods. Let us see what this may signify. Totsikas himself says about this triptych: “When I thought about making this work it was not my intention to provoke... I wanted to interpret the setting. I wished my work to convey the same shock I got from the place, the same sensation... I did it because I loved those things and I wanted to show the joy... I do not go there [to the mountains] to isolate myself but to be active in the proper way.”⁵

Those who have had the chance to visit the artist’s makeshift residence-studio in the wood of Mavrovouni no longer disbelieve this. Yet the question remains: Does the *becoming-Arcadian*, the *becoming-shepherd* in its extreme guise inevitably lead to an area of scandal? Anthropological and literary research has recorded several examples of ‘indecent’ Dionysian rites which place all our answers in a different context.

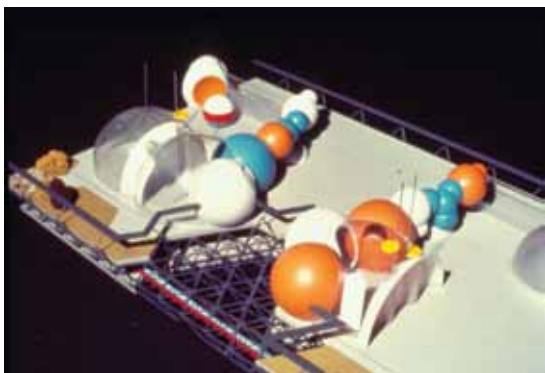
Moreover, most of us must have heard similar accounts of ‘uncivilised’ practices associated with the life and the everyday mythology of - mostly - isolated parts of the Greek territory. Totsikas, in any case, reminds us that next to what most people idealise today as the ‘pure’ and ‘innocent’ Arcadian ideal there is a lower, coarse, unrecorded and repressed culture of the outcast and the marginalised, which feeds on base functions, folk carnivals, superstitions, phallic references, Dionysian and pagan relics. This is a culture of the body, of debauchery, delinquency, lascivious bliss, disregard for the established norms and abandonment in the animalistic pleasure that exorcises fear and death.



Hieronymus Bosch, *Garden of Earthly Delights* Triptych
central panel, detail
Courtesy of Museo del Prado Madrid



Takis Zenetos, *Electronic Urbanism*, 1952-1974, truss
 “Takis Ch. Zenetos 1926-1977”,
Architecture in Greece Press, 8, Athens 1974



ABOVE / BELOW: Takis Zenetos, *Electronic Urbanism*
 (*Urbanisme Electronique*), 1952-1974, model
 Courtesy of Takis Ch. Zenetos Archive

— 3 —

Death is also the theme in Nicolas Poussin's *Arcadian Shepherds* (1647), with the sober and troubled men around the grave and the famous inscription ET IN ARCADIA EGO. Similarly, in the earlier (1618-1622) allegory by the Italian painter Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (Guercino) two astounded young shepherds are looking at a human skull perched on a funerary pedestal, with a mouse on one side and a fly on its brow.

So where is the carefree bliss of Arcadian meadows and the dissipation of the goat-legged Pan? Two years ago, in a superficial quest for answers to this question, I joined an autopsy around the mountain landscapes of Arcadia in the Peloponnese. During this tour I found no tombs and steles in the mist of the lush mountains and the paths along the steep slopes, but only scattered evidence of an erstwhile ideal natural condition which would be hard, if not impossible, to restore today. I confirmed much the same thing in the cultivated valley of Thermissia or on the mountaintops of the Corinthian Gulf, which soon began to turn into an allegory about man's insignificance amidst the boundless landscape. What really matters, though, is that this landscape (where still “the snakes live side-by-side with goats”), lends itself to becoming an instantaneous psychological biography of each of us.

It does not take too thorough an observer to notice that all literary and painterly descriptions of the *becoming-Arcadian* are fraught with an unexpected sense of melancholy, although this does not detract from their poignancy; on the contrary, it enhanc-

es it! I'll take as an example the *Bathing Women* of Constantinos Parthenis, a pre-1919 oil painting in which the apparently graceful harmony among the nude women in the natural landscape is unexpectedly subverted by their gloomy, sad faces. We observe the same thing in Cezanne's *Les Grandes Baigneuses* (1906), which preceded and certainly influenced Parthenis's gaze. A sadness and a sense of transience always lurks.

Yet we must not let this Arcadian intolerance monopolise our interest: if there is one thing I appreciate greatly in this genre, it is that it stopped treating the natural goods (the sun, the wind, the rivers, the mountains, the woods, the fields, the shepherds, the little houses and the bridges) with scorn but as a unified and commendable whole as well as a new kind of vision. The cultural legitimacy of the common natural goods started here.

So where does this *becoming-Arcadian* ultimately lead? The Greek poet Nikos Gatsos in the bucolic elegy of *Amorgos* (1943) takes us directly to the heart of the matter: the idealised Arcadian world of Greek summer and rural life, that had once fascinated the poet himself just as it did the 1930s generation, no longer exists: “In the backyard of the embittered no sun rises / Only worms come out to deride the stars / Only horses are in bud on ant-hills / And bats are eating birds and pissing seed.”⁶

And what do we get further down in the poem? Dogs, crows, frog flesh, spider's teeth, vampire feet but also waiting “For the dark heavens to flash, for the candlewick to blossom”, for “A kiss of the foam-embroidered sea”. Amidst this vacillation, what matters is not the difference between the poles of sadness and joy but our ability to compose images, hence language itself. This primordial contradiction in which we exist is what spawns the *becoming-Arcadian*. There is no way to experience the Arcadian outside the mechanism of its symbolisation, i.e. language and images. So Evgenios Aranitsis is right in insisting that Gatsos had realised how if you intended to write *Amorgos* you ought to avoid visiting the island itself. Strangely enough, the same is true of Arcadia, which was never visited by Virgil, Dante or Poussin.

— 4 —

It is my opinion that modernism's treatment of the archaic and primitive past encouraged this kind of attitude. The tension between modern and primitive led modernism to multiply the interpretations and contradictions. How do we find the traces of this tension in architecture? I choose three paradigms of Greek modernity as starting points which later architects approached – in a pattern of attraction/repulsion – and processed.

The first starting point is that of Dimitris Pikionis, whom we might call a “pastoral architect”. Pikionis's various ascetic approaches to the Arcadian theme culminated in the design of a forest village at Pertouli, Pindos (1953-1956), where he attempted to literally filter architecture into the savage twilight of the wooded mountain. This was followed by the design of the Aixoni settlement (1951-1955), whose emblem is a goat's head. These are two of the ‘darkest’ projects of an architect who adopted an archaeological practice based on a composition of fragments in order to overcome, as he writes, the “loveless ideal” of rationalism.

The second starting point is that of Aris Konstantinidis, in whom the idea of the natural landscape is stripped of all narcissistic elements of pleasure and of the decorative contexts with which it was often identified. The Arcadian element here is the total baring of architecture, the natural bareness of a ‘monk's cell’ (one of the two archetypes of habitation, together with the ‘philosopher's chamber’). This is certainly a design practice that lies at the hard core of modernism, and if we wanted to find its visual equivalent we would do so in the architect's own photos but also in certain paintings by Constantinos Maleas: in this case the Arcadian is reduced to a kind of intellectual purity of the natural and to a moral stance.

The third starting point is that of Takis Zenetos, whose experimental *City of the Future* and *Electronic Urbanism* (1962-1974)⁸ attempted to combine the inimitable “virgin nature” with a system of suspended infrastructures and functions for the de-territorialised city which unfolds in the “realm of the atmosphere”. This contrast marks the transition from tangible work to intangible forms of bio-political production. Here is how the architect describes this city in 1966: “Nature is liberated, finding its primordial form. A pliable spider web ‘contains’ the city [...] Tele-working takes place from home. From the same place we communicate with the entire earth or the universe.”

Zenetos emerges here as an early inventor of the Electronic Arcadia and the post-Fordist city. There is nothing outside the suspended city or outside the Arcadian nature, which mutually dissolve into each other. The model for the new integrated nature in the city is represented by the makeshift ‘hanging gardens’ – i.e. the flowerpots hanging from the balconies in Athens – and by an allegorical detail in Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights*, which shows a lustful erotic scene between a nude couple inside a transparent crystal sphere whose cracks warn us that it is about to burst. The inhabitant of the Electronic Arcadia has all the traits of a nomad, the *becoming-shepherd* of the post-industrial era, and has access to ‘tele-acting booths’ and ‘instant sleep areas’. Not accidentally, Zenetos comments on this inhabitant's “personality” and propensity to “standardisation” with a caricature of Costas Mitropoulos which alludes to the *Easy Rider* mythology.

Would we describe this kind of proposition as utopian today? Before answering this, I hasten to remind you that the greatest advantage of the Arcadian tradition is that, unlike Utopia, it is not necessarily limited to manmade civilisation. Hence we must also include in its armoury plants, organic and inorganic systems, mechanical and molecular developments but also that kind of “animalisation” that Myrivilis described as “the dominant soul of the green beast”: “all sorts of repressed instincts were at once unbridled.”

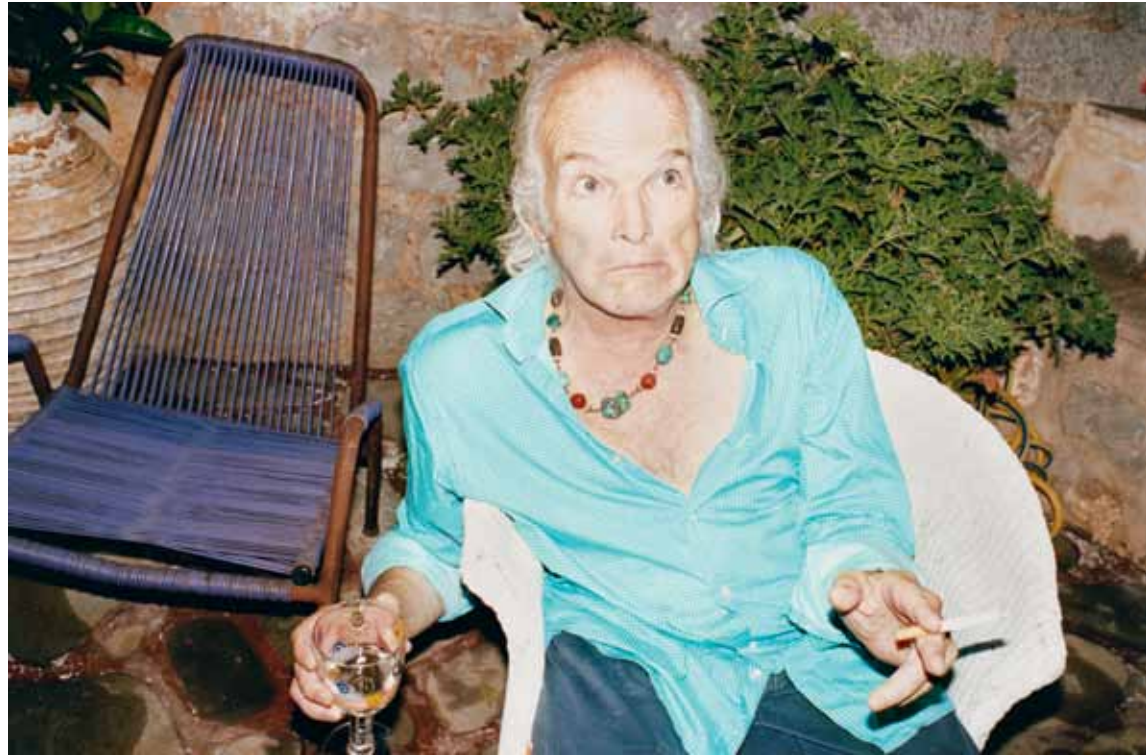
1. Michel Serres, *Temps des crises*, Le Pommier, Paris 2009.
2. This concept was developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their books *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (1975) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), ch. 10. It is associated with the “minority” or the “becoming-minor” which the two authors include in the processes of de-territorialisation.
3. Stratis Myrivilis, *Life in the Tomb*, translated by Peter Bien, London 1987.
4. Yorgos Tzirtzilakis, “The unconscious of the forest. Towards a new relation with folk tradition”, in Apostolos Kalfopoulos (ed.), *The beautiful is just the first degree of the terrible*, Thessaloniki 2009, pp. 162-167.
5. “Μια συντήρηση του Θανάση Τότσικα με τον Χριστόφορο Μαρίνο”, in *Τότσικας*, Athens 2006, p. 8. Cf. Theophilos Tramboulis, “Thanassis Totsikas”, in Ch. Joakeimides (ed.), *Outlook*, Athens 2003, p. 362.
6. Nikos Gatsos, *Amorgos*, translated by Sally Purcell, Anvil Press Poetry, London 2000.
7. Here I paraphrase Peter Sloterdijk's description of Martin Heidegger: see “Rules for the Human Park: A Response to Heidegger's Letter on Humanism”, translated by Mary Varney Rorty, rekveld.home.xs4all.nl/tech/Sloterdijk_RulesForTheHumanZoo.pdf: such an attitude “requires a proximate listening, for which man must become more passive, and tamer”.
8. Takis Ch. Zenetos, “Urbanisme électronique. Structures parallèles”, *Architecture in Greece Press*, Athens 1969.

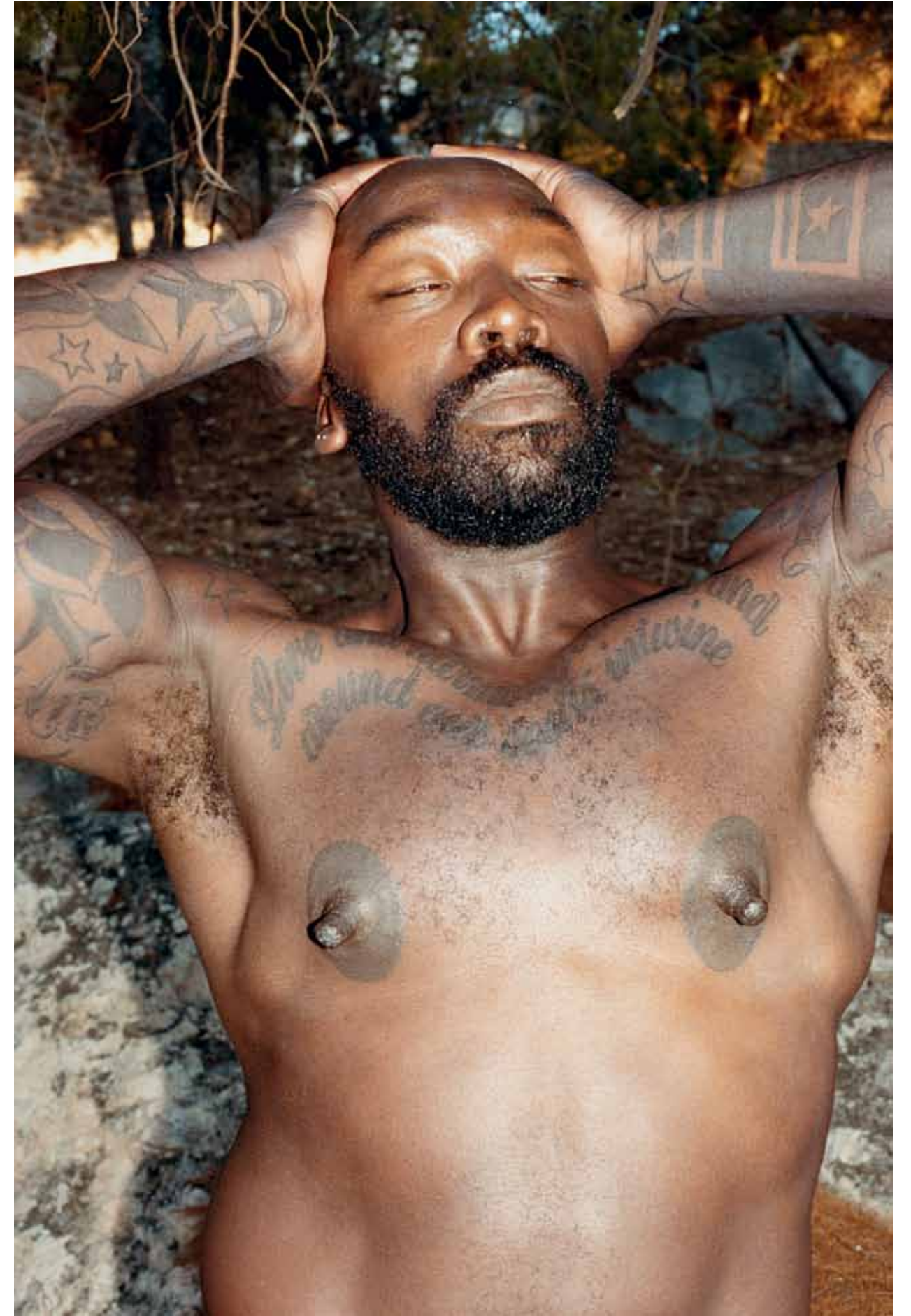
HYDRA

by Juergen Teller



These pictures were shot especially for South as a State of Mind publication
in Hydra, July 2012.
We would like to thank Elena Votsi (Hydra) for lending us the jewellery.







SOFTROCK HARD LOVE

by Socrates Mitsios and Actually Huizenga

Socrates Mitsios and Actually Huizenga met in London and got married in Athens on June 30th 2011 at 20:30, while shooting their first project together entitled *Softrock*. She, a Los Angeles extravagant creature, singer, performer, visual artist and descendant of a family of ‘royal’ playmates. Socrates, born and raised in New York, studied psychiatry at New York University, and has since developed a photographic career induced with hallucinatory-idealism from the grey depths of London and the sunny-pop-plasticity of LA, where, between the two cities, he now resides



Socrates Mitsios and Actually Huizenga, *SoftRock 1*, 2011
film stills
Courtesy of the artists
SOFTROCK: vimeo.com/softrock

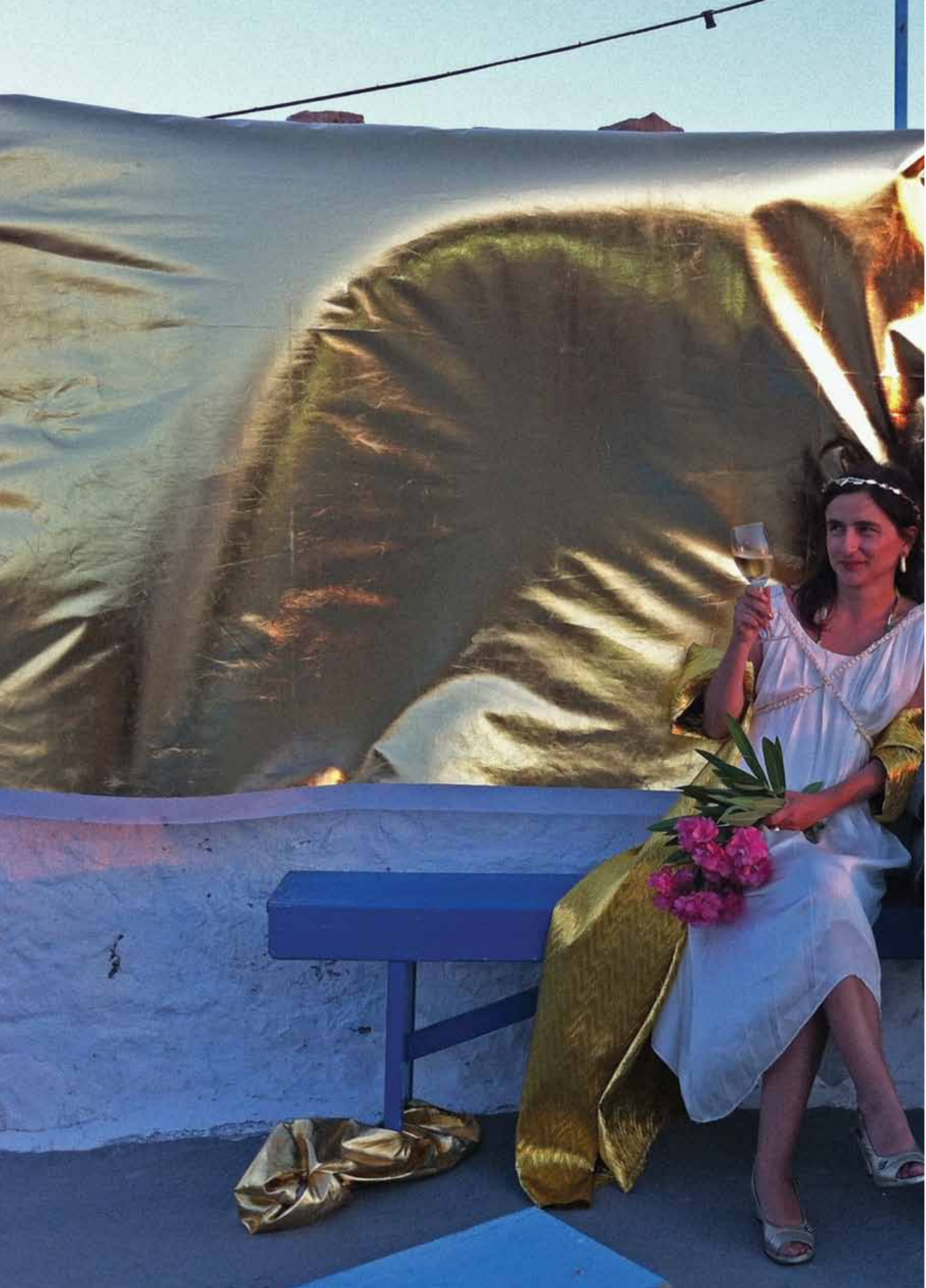
Mitsios says:

Softrock I is basically the meeting of two, their unity through sex, and the body is the landscape explored. The images of the outer world and nature only exist through the ‘cracks’ of the narrative. It alludes to an idyllic state, a state of pre-pleasure and its necessary counterpart, pain. This is ‘fleshed’ out in more and more detail in the subsequent parts. In II & III more people are involved, as the nature of the relationship between the two becomes increasingly complicated. The marriage – our marriage – is sort of a desire to go back to that early idyllic state but all the while carrying the complexities of earthly life and passion and abandon. SoftRock I is about a certain kind of unity that is expressed directly and through its opposites: Love through idealized rape, while snuff film making or pornography is aestheticized and made beautiful. The woman, who is seen as sexually submissive, is an initiating force – she has an identity, looking into the camera with a mixture of defiance and cheekiness. Certain of what she wants. The film is more like the Renaissance reading of “Leda and the Swan” in which their meeting, the rape of Leda, is one of erotic compliance not of violation, as in the classical sense. So SoftRock I embellishes this further and brings it into the twenty-first century. The woman adorns herself in fetishistic red ribbon, tied to the chair. She enjoys her sexual liaison; in fact, she orchestrates it, despite her ostensibly passive/submissive situation. In fact, she might be the creator of this through her fantasy world and imagination.

“The video art duo Actually Huizenga and Socrates Mitsios like to be watched. The two have created a trilogy of short video works that they have colourfully referred to as “Pop Rape” – two words that have, as far as I know, never been placed side by side, perhaps for justifiable reason. The films are an exhibitionistic display of naked, hypersexed bodies. At once glossy and vulgar, fastidiously disciplined and wildly chaotic, the films are an exercise in the photogenics of sex. *SoftRock*, the first film in the trilogy, is a colour-saturated, digital experiment in stylized pornography. Shot in Athens, the film encapsulates some of the sexual energy and unsettling volatility of contemporary Greece. There is something volcanic, earthen and tectonic about this film that speaks to the fact that it was shot in a nation of atomised islands. The atmosphere of the film is fear-laden and heavy. Greece is both a sweaty, sexualized playground and a site of fearful omens. The buzzing, screeching, humming digital reverb of the soundtrack renders it eerie, exciting and charged with unseen yet imminent violence. Sort of a David Lynch-meets-Britney Spears mash-up, the soundtrack recapitulates some of the visual thematic contrasts in the film. Digital and cassette feedback noise is mixed with catchy dance beats in a way that both excites and intimidates... The artists wed some of the bold sexual violence of Bruce La Bruce with a savvy understanding of popular culture and the pleasures of cinema, à la Kenneth Anger. Huizenga channels a bit of Carolee Schneeman in her use of her sexed body as a means of performing and criticizing cultural taboos. The film trilogy, if I might be so bold, is *Meat Joy* with lots of makeup.

Strategic film cuts and close-cropped focus are central to the technique of the artists’ work. Inspired, so they admit, by the Zapruder film of President Kennedy’s assassination, the artists have cut and focused on the juiciest details, sparing much of the broader panorama that they deemed superfluous: “The camera is meant to have an objective quality,” they suggest, revealing an investment in the scrutinizing gaze of the camera’s lens. The tension between the cold neutrality of the camera’s gaze and the heightened intimacy that it records is a crucial part of the viewing experience. The viewer is witness to a crime, an act of sexual violence that has been recorded and produced as a pop confection.”
(Excerpt from text by Ryan Linkof.)

Enjoy their hardcore arcadia.



Golden Wedding
Milos (Greece), Saturday July 14, 2012, at sunset
Bride and Groom: María Inés Rodríguez and Juan Andrés Gaitán
Best Men: Andreas Angelidakis and Angelo Plessas
(The wedding was conceived by the above and was shared by lots of friends)

ELEVATED ARCADIA

by Kostis Velonis

A balcony calls upon us to escape without having to flee from home

The balcony and the spacious veranda is the place where the drama of the interior can be derailed and diffused in the broader external environment. Burdened with family obligations and and refusing to accept the dramaturgical restrictions of a theatre-room, we lean on the banister and daydream of 'another life'. A balcony calls upon us to escape without having to flee from home.

The balcony with its mechanisms of providing shade on hot days and a refuge for those wishing to avoid the family melodrama is almost a rule in Mediterranean architecture but almost absent from the more northern countries.

No one is likely to dispute the fact that the predominance of apartment blocks in post-war Greece, particularly in the cities, as a sustainable answer to the problem of housing an increasing, shapeless population led to the deterioration or even the annihilation of the natural landscape. However, in the case of apartment blocks the notion of 'upgrading' the landscape within the city is associated with the private space of the balcony rather than the shared garden outside the building's main entrance.

By the end of World War II and after the Civil War every modern housewife dreamed of moving into a flat, since the newly-built complex offered comforts that an older house could not match. A flat gives you central heating, hot water, indoor toilet facilities, lower running costs, fire-resistant materials, a modern kitchen, ergonomic storage spaces, and remains impervious to changes in the weather. It shapes a new housing model based on the demand for modernisation. Until the 1970s, all social classes in Greece sought to become 'civilised' by opting for apartments - each class on its own terms, of course - with their small balconies and huge verandas. Nevertheless, this newfangled access to the environment through balconies in the 1940s and 1950s did not seem to convince certain conservative social groups.

If apartment blocks were seen as the quickest and cheapest solution for housing the lower classes in the cities, in terms of both construction and urban planning, the luxury of a house in a garden city did not remain an objective only for the affluent. The rational option of a flat, in the sense of healthier living conditions, is disputed as long as it is not combined with a return to nature. Stamatia D. Mastroyanopoulou, expressing the Christian moral values in her book *Realm of the Home*, which is meant as a bible for pious housewives, believes that "the best house is the so-called 'solitary' one. It should be detached, and have some space for a garden, if only a small one". She goes on to say: "So let us not envy those who rent flats in apartment blocks, because in addition to never having a quiet moment they lead an unhealthy life." The little house in the garden city is recommended for proletarian families since "outdoor work will always be the best antidote for those who work in factories".

It is fortunate that developers, who are usually blamed for the slipshod way in which Athens was built, envisaged a typology whereby one could create a second place of habitation par excellence; the concept of the garden was concisely reflected in the idea of spacious balconies. In this way the former rural populations that moved into the city found an indirect solution to their identity crisis in a space where they could replicate village life within the safe conditions of urbanisation. The village yard's honeysuckle became a creeping plant between the drying clothes on the clothesline. This almost exclusively Greek generosity in apartment design was combined with the *retiré* practice - the gradually recessed top floors - and could replicate the effect two or three times in the same building.

For Greek families, this access to public space from a certain height, with the balcony or the deep veranda of a *retiré* flat as the

outer boundary, provides a parallel place of habitation where the extrovert nature of relaxation and chatting with friends and neighbours ends up generating and sustaining sociability. This sociability extends beyond such gatherings to include chats with the housewives on neighbouring balconies, thus reproducing the custom of village gossip. A *retiré* flat is the quintessence of isolating oneself from the bustle of the city.

Between the spaces for exclusively private living and the provocatively open veranda we can observe certain degrees and variations. The shade turns the veranda into a space protected from the unpleasant and undesirable view of the city and makes it possible to create a rural Eden within the micro-scale of the apartment's functional layout. Even the colours of the shade, usually green, yellow or orange, reveal the unconscious correlation with the green of nature and the bright colours of the sun, whose life-giving effect is essential for the household's physical and mental health. The tastes of the prospering middle class of the 1970s follow the commands of modernity, and the shades now sport decorative patterns in tune with the psychedelic fad.

The balcony as a spatial boundary of privacy serves as a forum for information gathering, a place from which a housewife can survey the once male-dominated public life. There is a difference between a window and a balcony. The window is a tool for reverie, but one in which the female observer is distanced from the external environment, concealed behind or between the curtains. On the balcony, discretion is absent. The aggressive nature of the balcony and the defensive one of the window or the skylight are eloquently reflected in the representations of Western painterly tradition, which find their special parallel in the art of our own Munich School and Greek impressionism. For many years we used to take it for granted that behind a neat balcony there was a diligent housewife, a chubby Greek mother who watered her plants and enjoyed feeding her children there in the summer months. Yet while in the early decades the emphasis was on flowers and decorative trees, in recent year verandas have come to include plants important for nutrition. The spirit of the times calls for economising through the organic growth of vegetables, and more importantly through a general new approach in the design of our habitable zones.

Today, the veranda acquires more significance as a place that carries the seeds of ecological vigilance, if only in a quixotic way. Among the bamboo furniture with the comfortable cushions and the lanterns, the pots with baby tomatoes, basil and spearmint but also the corners with the flowers and cactuses all echo that long-lost notion of living in a garden-city villa. The microcosm of the veranda gives the once-docile 'manageress' of the house an opportunity to subvert the patriarchal structure. Against the backdrop of a bankrupt public sphere, this nature-in-the-house comes as the vengeance of our home and seeks to break down the built urban environment into scattered gardens.

This is excerpt of a text published in the book *Sichroni Ellinida*, edited by Marina Fokidis and published by Vimadonna, D.O.L., Athens, Greece, 2011.

Advertisement for Peiraiki-Patraiki awnings
Tachydromos magazine early 1970s
TRANSLATION: Where are you going on vacation this year?
You can go to the sea or mountains,
but you can also stay at home...



Πού θά παραθερίσετε φέτος;

Μπορείτε να πάτε όπου θελήσετε. Στη θάλασσα ή στο βουνό. Μπορείτε όμως να μείνετε και στο σπίτι σας. Θά είναι το ίδιο ευχάριστα. Παραθερίστε στη βεράντα σας. Τα χρώματα, τα λουλουδία και τη δροσιά της εξοχής σας τα εξασφαλίζουν τα τεντόπανα PRIMAVERA, της ΠΕΙΡΑΙΚΗΣ-ΠΑΤΡΑΙΚΗΣ. Θά τα βρήτε σε τρεις τύπους (εμπριμέ, ντούμπλ φάς και ριγέ) και σε μία ποιότητα (αδιάβροχα, άνθεκτικά). Έπίσης θά βρήτε και τα γνωστά σας μονόχρωμα τεντόπανα ΠΕΙΡΑΙΚΗΣ-ΠΑΤΡΑΙΚΗΣ σε υπέροχους χρωματισμούς. Διαλέξτε τα χρώματα που θέλετε και καλές διακοπές.



WELCOME TO ARCADIA

by The Filopappou Group

The project *Et in Arcadia Ego* was commissioned and produced by the 2nd Athens Biennale and was presented as part of the exhibition *Live* curated by Zafos Xagoraris and Dimitris Papaioannou. An interactive environment was installed at the Flisvos Park in the area of Palaio Faliro, which is Athen's seaside, for fifteen days in June 2009.

The Filopappou Group created an artistic environment, a gathering place, a different kind of garden that invited visitors to be part of it. An immanent 'scenery', it played host to the negotiation of issues related to the title of the project. Arcadia refers, among other things, to an earthly and at the same time mythical paradise, to a garden of pleasures, to contemplation of death and eternity, but also to an inexplicable feeling of escapism; this project recast it as an imaginary place of frustration.

The Group's research and study, as well as their stroll through Poussin's painting *Et in Arcadia ego*, drove them to consider topics such as 'natural and artificial paradise', 'pause and movement,' the 'flourishing of people and artificial flora,' 'death and eternity,' 'rhizome and passage' and 'collectivity and community'. They created an ephemeral place of concentration and focus: a place that was mobile and changing every day but also required accomplices. Members of the Group, guests and visitors organised a series of discussions, ephemeral actions, performances etc., which were held at the Flisvos Park.

The schedule of the activities, workshops, open discussions and presentations included: a workshop on natural farming, where the audience and passers-by were invited to participate in the act of wrapping seeds in pellets of clay soil (the resulting garden would be a living sculpture that would flourish in the Palaio Faliro promenade); 'Tracing the ephemeral city,' a presentation and discussion on transportation, highways, street art and graffiti and the current urban sprawl by Panos Totsikas, architect and activist, and 'Feminist Utopias' by Maria Gargaroni, in which women acknowledge the dystopian conditions of their existence and transcend them by constructing ephemeral spaces or non-spaces of experimentation and freedom.

There was also a poetic residency called *Poetica Residenza Arcadia / The Arcadia poetic residency - a workshop of words*, in which a group of poets shared with the audience their previous work or new words they'd been inspired to voice. The invitation for the evening stated: "The spoken word as a murmur or as a cry breaks the usual practice of reading poetry. It flows through writings on the concrete walkway, through notes and scribbles passed around, stuck on benches, sewn into pillows or placed behind the announcement boards of the 'Arcadia' installation." A series of lectures on the aesthetic, philosophical, historical and political connotations of Utopia under the general title 'Arcadia / Utopia', gathered together professors of sociology, political sciences, philosophy and theorists who discussed their views on the relation between arcadia and contemporary art and between arcadia and real life.

The Filopappou Group
Et in Arcadia Ego, 2009
project commissioned and produced by the 2nd Athens
Biennale 2009
www.omadafilopappou.net



ET IN ARCADIA EGO

A PROJECT FOR A UBIQUITOUS KUNSTHALLE

by Filipa Ramos

Ironically, there are many affinities between the natural set of classical Arcadia and the location of Como – the original stage for a proposal for an ubiquitous Kunsthalle. In fact there are so many that it seems more than a coincidence that a project with such a strong idealistic component was born in this idyllic – or should we say Arcadian – location.

Como, a city located on the Southern shore of the lake that shares its name, owes its natural charm to a good combination of a mild Mediterranean atmosphere and an alpine character, conferred by the proximity to the Prealps. Despite being just 40 km distant from Milan, it remains quite a remote location, traditionally more concerned with itself than with the outside, and largely indifferent to the vicissitudes and events of the larger city. The current Como focuses on its natural and historical resources and has an overall attitude of detachment from the activities of larger neighbouring cities. This willingness to turn its back on its neighbours is not entirely positive. Indeed its cultural activity is quite low for a middle-sized city in a wealthy location with an important natural and historical patrimony, from the local late-medieval school of painting (know as the “Comasine Masters”) to the legacy of Rationalist architecture, in particular that of architects Antonio Sant’Elia and Giuseppe Terragni.

It is also an irony that, despite its cultural and environmental attributes, the modern Como is commonly associated with extravagant and luxurious lifestyles, which are fed by a profusion of fashion boutiques, decadent restaurants, and top class hotels and villas that attract the rich and would-be rich to the area.

It was this isolation that motivated research into the possibility of providing the area with a forum exceeding the commonplace exchange of goods and attracting cultural and artistic proposals that relate to locals and international visitors.

However, it would have been difficult to impose on Como an institution that its inhabitants and visitors did not feel a need or desire for. For that reason a consultation project was conceived that would hopefully increase and nourish a sensibility for contemporary culture by inviting professionals from diverse areas of expertise of cultural production to come to Como and share with its inhabitants their ideas, visions and advice on how to create what would ideally become “the most beautiful Kunsthalle in the world”. This was a concept that was conceived by Marco De Michelis, director of the Antonio Ratti Foundation (responsible for developing the project), and carried out and supervised by myself.

Researching the possibility of establishing the most beautiful Kunsthalle in the world – that is, the conditions to create an exhibition space that would function in the best possible way – was developed through twenty-four encounters that took place over a two-year period, with an average of one per month.

In developing the programme, we felt the need to experiment with different formats in our public encounters, to ensure the best possible relationship between themes, speakers, timeframes and audiences. One of the most successful models was one-to-one dialogue with certain personalities we felt had important testimonies

to pass on, such as Hans Ulrich-Obrist, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Nikolaus Hirsch and Vicente Todoli, who were all invited to speak in Italian so as to be linguistically closer to the audience.

There were sessions coordinated and moderated by younger professionals, as when Paola Nicolin moderated a discussion between Art Angel’s James Lingwood and Creative Time’s Nato Thomson about producing exhibitions, and when Francesco Garutti hosted a discussion on architecture for culture that included Andreas Angelidakis, Kuehn Malvezzi, Dieter Bogner and others.

There was a whole day dedicated to the curator, which was divided into three main blocks (the canon, the exhibition and the institution), and for which we invited Maria Lind, Bruce Altshuler, Raimundas Malasauskas, Celine Condorelli and Jens Hoffmann, among many others, to discuss the history, role and pertinence of the loved and hated figure.

The last encounter marked a critical moment for the development of the most beautiful Kunsthalle. After two years of inviting international professionals to bring their expertise and proposals to Como, the time had arrived to focus on our city and face its needs and problems. This also became the moment to gather what was said and suggested and to decide if the most beautiful Kunsthalle in the world was set to remain a research project that provided guidelines for those interested in thinking institutions, or if we would use these theoretical foundations to imagine the configuration of a centre for the arts in Como.

It was most probably the speculative nature of the project that called for an experimental proposal, which would function as a test-site for a different relation between cultural institutions and audiences, especially the new ones, with a whole new set of desires and demands. This proposal was born out of the need to answer a series of questions that emerged while thinking about an institution for culture in the present context, such as: How can cultural institutions in general, and a new institution in particular, establish a close and long-lasting dialogue with its visitors? How can an individual feel part of an institution and identify with its positions, statements and activities? How can an individual trust an institution? How can a space be more than an area of display and encounter and become a key element for the identity of a place, adapting itself to it? How can we feel at ease at a venue? How can a cultural centre generate needs and desires in its visitors, some of which they did not even know they felt? How can we spend less on infrastructure and maintenance in order to redistribute funds to production and creation investments? How can an institution relate equally to diverse physical and social realities?

We did not answer these questions. But they offered hints for a proposal. For one thing, they seemed to attest that the desired closeness between cultural institutions and the public could not derive from logics of emplacement but from the promotion of a more flexible and less imposing space for the production and promotion of culture.

A central aspect that came out of the discussion sessions about the most beautiful Kunsthalle was that such an institution did not



Outdoors view of the Most Beautiful Kunsthalle in the World
Fondazione Antonio Ratti
Photograph by Giovanna Silva

need a fixed physical location to exist and that its initiatives could take place in different locations, as institutions seem to have a great capacity for triggering processes of aggregation and identification that do not require association with a place.

The current situation for certain cultural institutions in Italy mirrors the apotheosis and crisis of the museum as a status symbol. To give as just two examples the two main museums for contemporary art in Rome: the MAXXI, which is threatened with closure only two years after it opened (in May 2010!), due to excessive maintenance costs associated with severe governmental cuts, and the Macro, which has suffered from a directional instability that has led to its gradual loss of identity.

These sad occurrences seem to confirm the fact that if culture is an essential element for the cohesion of individuals and the edification of a local, national and international identity of a given place, it should not be presented inside costly and obsolete containers that absorb a considerable part of the resources meant for research and production.

These examples (and many others, in Italy and abroad) lead me to believe that a new space for culture in Como should be based on participation and have a changing, iridescent identity, one that is itinerant and adaptable to the diversity of the presented projects, because its strength would rely on the activation of processes and not in an immobile presence. This would allow for a concentration of funds on a constant reconfiguration of a place that is different each time.

It is obvious that such a project would need to have a small headquarters, a sort of office for administrative, logistic and archival functions, an operative bureau from which the activities would be run.

The possible faces of this itinerant centre for the arts would largely depend on the nature of its projects – that most probably would not be exclusively contemporary art but would reach many areas of cultural production, from music to science, from ecology to performing arts, from urbanism to literature, philosophy or anthropology – in such a way that they could relate in a more incisive way with the central elements of the territory.

This would also allow for the activation of the architectonic, natural and human heritage of the city, places that, by hosting new functions and allowing new uses, would be traversed and occupied by a variety of individuals who could positively contribute to its fruition.

As part of these we could consider disused structures and industrial edifices, but also old cinemas, petrol stations, former hotels or commercial spaces, and many other venues according to the physical and symbolic characteristics that a given project would request.

Places of mobility and transportation should also be considered, for a centre for the arts that moves and that physically reaches and takes its visitors to different areas can push forward, testing and verifying proposals of radical hospitality: This is a central aspect for comprehensively reflecting on cultural practices and institutions, for which participation is always a central but also problematic issue.

Can this ubiquitous Kunsthalle become a reality, in Como or elsewhere? Or is it destined to remain a vision of an imagined cultural Arcadia? Only the future will tell, but for now, let us direct this famous nostalgic longing into wishful thinking, as *Et in Arcadia ego...*

TENSTA KONSTHALL 2003

A CASE STUDY FOR A SUBJECTIVE INSTITUTION AS CONCEIVED BY THE GROUP KONST2

by Rodrigo Mallea-Lira



Exterior view of Tensta Konsthall after the first re-building of the Art Center and the area just outside it
By Front Design
Curated by Konst2
Photo Front

Konst2 was the name of an artist and curatorial group consisting of members Ylva Ogland, Jelena Rundqvist and me. Konst2 served also as the name for what we defined as a “subjective institution”, which in the beginning operated within its own scene in Skärholmen, a suburban area just south of Stockholm. Later, when Konst2 as a group became directors of Tensta Konsthall, in a suburban area north of Stockholm, the “subjective institution” continued to operate in Skärholmen for some time, with its base at the art centre in Tensta. Konst2, as such, was initiated in the summer of 2003; we were all unanimous on the need to establish a new kind of institution that could correspond more directly to the actual requirements of contemporary art practice and that the existing institutions, in our opinion, didn’t respond to.

Right from the very beginning, in our first meetings, the discussion of location of this new institution was a crucial topic. Previous to Konst2 we had all operated within the established art scene of Stockholm, as curators and artists, at commercial galleries like Gallery Brändström and Charlotte Lund, or public institutions like Moderna Museet and Kulturhuset, and artist-run spaces like Enkehuset. We had been exposed to media attention and critically acclaimed for our different projects, and when we established Konst2 in Skärholmen the attention increased, and we also started to be scrutinized in different academic studies.

The first interviews for these academic surveys took place early in the spring of 2004 in our new venue in Skärholmen, the great modernist project and communication node south of the city centre of Stockholm and very close to where the mother of all IKEA department stores is located. Our “subjective institution” was housed in the Swedish Migration Board’s former offices that had been abandoned for some time. There was an air of symbolism in the dislocation of our operations, moving out to a “suburban area” and these specific offices, which attracted a lot of media attention. Skärholmen had a bad reputation, in the minds of many, as a segregated area, home to many immigrants; however, at the inauguration of the modernist project in 1968, it was at the cutting edge of social planning.

Our decision to move out of the city centre came about as the result of dialogue with Klas Ruin, an architect based at the School of Architecture in Stockholm. We had just established Konst2 as a group and had an e-venue-less institution, and we had been offered an artist run gallery space in a very central location. However, we were hesitant as to whether this was the right venue and location for our new project. Ruin suggested we consider other geographic location for Konst2 rather than in the gentrified city centre, and when scanning the areas around Stockholm, scrutinizing the city of Stockholm at large, we decided to look more closely at Skärholmen. We contacted the local District Board in Skärholmen who put us in contact with the management of a company that owned most of the centre of Skärholmen. This company managed the vacant former offices of the Swedish Migration Board; it was a huge venue, which we were more or less immediately given access to and moved into. There was a double sense of meaning to the space – it was a former migration office in an area that was now distinguished by its migrant population. The loca-



LEFT / ABOVE: C.F. Hill, *A Fairy Tale*
Historic work by Carl Fredrik Hill
on display in the Leoprad Cube
in a subjectilvely curated show
Curated by Konst2. Photo Konst2



The Leopard Cube, by Konst2, 2005, Photo Konst2



Taxinge Torg, upper facade of Tensta Konsthall and
Tensta Centrum Mall. An urban development project by
International Festival, Front, and Konst2
Curated by Konst2, 2006
Photo International Festival and Front



The Lack Project, by Gruppo A12.
Installation detail from the apartment
made out of 1000 pink Ikea Lack tables, 2005
Photo Konst2

tion of the actual building was strategically extremely well situated, just across from the subway station on the modernist pedestrian square. There was also no traffic, lots of parking and loading docks situated underground. Skärholmen was and still is, despite its bad reputation, an active traffic node in a highly active commercial area. Right next to our building was an Ikea, which was surrounded by malls and entertainment areas. The flow of people moving on this square during office hours resembled a little the flows at T-centralen, the main subway station in Stockholm.

We rapidly established our “subjective institution” and carried on a series of experimental projects, changing the space at the same time as keeping memories of its past present. The architect and design group Uglycute covered the main hall with a wall of glass-desks and the floors and the rest of the walls of the former lobby with a grey needle carpet. In the various smaller office spaces we had studios of different kinds, where artists, graphic designers, fashion designers, artisans, writers, etc. had what we called production sites. We arranged seminars and lectures, open and informal ones, scrutinising and so on the institution, its roles and also its nature as a piece of art itself, related to the idea of the total work of art. We also showed historic art in this experimental context: historic art had not been exhibited in Skärholmen before.

Konst2 was an active place, and it felt dynamic. The cultural climate in Sweden was then, and still is, despite the image of Sweden as a progressive country, infected by a polemicised discussion and attitude towards migration, immigration and immigrants, and the fact that we moved our operations to this neighborhood raised a lot of questions and revealed issues to us that were not uncomplicated. As a consequence, facing this – for us – new situation, we decided to embrace it and include it in our discourse. So by moving the operation out of the gentrified city centre we had to deal with the broader public mindset to do with specific issues

of integration; we were supposed more or less to carry on a mission, with the intention of facilitating integration through cultural education.

We ourselves saw things in a totally different way, in the dialogues with Ruin, i.e. the issue of ‘sprawl’ came naturally, and we were part of such a movement that not only defined geographic dislocation but also ideological dislocation. But it so proved that societal fear regarding these kind of ‘problematic suburban neighbourhoods’ carried within it unsolved and unanswered problems that were also related to aesthetic issues and the larger cultural body, i.e. how gentrified areas are more likely to be maintained whereas these suburban areas were – and are – more likely not to be. We are also interested in what these differences were – and are – based on and how structural and subjective decisions, with connotations related to socio-migrational issues, are made.

Moving out to this suburban context, we were seeking to break new ground for ourselves, and to expose ourselves to working conditions other than the ones we had been used to. We found more material than we had expected: the limited time we had in Skärholmen gave us substantial material and a set of tools that we later on continued to work with in Tensta.

PROGRESSION IN FRAGMENTS

by Marina Vranopoulou

Artists and activists formulate their own actions and means in response to the current crisis, leading to the formation of a network that could provide the foundation for change

It is widely known that Arcadia in antiquity referred to a modest and carefree life. In classical iconography it is portrayed as a topos where idealised shepherds read poetry, exchange love stories and write celebratory verse, in the natural fertility of valleys and foothills.

Two centuries later, the great Roman poet Virgil created masterpieces of bucolic Latin poetry that placed his shepherds in Arcadia. In that Arcadia, however, which had features of a mythical, fantastical place, humans lived in harmony with nature, away from the adulterating effects of civilisation. From then on, Arcadia in the arts became the timeless archetype of the idyllic place, of Paradise: the topos where the ideal values of simplicity, love, peace and justice could prosper.

These days in the South, trying to think of a contemporary Arcadia and find traces of its manifestations will lead to instant thoughts of escapism and to a form of depression where one might find some solitude but not peace of mind. However, on second thoughts, another post-Fordist scenario for Arcadia can possibly be written or, at least, should be examined.

Indeed, Arcadia in the South cannot be anymore a solitary paradise. If we accept that the traditional iconography, which placed paradise in some far away place where a few actors' enjoyed myriad blessings in contrast to a packed hell, is passive and outdated, then why not look for traces of a new Arcadia? An Arcadia organically developed from the various implications of social and political agencies.

Is this realistic? Can we talk about a reincarnated Arcadia in the South? Is there a new paradise, a new garden that invites people to be part of it? I believe so.

Such an Arcadia is fragmented and developed mostly through partnerships as well as through a new sense of collectivity in the community. The producer's movement that begun in Katerini in northern Greece this February, with potato-farmers cutting out agricultural middlemen and selling potatoes directly to shoppers at cost price, is an ideal paradigm for this concept of a reincarnated Arcadia. The so-called potato movement, which has since expanded to encompass other products like oil, vegetables, rice and kiwis, is a genuine expression of civil society, of a community that is organ-

ising itself, as well as intervening in and contributing to the proper functioning of the market, and, in the end, reinventing it.

Other manifestations of such an artificial Arcadia include: the free or low cost mammography tests that the Intermunicipality of Health and Welfare Network offers to women all over Greece, the development of Groopio, a Greek collaborative network for funding private creative projects, and the creation of a small park near Victoria in the centre of Athens by the activist group Atenistas. Built on the site of an abandoned building, the park includes a playground that was made using only recycled and eco-friendly materials.

In the visual arts a similar sense of maturity and civic mindedness is being experienced, in fragments again, where appropriation and re-appropriation practices are not implemented for aesthetic and social reasons but as tools for subsistence.

Inaugurated in July, Greek artist Maria Papadimitriou and American writer Cathryn Drake created an environment – a gathering place – in an abandoned industrial space in Eleonas (Olive Grove), in the historical centre of Athens. It hosts a canteen called Souzy Tros that currently serves as a space for performances, film screenings and workshops that invite visitor participation, and will offer cheap food in the future. The project serves as a community forum for information exchange and companionship in these hard times.

On June 23rd, in a property in the Peloponnese countryside, the artists Lakis and Aris Ionas, curator Nadja Argyropoulou and their immediate creative circle hosted an event called *Lustlands* to celebrate the end of filming of their movie *Lustlands: A Family Noir under the Sun and other Experiences*, due to come out this autumn. With few means, artists, musicians, writers and performers shared their work from sunset to sunrise using as raw material the ruins of the artists' old family home.

Can we then consider projects like Souzy Tros and Lustlands, which both revived a deserted form of exhibition display and set up an earthy, paradisiacal setting for intellectual debate and collectivity, as fertile ground for new models of biopolitics?

Various actors (mostly activists and members of the artistic community) formulate their own actions and means in response to the current crisis, leading to the formation of a network that is engineering the social landscape and could provide the foundation for change. If one wishes to reincarnate Arcadia in the South, this network should be examined more thoroughly.



Souzy Tros ('Suzy Eats')
Food and Culture Canteen organised
by Maria Papadimitriou and Cathryn Drake, Athens, 2012

¹ The use of the terms 'actor', 'agent' and 'network' in the text reference Bruno Latour's use of them in his book *Reassembling the Social*. However, their conversational English meaning can be applied without distorting their context.

FALLING FISH

by Johan Grimonprez

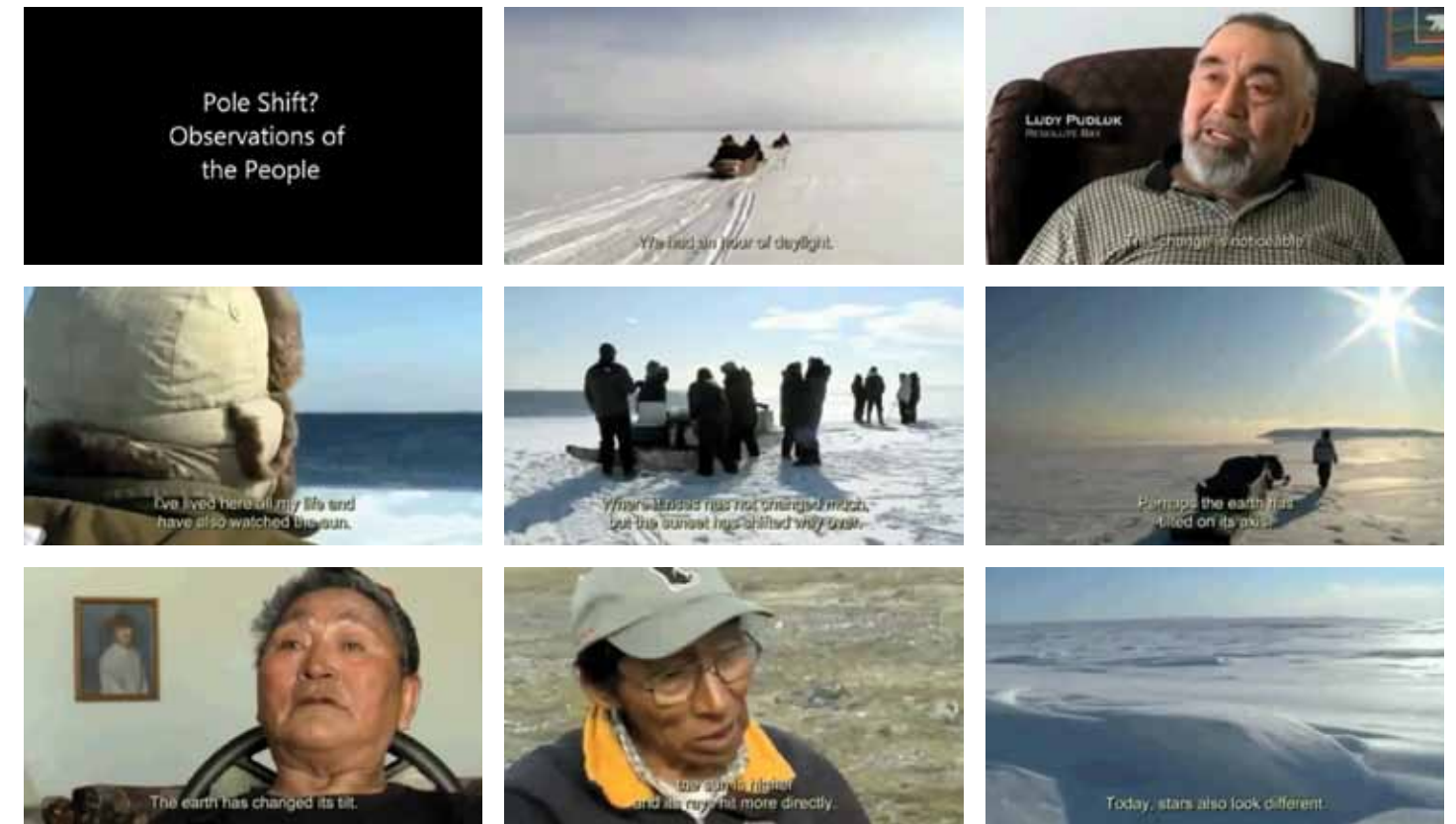
The incident occurred in Hatfield, England, May 17th 1996, at about 6.30 pm, as Mrs Ruth Harnett and her husband David were hurrying to unload the weekly shopping. It was not raining and the air became suddenly very chilly. Hearing a loud thump on her van's roof, Ruth was surprised to see a modest-sized fish. Looking up into the cloudy sky, she saw a second fish heading towards her. It hit the van's hood.

"I looked around, thinking it was kids mucking about," said Ruth. "Then three more fishes dropped in my garden and I realised they were falling from the sky." She called David, who was inside the house. "As he came out, I looked up again, which was a big mistake. I was bombarded with fish and one hit me in the face." Some local children came running up laughing and they all stood in wonder as about twenty more fish plummeted down.

This was the second time in living memory that Ruth's family had experienced this strange phenomenon.

"I remember as a child my father telling me that his father was caught in a shower of fish and frogs near Welwyn Garden City, just seven miles away, about sixty years ago."

Quoted in Johan Grimonprez: "It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards", 2011, pg. 397.
First published in *Strange Days #2, The Year in Weirdness* (New York: CaderBooks, 1997), 85.
See also, Elliot, K., "Dead roach society", in *The Independent* (2 June 1996).



[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012
Geo-engineering
Inuit Knowledge & Climate Change
Inuit People on 'Sun Wrong, Stars Wrong, Earth Tilting on Axis'
Directed by Zacharias Kunuk & Dr. Ian Mauro, 2010



[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012
Geo-engineering
What in the World Are They Spraying?
www.realityzone.com, 2010





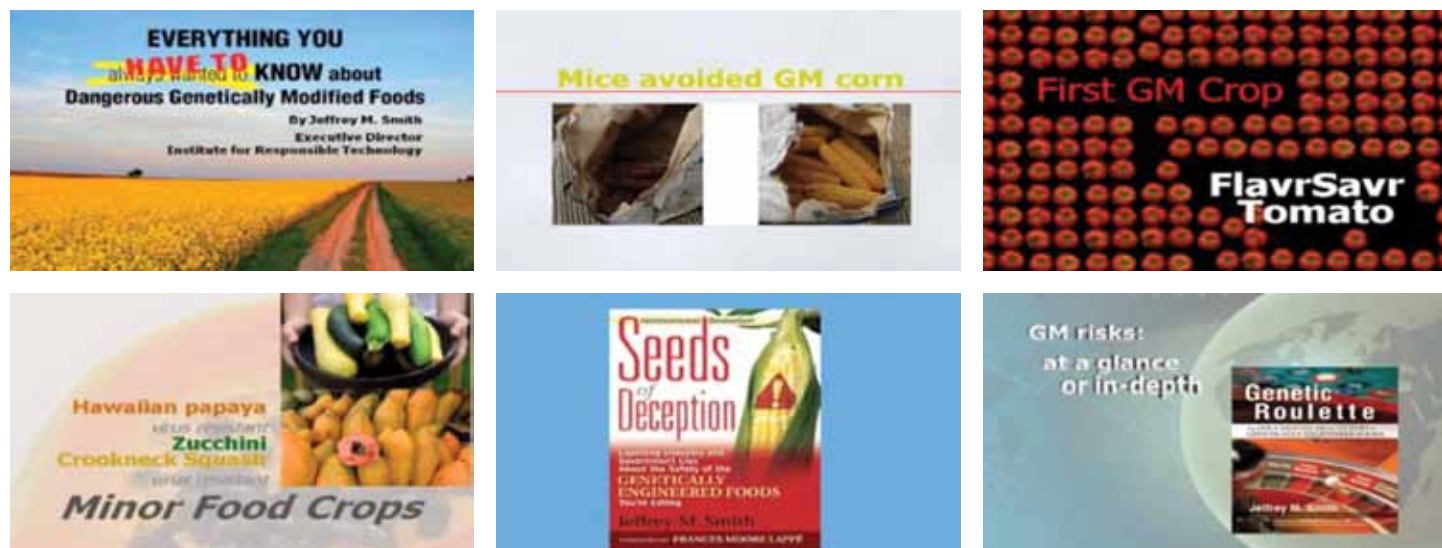
[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012

[Radical Ecology](#)
Paul Stamets: 6 ways Mushrooms Can Save the World
TED2008, 2008



[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012

[Guerrilla Gardening](#)
[Permaculture & Seed Bombs](#)
[Greening the Desert I & II: Greening the Middle East](#)
The Permaculture Research Institute of Australia, 200



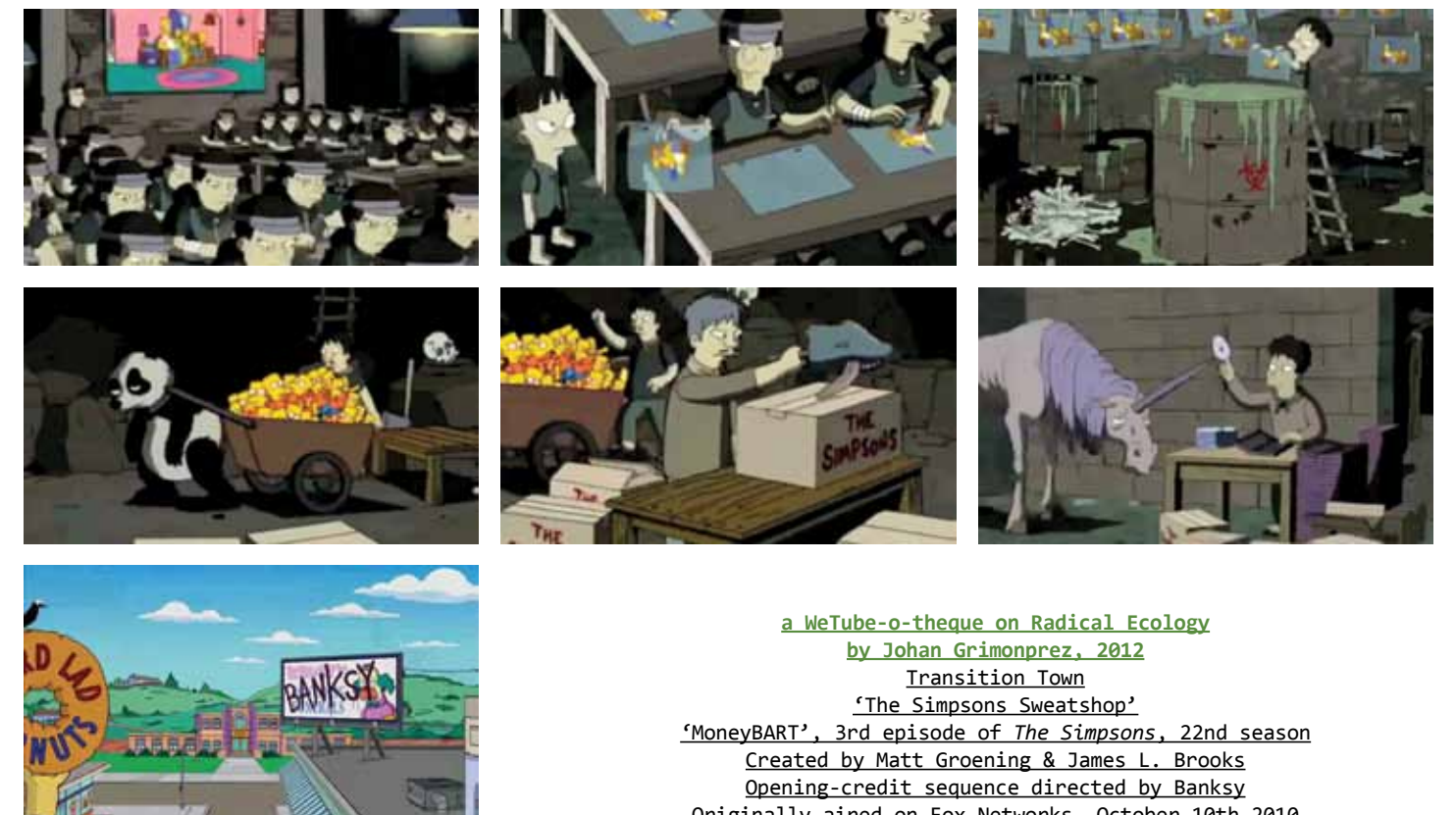
[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012

[Guerrilla Gardening](#)
[Bio-Piracy](#)
[Seeds of Deception: Everything you have to know about Dangerous Genetically Modified Foods](#)
by Jeffrey M. Smith, 2009



[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012

[Transition Town](#)
Alex Steffen: The shareable future of cities
TEDGlobal, 2011



[a WeTube-o-theque on Radical Ecology](#)
by Johan Grimonprez, 2012

[Transition Town](#)
['The Simpsons Sweatshop'](#)
['MoneyBART', 3rd episode of The Simpsons, 22nd season](#)
Created by Matt Groening & James L. Brooks
[Opening-credit sequence directed by Banksy](#)
Originally aired on Fox Networks, October 10th 2010

THE MILIEU (WHO ARE YOU TO CATASTROPHE ME?)

by María Berrios

Three cautionary tales about environmental devastation

Primo Uomo (Southern Swan Story)

Anacleto Angelini could have perfectly been a bird lover himself, after all, he did owe part of his fortune to his famous chicken farming enterprises from the 1950s. A self-made man, born in Ferrari in 1914, the eldest of three brothers, to a poor Italian family, he migrated to Santiago de Chile in the late forties after some not so clear incidents in Ethiopia. He became the nation's first billionaire. A man not too worried about politics, although he did quite well in Pinochet's time buying state companies dirt cheap – he was well known for his talent in turning around bad businesses. Just shy of his 90th birthday one of his proudest enterprises began operations: Celco Arauco, a top technology pulp mill began production in Valdivia, a small city in the south of Chile. The plant had only been working for four months when it was closed down because of accusations that linked it to the mysterious falling-from-the-sky fainting swan phenomenon in the year 2004. Some obsessive locals insisted on six thousand missing *Cygnus Melancoryphus*. Confidential sources claim Don Cleto never understood why there was so much fuss over a few ducks. Later his company opened a Nature Reserve close to the mill known especially for attracting amateur ornithologists and eager European backpackers, but there were no swans. Although, since Anacleto's tragic death in 2007 – partially due to flu – his widow has been repeatedly spotted roaming the park at night in a stunning swan cloak, throwing wrinkled paper samples at anyone who comes within arms reach. When asked to comment on these allegations his nephew and heir has repeatedly declared: “there is nothing uglier than poverty.”

The Artifice of Disaster (Nature as Culture)

On May 22nd, 1960, the Great Chilean Earthquake struck the world. The most powerful earthquake ever recorded permanently modified the course of rivers, erased islands, created other islands and moved mountains. The initial shock was followed by a tsunami that affected the whole Pacific Coast, killing thousands all over the globe (hundreds died in Japan, Alaska, the Philippines, New Zealand and Australia). In Chile the fatalities reached only six thousand, a very low death toll for such a highly destructive catastrophe: specialists attribute this statistic to the fact that the shock

occurred during church service hours – in proudly Catholic and seismic countries, churches are the sturdiest buildings around. One of the most heavily fortified cities of the New World, Valdivia, was once again totally devastated. (For over three centuries the conquistadores tried desperately to protect the city from the belligerent Mapuche people resisting enslavement in what is known as the Arauco War.) Water contaminated with debris flooded the city, whose electric and water systems were completely destroyed. Shortly after, black necked swan beauties from all over began migrating to the newly created wetlands. Two days later, countless surrounding volcanoes flared into eruption.

And Then There Were None (Expectation / Exportation)

We had been driving south for over eight hours, and were beginning to get tired. Even though the German friend I had invited was very restless in her desire to experience as much as possible on our road trip, she had slept almost the whole way. I felt terribly guilty, I was sure that she had snoozed out of boredom due to the monotonous straight-line effect caused by the Pan-American Highway. So far I had managed to remedy the situation by telling her, every time she raised her head, that she had missed the most exciting things: bizarre church construction, futuristic Animita, Araucarias, ñandús, pudús ...etc. At one point my mother, who had come along, suddenly realised we would be able to see the Llaima, a volcano close to Valdivia that had become active the month before: rumours were that a drooling ‘tongue’ of lava was visible at night. My friend seemed to like the idea and I was slightly relieved. As we got close to the new volcano-vedette we all started becoming a little excited, and my friend stayed awake a full forty-five minutes. Shortly before reaching our destination, we stopped in a gas station. While leafing through the newspaper in the pee cue, I read a small note on four Japanese tourists who had been arrested for sneaking into a restricted area to see the eruption. Back in the car an unexpected full three hours awaited us, my friend fell asleep again just as we passed what looked like a science fair maquette-miniature of a volcano blowing a little smoke. When she woke up later I told her she had missed what was for sure the most precise image of catastrophe I had ever seen.

This is an amended version of a piece titled “The Milieu (WHO ARE YOU TO CATASTROPHE ME!)” published in a special climate change issue of the magazine *spectator cut+paste*, issue 4, for the exhibition *Katastrophenalarm*, NGBK, 2008

Misha Stroj, *Los Pavos Reales*, 2012
Courtesy of the artist

BACK-TO-THE-PROMISED-LAND

by Maria Passarivaki

What is the place of ‘Arcadia’ in the twenty-first century?

A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias.
(Oscar Wilde, 1891)

IN SEARCH OF ‘UTOPIA’

For centuries writers have tried to identify the endlessly enigmatic meaning of utopia, whereas others have attempted to compose an ideal ‘commonwealth’. As Thomas More explains, Plato first developed and later Aristotle improved on the foundations for creating an ideal commonwealth, based on the happiness of its citizens. The word ‘utopia’ was first used in the book *Utopia* (1516) by Sir Thomas More and derives from the Greek adverb *ou* ‘not’ and the noun *topos* ‘place’. The word ‘utopia’ sounds like another Hellenistic compound *eutopia* – ‘happy’ or ‘fortunate’ place, both signifying that it might be a ‘good place’ in addition to ‘no place’. In keeping with Greek philosophical discourse, Plato and Aristotle worked towards the communal goal, which will be achieved in the design of utopia: the most pleasurable life of all. Utopian ideology conclusively ranges from Plato’s *Republic* to More’s *Utopia*, where the commonwealth is extremely egalitarian and, thus, responds to the idea of welfare democracies.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, More’s *Utopia* remained the best example of a Republic. Yet William Morris argued in his book *News From Nowhere* that More’s Utopia is too retrospective and doesn’t consider future practices. In other words, he implies that there is an ongoing series of meditations behind the design of the ideal society, which will be forever a work in progress. Indeed, Morris describes the structural relationship between the vision of a utopia and the dreaming of utopia. He explains that an individual dream translated into a collective effort could possibly create a better reality.

Nowadays theorists and sociologists argue that too much freedom within the utopia would harm the ethics of the commonwealth. Further studies on the subject have shown that not all utopias are feasible. Herbert George Wells identifies in his book *A Modern Utopia* fatal flaws in designing a utopia. He does ‘huma-

nise the conflict’ about utopia as he refers to competitive human nature and how it can be anti-productive within a utopia. However, Vieira and Freitas insist in their book *Utopia Matters: Theory, Politics, Literature and the Arts* that we can achieve a better way of living, but that this ideal requires commitment.

Ultimately, in answer to the question: why should we seek a utopia? Jörn Rüsen in his book *Thinking Utopia* claims that the anxieties of the twentieth century could help rebuild a utopian vision. He points out that people ought to set out across the world in search of practical utopias by means of social regeneration.

It could be said that we are living in dystopian times. Modern societies are pressured by a number of new threats such as the collapse of the world economy. So, it begs the question, what is the actual influence of utopias on contemporary society?

The concept of utopia currently is connected with the creation of intentional communities, or Arcadias. Today’s eco-communities don’t aim to create an ideal community, but a reality. Ruth Levitas offers us a new definition of utopia. Rather than a ‘perfect’ future, she imagines a utopian one to be ‘better’ – and that it would evolve and change over time.

After the 1960s, the noughties became the decade in which many people gathered together in a community and went back to the countryside. The revelation messages of hippies are similar to those of intentional communities in the 21st century, according to Timothy Miller in his book *The 60s communes: Hippy and Beyond*, because “Depression-era socialism” led to “back-to-the-land romanticism”.

Beyond the social, political and intellectual context of ‘utopianism’, some utopias formed in wished Arcadias realise people’s need for coexistence outside the conventional social forms: they offer an alternative to the homogenised cultural reality of Western cities.

SOUTH OF BRAZIL – A POSTCARD

by Eli Sudbrack

Aryan Visagist Assassinates Fassbinder



Dear South as a State of Mind,

when u wrote me first time, i was in fact doing a trip south - my boyfriend’s parents gave us a cruise trip (my first ever) leaving Santos (in São Paulo state) towards Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Punta. The funny thing about it is that the weather has changed so much in Brazil in the past few years that December is now a cold and often rainy month. We checked on the weather in Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Punta and the forecast was everyday above 30C and sunny always. We headed south from Brazil to reach the sun. Which was a crazy new South for me! and the whole experience of taking a cruise ship for first time – which I always related more to Greek islands, the Caribbean and the Northeast of Brazil – and to go south from Brazil was sort of bizarre at first. It felt like we were taking the opposite direction, south, to reach the idyllic summer weather conditions usually related to Brazil. and not only that – Brazil is also so expensive nowadays and it also felt like we were heading south to reach less gentrification – so many unexplored/run down areas, old book stores, abandoned art nouveau buildings both in Buenos Aires and Montevideo! and everything cheaper than Brazil as well.

so i guess i need to send you an image from this trip.

Thank uuuu
lovelove

TAKE THIS POSTER SERIOUSLY!

by Adnan Yildiz

An interview between now and then

NOW: Why have you sent it to the South as a State of Mind publication?

THEN: This place could be the new Arcadia. I wanted Marina to see this poster if she has not seen it yet.

NOW: Who took this picture, when and where did this happen?

THEN: I took this photo in Madrid during Arco Madrid this year (2012).

NOW: Why did you take it and what was your motivation?

THEN: When I took this picture, I knew that I would come back to this moment. I wanted to think about this image. I clearly remember now that I did not want to forget it at the time. I wanted to look at it and think about it. I wanted to understand the person who put this notice together as a design and an installation. Since then, it has acted as an open invitation for my mind. It first communicated with me as a clear sign or a public notice, but when I noticed that it was a (nice) design within its own context, I thought about what would happen if it was a work of art. What if it was a conceptual piece that asked some questions?

NOW: Where do you keep it?

THEN: It has stayed on my computer for the last six months. It came back with the call of Arcadia. I don't know why. I am thinking out loud. We mostly don't have time to think about all the posters we see on the streets, do we? This should be a good one. At least a good poster!

NOW: What do you feel about it and why do you keep it?

THEN: I don't remember now if I liked that Arial type at the time. The typography on the poster was left white with a strong black background. It looked purely beautiful glued on that wall. The poster material looks very true to its practical nature when it is glued on the wall – when it is directly touching the architecture of the wall. I am thinking now: What is an aesthetic of the public? Critically abstract, it is formal, and it is such a politically strong message, especially for a traveller who has lost his way. When you are looking for an address, it is mostly a place you don't know. And what would you think of anywhere on earth – as a place of No Internet? It is a broad definition. Why is there is no internet beyond that point? Poverty? State control? Community decision? Protest strategy? A rich content.



Photo by Adnan Yildiz

NOMADS OF MYKONOS

by Pola Bousiou

Healing a split: Between their desire for autonomy, rebellion, and aloneness,
and their need to belong to a collectivity



The past: a space of dynamic marginality

Antonis protects Johnny's ashes under his hat. As the sun sets, a large circle of about forty people hold hands around a fire. Some have never met Johnny. Mykonos is their common link: their annual pilgrimage to the same beach, shared sunsets and joints, shared lovers.

Mykonos, a site of emergence, has evolved into a spatial fetish. From a communal space – a Deleuzian space of 'dynamic marginality'¹ – Mykonos is reduced to an empty signifier of an already commercialised local 'bohemia' (cf. Wilson, 1998: 124): a semiotic distortion via consumerism and unavoidably the end of an era for the *Nomads of Mykonos*.

Home

Johnny's ashes were scattered in three places around the world. First in Bali, where his last partner performed a ceremony under the full moon, spreading his ashes over the ocean from a fishing boat. Second, and much later, at Laguna Beach in California. And third, in Mykonos, another 'beach farewell' took place.

What is 'home' for Johnny? The notion of home has been symbolically turned into a versatile dispersed identity signifier; home has been transmuted into alternating homes; 'home' has been se-

mantically and ontologically reconfigured into "the place you get to, not the place you came from" (Monette, 1991, quoted in Fortier 2001: 409).

Home becomes the site of emergence rather than a physical entity. Mykonos metonymically stands for this type of ontological nomadism. Drawing semiotically from its ancient counterpart Delos, whose myth of emergence entails a spatial restlessness, Mykonos also acquires an idiosyncratic fluidity. In mythology Delos, the island of Apollo, had been condemned by the gods to be an island in constant movement. Mykonos, as a signifier of a cultural nomadism, shares this quality. Mykonos – and, by extension, the *Mykoniotis d'election* – signifies mutability for the space/group. Mykonos acts as a 'site of emergence', a 'home' that is not necessarily place-based.

A nomadism in situ

Mykonos' topos stands for a way of life that affectively 'collectivises'. Ultimately one transgresses – beyond locality and the group itself; the 'group' is never formulated as a group; its 'members' are never consistently there. Mykonos' liminal space thus epitomises the *Nomads'* conundrum of belonging and non-belonging.

The Greek roots for the word 'utopia' stand for a fantastic space of non-topos. Since 'topos' denotes some bounded identifiable space, the u-topos denotes the transcendence project. But,

Bauman argues, in post-modernity we already inhabit the boundless u-topos, so there is no desire for transcendence, utopia. "The 'u' of 'utopia' bereaved by the 'topos', is left homeless and floating, no more hoping to strike its roots, to 're-embed'" (Bauman, 2003: 22).

What is hidden behind this denial of any collectivity or group identity? I would argue that it is an ontological resistance to any collective nomenclature that stabilises or stereotypes the self. A form of Nietzschean 'nomadism' in situ (cf. Deleuze, 1985: 149).

But ultimately, what is hidden is a deeply involved – yet impersonal – affective community with fluid and non-committed membership. The *Nomads of Mykonos* keep returning to a series of alternative affective groups largely to heal a 'split': between their desire for autonomy, rebellion and aloneness, and their need to affectively belong to a collectivity.

A liminal corporeality

There was an aesthetic passion – rather emotionless – for the perfect body (as if the body lacked individuality and was purely for display, victim of the gaze). The *Nomads of Mykonos* learn to exist on the gaze; their whole life is a performance. They do not survive on emotional relationships but on the gaze. They live in a 'liminal corporeality'.² The *Nomad/Monad*, as the object of the public gaze that keeps his performance visible in the tourist space as cosmopolitan, traveller, adventurer, is turned into the performer of his own biography. For the neo-Nomad, there is no 'front' and 'back' stage. There is no motivation behind self-performance besides the desire for visibility. The *Mykonos Nomad* is not unlike a contemporary 'emotional anorexic'.

A rock 'n' roll museum

Bauman's identity metaphor of the tourist and his alter ego, the vagabond, reminds me of groups like the *Nomads of Mykonos*. Their once glamorous marginalisation is now becoming obsolete in a tourist space where every otherness is semiotically consumed irrespective of content. The Nomads are only one display in the rock 'n' roll museum of Mykonian unconventionality. The museum hosts other unconventional categories: uncompromising locals, gays, cosmopolitan eccentrics, global adventurers who migrated there, aspiring to no special status. In the winding Mykonian streets there is no real mixing anymore; there is no immersion in the other.

The present: a liminal space-myth

Mykonos' space-myth developed as a sign of liminality. Places like Mykonos which carry the image of their 'marginality' exploit it to build their cultural status. This 'marginal' image is due to an

² See Gooldin, 2003: 43.

ALL PHOTOS:
Pola Bousiou, *A Beach Farewell*,
Paraga Beach in Mykonos, 1999
Courtesy of the artist

antithesis: Mykonos attracted both *status quo* and 'fringe' cultures alike. More importantly, what Mykonos reflects is a constructed 'otherness' specially tailored for the Athenian bourgeoisie; Mykonos is close enough to Athens to be both its anomie and its extension. Among other things, the island was chosen to perform the role of the 'anti-structure' against the organised life of the centre. Mykonos, in the modern Greek context, was the catholic signifier of an aesthetic 'otherness', of an unrestricted, disorganised, hedonist, marginal and glamorous lifestyle. Different groups appropriated Mykonos' myth of 'otherness' in different periods. These gradual appropriations always revolved around the themes of marginality and desire manifested in conspicuous extravagance: i.e. excessive drinking, drug taking, sex and partying. Reputedly, marginal and cosmopolitan identities were, and still are, highly fetishised in the discourses of 'modern' Greeks. Mykonos, in the aforementioned context, represents an 'amoral' space. For readers familiar with it, its sign invokes strong feelings, either positive or negative.

Mykonos' sign acquired a 'classless' connotation, mainly as an internally employed logic of distinction rather than as a reputation. Systems of classification based on social position were replaced by alternative criteria such as beauty (physical and body capital) and level of deviation from a 'proper' bourgeois prototype. All this happened mainly during the 1970s and 1980s, before Mykonos' 'liminal' sign became a simulacrum of alternativity.

There was also a romantic element involved in projecting 'marginality' onto the Mykonian space; its visitors traditionally simulated marginality. They performed a self, supposedly liberated from the social constraints of modern urban life, by converting into 'locals', 'hippies' and so forth.

The carnivalesque

The reader should try to visualise the densely packed Mykonian settlement as an all-encompassing aesthetic forum that displays these different zones of identity in between traditional households, Orthodox churches, souvenir shops, fashion retailers and fast food outlets. Mykonos tour guides usually provide an extensive list of clubs and restaurants which leads the 'consumer' to the legendary Mykonian nightlife, an essential part of cultural sightseeing. As shrines to a local system of spatial fetishisation, Mykonian haunts (bars and clubs) act as semiotic references for the unsuspecting visitor who maps the Mykonian *Hora* and its culture accordingly. The reader can imagine the 'protected' settlement of the *Hora* as a series of open doors that create a feeling of 'intimacy'.

The constant 'entering' and 'exiting' creates an endless motion of the masses in the labyrinth-like inner *Hora*; the local tourist tradition dictates 'strolling' or rather 'parading' in the Mykonian streets, dressed in one's loudest garments, with a generous consumption of alcohol.

The building of a liminal place-myth

'What time is this place?' By employing this rhetorical question, Lynch argues that the establishment of the tourist/romantic gaze has in turn created images of places connected with particular times and histories (Lynch, 1973, quoted in Urry, 1990: 126).

The sense of time in Mykonos is not singular, since what is en-

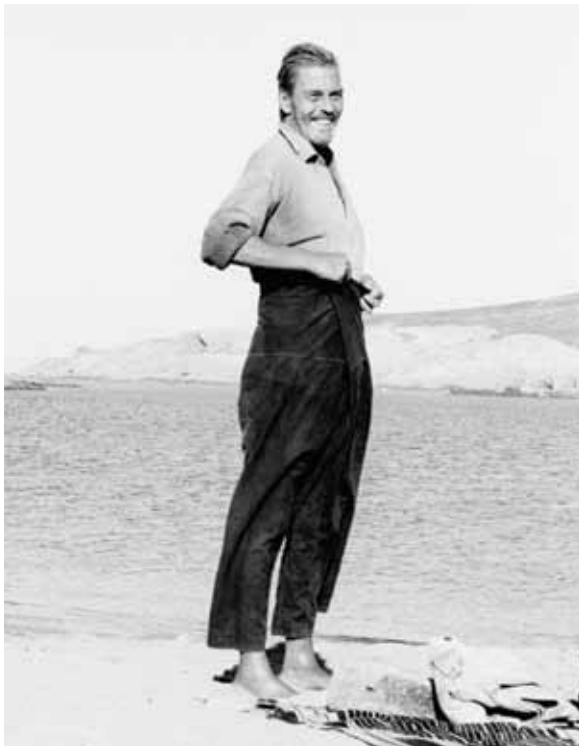
¹ Braidotti, 1997: 69.



A trip to Delos



Johnny goodbye



Johnny Read

acted is both a ‘traditional’ back-drop and a cosmopolitan and ec-centric ambience. This aesthetic and cultural mix gives the visitor a spatial and temporal sense of *déjà-vu*, a sense of familiarity later exploited in favour of a local myth of otherness.

Timelessness

Left impoverished after the war, Mykonos, an infertile island, had little to offer but the islanders’ hospitality and tolerance. The first modern visitors admired the simplicity and repetition of the all-embracing whitewashed stonework. The locals decided to ‘respect’ visitors’ tastes and preserve everything ‘as it was back then’. Moreover new houses were built in the old style. This slowly created a ‘staged’ vernacular. This spatial performativity, reflected in the actions of the locals and in the habitus of the whole exogenous community, created what Urry calls a ‘post-modern vernacular’ where the representation of time in space is faked to create a picture of authenticity. Mykonos’ later notoriety was acquired through an aesthetic capital which reputedly derived from its ‘inherent taste’. The place-myth remained faithful to the romantic gaze by constantly recreating a local vernacular architecture. Timelessness defines the island’s performative space.

Lawrence Durrell is largely responsible for the semiotic acquisition of Mykonos’ space as timeless with no definite style – haphazard and harmonious at the same time. Mykonos, the ‘miracle’ of modernist architecture, ‘has so little history to intimidate one’ (Durrell 1978: 231). Yet, Mykonos – due to its overdevelopment – suffered a semantic mutation: from a romanticised ahistorical rural landscape to a cosmopolitan ‘metropolis’ that semiotically works as a rurban space constantly expanding through sophisticated contemporary architecture contiguous with the picturesque signs of the vernacular. The prevailing discourse is one of a historical catastrophe due to the vandalising of the romanticised Mykonian landscape by invading visitors and greedy locals.

The spectacle

What type of spectacle then does Mykonos offer the tourist gaze? Mykonos is a polysemic place that bombards the tourist with conflicting signs. It’s a full and exciting aesthetic kaleidoscope. As a polythetic sign, it can also afford to invoke different desires and perform different spectacles for different groups. For Greek tourists, for instance, Mykonos’ image may signify cosmopolitanism, a ‘cultural quality’ they themselves feel deprived of. Mykonos performs for them the ideal, miniature mapping of a cosmopolitan city with its subcultures, hedonism, transculturalism, multi-neotribalism; in short the object of desire for their hungry ‘gaze’ is the boundless element of the post-modern space. On the other hand, the tribestyles of the 1990s, groups such as gays, ravers or aesthetic simulators of the hippie style, satisfy their desire through identification with diverse bodies of spectacle that ‘democratically’ coexist in the polysemic space: Mykonos’ clubbing, alternative communions with ‘old’ friends, or fetishisers of the special (metaphysical) properties of the island’s natural setting. The discourses on what the Mykonian spectacle consists of may also, in many cases, overlap. Yet each tribestyle strategically occupies different parts of this small tourist island. Their performative distinction game is conspicuously displayed through a set of ‘distinct’ aesthetic preferences which are, in turn, spatially re-presented, thus overtly demarcating Mykonos’ territorial map.

The tourist, confused in the narrow cobbled streets of the maze-like Mykonos ‘city’, engages in the most ‘significant’ act: voyeurism. By satisfying every anticipation, the polythetic Mykonian sign locates the tourist in the place-myth. Strolling around the central arteries of the town only to watch where the ‘others’ go, she is part of the parade, part of the spectacle, without realising it.

Déjà-vu

Once upon a time, in Mykonos, the streets were clean and the explorer/tourist walked barefoot, enchanted, seeking to catch up with ‘local’ time and forget his own, taking pictures of old ladies at their looms. Nowadays, the picturesque old ladies are a scarce spectacle for the tourist gaze. Those that still exist simulate the image of the ‘Mykonian woman’ and enact weaving by displaying the old loom without actually using it. Some women still knit caps near their windows and sell them during the summer months, especially around sunset when tourists return from the beaches. For a moment the eye is enchanted: what time is this place? Greece in the 1950s, or further back? Next to the window with the old lady knitting is a small chapel with its door modestly open. With just one glimpse, time can change here and now. The next snapshot is of Pierro’s. Soon after sunset its fame will transform the Mykonian neighbourhood: laughter and extravagant clothes, leather, boots, beers. What time is this place? The 1980s, I’d say. Youth, subcultures and all that. Tourists do not bother to explore the many short cuts of the town. There is nothing ‘left’ to discover. They have already decoded their own haunts. Some will end up at Pierro’s, some at the Irish bar, some at the Scandinavian, some will exhaust themselves ‘celebrity’ spotting. Some old-fashioned romantics visit Mykonos off-season, admire the architecture, talk to the locals. They will perhaps find cheap accommodation in the freaks’ camping site on Paradise beach. What time is this place? Definitely the 1970s.

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This text is included in Pola Bousiou, *The Nomads of Mykonos: Performing Liminalities in a ‘Queer’ Space*, Berghahn Books, Oxford and New York 2008.

A previous version of this text was also published in *The Dispersed Urbanity of the Aegean Archipelago: 10th International Exhibition of Architecture Venice Biennale: Greek Participation*, FUTURA, Athens 2006.

meanwhile, on a small Aegean island...



IGNORANCE: A NECESSITY AND A RESIDUE

by Konstantinos Trantopoulos

The Greek islands offer a unique environment for disconnecting from existing knowledge and continuous information flows

Life as we know it is increasingly dependent on an intricate web of digital networks, a global emerging nervous system embedded in our lives. Web searching and online social platforms combined with the advances in communication technologies and hand-held electronic devices enhance the collection and distribution of massive amounts of information – the necessary catalyst to develop our knowledge system enabling us to generate insights, explain how things work, build inferences, or make judgments. But if information, as well as knowledge aggregation, has developed as one of the most important sources of competitiveness for individuals and organisations within modern societies, what about ignorance?

To shed light on the role that ignorance plays in the inextricably intertwined physical, digital and social worlds that we inhabit, we should first start by looking at the red queen's race between our powerful but finite capabilities to process stimuli from the outside world and the increasing pace of information burst present in our lives. As we run the risk of losing our 'sense-making' – the ability to step back and thoroughly process information in order to construct reliable mental maps of the world and act accordingly – ignorance seems to create the necessary delay between stimulus and action, a filter from external noise that allows

us to slow down and begin to reflect on our innermost thoughts and feelings. One step further, the calm and quiet that ignorance provides can prove useful for steering attention to uncharted territories, offering an omniscient view on life, letting the mind puzzle over connections and drawing unexpected links between people, objects and ideas. This mental map, which exhibits a rich network structure, can serve as the skeletal morphology to underpin some of the most important functions of the human species that urgently need to be revitalised: Face-to-face communication,

focus on emotions, as well as building trust and mental bridges with peers through human signalling and language which is our ultimate weapon for reasoning.

Apart from serving as a tool to communicate, language shapes the way that we understand reality and ourselves. During the historical development of the world, it has always been used for categorising knowledge into unrelated and fragmented vertical columns that focus mainly on the 'in silos' identification rather than on the relationships between objects and contexts. However, as we occupy an increasingly complex world that is becoming deeply interlinked on multiple levels, we need to reconfigure our mindset and relate everything ranging from art, science and technology to politics, religion and feelings – to name but a few – on a rather horizontal axis focusing on the interconnectedness between them. Rewiring our pattern of thinking based on this nonlinear network perspective requires that we avoid constraining our horizons to the current state of knowledge, resulting in ignorance as the residue of leaving old mental models and some of their core assumptions behind. This different kind of thought should lead to a redesign of our language from pure logical argumentation towards a more poetic way, which in turn, as language guides action, will enable humanity to turn inward and architect life in a more holistic and sustainable way than it does today.

In a rapidly evolving world, being ignorant in an innovative way calls for developing strategies to manage creativity, as well as for some 'south' injections by the irrelevant. To draw an analogy with their separation from the mainland in the physical world, the Greek islands offer a unique environment for disconnecting from existing knowledge and continuous information flows. For one month, Ανάφη offered its fabric for the creation of a dazzling mosaic made of fragmented experiences, thoughts, actions and emotions, opening a potential pathway towards a new kind of language. A man-made synthetic utopia may not be natural, but it's perfectly elegant and real. Dream baby dream.



ABOVE: Illustration by Antoni Hervàs

RIGHT: Sign as appeared in the main square
"I lost my goggles yesterday 07-08-2012 in Saint Anargyroi beach.
If you find them, please leave them in the only bakery of the village, just across.
Thank you... Andreas, 6 years old"
Photo by Marina Fokidis



BEACHVILLIZATION

by Andreas Angelidakis

The first night on the island, I left camp in a paranoid fit. Suddenly there was not enough space, the beach wasn't big enough. I rolled out my sleeping bag and slept under the stars. At dawn the glorious morning sun illuminated the fact that my wallet had been stolen. That's what happens when you leave your camp, when you stray from the herd. Beach living is just like any other camp: there are invisible borders to cross and ephemeral property lines to mark with a wet swimsuit and an empty bottle of water. Wherever you lay your tent, that's your home. Property is temporary and easily transferable between friends. Whoever arrives first on the island picks the 'best' spot, and then can pass it along to friends. You might find yourself sleeping in a tent installed months before by someone you never met, but still for these days or weeks, that tent is yours to sleep in. The beach is a makeshift community, and sometimes the nearby cafés let you use their bathroom. At night you try to keep quiet, or join in the party if there is one. It is a simple civilisation, reduced to the essentials of waking up, swimming, eating and sleeping. Sex in the tent or on the beach is often an option, though horror stories of sand entering the condom abound. Otherwise everybody is happy and relaxed, if often quite dazed.



The Tourist and the Vagabond

The southern islands are always full of tourists in the summer months. Usually they rent crappy island rooms that have single beds with ugly little bedside tables and just enough room to walk around and jump over the suitcases on the floor. This type of room has no windows, most often just a door, and next to it is another room and another door leading to another room. The price for these range from 25 to 70 euros per night, no breakfast included, and with minimal services. The people renting them aren't in the hospitality trade as such: they are farmers or plumbers or even grandmothers. They just rent rooms for a living.

If one considers Zygmund Bauman's definition of the post-modern man as a tourist who constantly jumps from reference to quotation in order to defy description, then his dark alter ego is the vagabond, the post-postmodern man who shifted so much he not only escaped description, but dropped out of civilisation altogether. And if the tourist is the one renting the rent-a-room on the island, the vagabond chooses to drop out on the beach. He sets up in a free campsite, paying no fees and requiring no services. It's a temporary escape from the neoliberal grid, no electricity, no money, no light apart from what the sun provides. If you need electricity, you 'borrow' some randomly. If you brought cans of food, you never leave the tent. But the vagabond can be well organised in order to survive. He has a reflective tent with a cotton and gauze interior, multiple openings that flap open to provide a breeze and large pieces of batik or other folklore fabrics to stretch casually over the tent for shade. Some carry solar laptop chargers and special instant-filtering bottles, inflatable mattresses and antiallergic pillows. Their outfits are mostly droopy cotton in perfectly faded blacks and burgundy; they cast their blow-up



beach toys all around the campsite, they smoke their joints and listen to their ipods while pretending not to be yuppies. Often they are adrift in a sea of overpriced specialised accessories, ready for the hardest storm and the worst weather, which apparently never comes. On the island they form lines waiting to take a shower at the newly installed beach bathroom, then they walk home, crossing the little streets formed by the multiple rows of tents lining the beach. Awkwardly, their civilisation is not so different from the one they escaped. In fact, they just copied what they knew already; they never bothered thinking it over when they were starting over.

Another Beach

In the early 1990s we were cast ashore another beach. Like Robinson Crusoe, we proceeded to copy the offline civilisation we already knew. Like most shipwrecked folks, we made proper houses out of banana leaves and villages out of our makeshift huts. We appointed leaders and made rules for existence. That beach was the internet, and we were the first generation to arrive there. Clueless, in the beginning we used the internet as a search engine, looking to see what was there already. What we found was banal information, phonebooks and cookbooks, dick, pussy and ass. We learned to use electronic mail and to post on electronic bulletin boards, just like we would in the lobby of our highschool. Like every new civilisation it took at least ten years to see any sign of actual culture on the distant horizon. Slowly the shipwrecked citizens of the internet formed their online communities and started developing social structures. The first such structure was called the Palace, and artist Dominique Gonzales Forester proclaimed that the sound of a modem connecting to the web was the “sexiest sound in the universe”. Later came other structures: friendster, myspace, twitter and facebook, slowly introducing their own terminology. “Friending” became a form of pretending to know strangers, “following” was pretending to pay attention. “Liking” became the universal currency exchange, and it seemed we were all working to collect “likes”, useful for nothing but the pampering of our egos. A “comment” was how you could discuss a subject, and since those discussions were held in the open air Agora of the main page, it did not matter who you were having the discussion with, since anybody could answer. We all lived on walls and spent our times staring at our friends’ walls, wondering when their “timelines” would be active. Our life on this beach of the internet was called simply “Newsfeed”, and there was no room for anything old; yesterday’s posts were literally archaeological finds. Previous social networks were our lost cities of the internet. Like a beach in real life, our domesticated wall pages became as ephemeral as the flicker of a lightbulb and as solid as the



facebook IPO would allow. We all wondered if we should move on to the new beach of google+, but quickly realized that that was just a *fata morgana*, a place that never existed, a ghost town never inhabited, except by our gmail ghosts. Inhabitation of these beaches was as unorganised as a set of tents on a sandy beach in Anafi. One day you woke up only to find half the population gone, having left with the midnight boat. Summer was coming to an end and even if you appreciated the quiet on the empty beach, you still didn’t want to be the last to leave.

Proposal for the reconfiguration of Roukounas

If we study the way tents are layed out on the beach, we notice a striking resemblance to how buildings are placed on the inhabited beaches of this island. It’s not that the tents are so orderly, even though they do follow a logic of shade, proximity and horizontality. It’s that the buildings on the island appear just as haphazardly joined, divided by invisible zig zag regulations and connected by varying widths of road. No urban planning, no system, no organisation, the buildings represent a solidified version of the beach camp. Or maybe it was the other way around? Maybe the tent vagabonds looked around for clues on how to organise



themselves, saw the randomly scattered Cycladic white cubes and decided to follow suit. Like on a beach, what matters is that your land is flat and soft and close to the water. You want to be close to your neighbours too, and you want to be part of a community that represents you.

Just like on the internet, we have to be able to re-imagine our communities so that they better represent us. Looking at the main camping beach of Roukounas, I imagine what it would be like if it stuck to a strict urban plan. Could we achieve a ceremonial symmetry? Could we have public spaces and temples? And what kind of civilisation could take place on that field of sand and symmetry, hierarchy and ephemerality?

Would our city of tents be aligned according to the stars of the summer sky, or the ancient buzzing bbr bbrb zzzz ggzzz murmurs of a modem connecting to the internet? Can we re-imagine society as a perfectly organised welfare state Scandinavian beach, or are we destined to exist ad-hoc in the beach camp of South eternal?



AREN'T THEY EVER GOING TO FINISH GREECE?

by Dimitris Politakis

An out of context sunstroke-style “mash up” of the movie *Summer Lovers* (1982) and Don DeLillo’s novel *The Names* (1982), both set on Greek islands, real or imaginary

Sea, Sun, Sand, Stars, Sex

Set on the island of Santorini, *Summer Lovers* is an upbeat romantic/erotic drama. Resisting soft-core tendencies of the ‘hot fun in the summertime’ subgenre, the movie, although depicting an erotic triangle, appears remarkably sleaze-free, “deploying its themes in an apparently sincere paeon to polyamory” (as the movie site 1000misspenthours.com quite accurately puts it). Though in essence an ‘exploitation’ film, it does manage to overcome both the usual fatalistic repercussions of the ménage a trois plot as well as the relentless folklore of other more respectable movies shot in Greek.

Set mainly in Athens, Mani and Kouros (“an obscure island in the Cycladic group”) *The Names* is a thriller about a mysterious cult that performs ritualistic murders as well as a moving examination of love, loss and the amorphous and magical potential of language itself. Its milieu is the twilight world of the international ‘risk community’, a subculture of ‘business people in transit’, where the degree of collusion between the executives of multinational corporations and the intelligence services is assumed. It is possibly the most esoteric, eerily exotic, often obscure and strikingly original novel ever set in Greece.

(text in ITALICS from *The Names*)

Americans in search of deeper textures

Young American couple Michael Pappas (played by Peter Gallagher who went on to star in *Sex, Lies and Videotapes*) and Cathy Featherstone (played by Darryl Hannah, who had just been in *Blade Runner*), take an eight week vacation to Santorini, “to be free” and re-evaluate the prospects of their relationship, after college graduation.

Cathy: What are you thinking about?

Michael: Time.

Cathy: It’s 2.30.

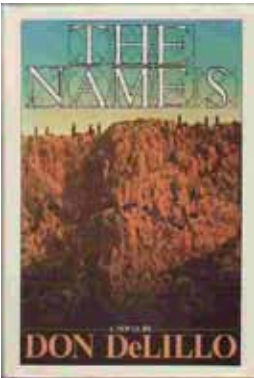
Michael: No, I meant time.

Shadows of empty chairs in the main square. A motorcycle droning in the hills. The light was surgical, it was binding. It fixed the scene before me as a moment in a dream. All is foreground, wordless and bright... Subsistence. A deep silence. There’s nothing here to soothe or refresh the landscape, no forests or rivers or lakes. But there’s light and sea and seabirds, there’s beat that rots ambition and stuns the intellect and will.

The place (the beautiful nudist beaches, the volcanic landscape, the catacomb-like discos) seems to burst with uninhibited energy, testing the couple’s already shaky bond. Preppy, conservative Cathy seems particularly overwhelmed by the whole atmosphere of erotic permissiveness, indulging however in playful sexual experimentations that fail comically, like dripping wax on Michael’s chest during erotic play. Michael, on the other hand, is more ‘game’ when it comes to new experiences (he’s of Greek descent after all).

I began to think of myself as a perennial tourist. To be a tourist is to

escape accountability. Errors and failings don’t cling to you the way they do back home. Tourism is the march of stupidity. The entire mechanism of the host country is geared to travellers acting stupidly. You are an army of fools, wearing bright polyester, taking pictures of each other, haggard, dysenteric, thirsty. There is nothing to think about but the next shapeless event... Greeks from the audience were on the stage now, dancing, and soon tourists began approaching the edges of the platform, carrying purses with them and shoulder bags and wearing sea captain’s hats, looking back at friends – looks that begged encouragement for some stupidity they thought they were about to invent.



Visiting alone a nudist beach (with a prominent “nudism is forbidden” sign), Michael meets Lina (played by French actress Valerie Quennessen, who died in 1989 aged 31 in a car accident, a few years after retiring from acting), a young French archaeologist working on the Akrotiri excavation, who also happens to live in a summer house in Oia just across the hill from Michael and Cathy’s place. *One of the mysteries of the Aegean is that things seem more significant than they do elsewhere, deeper, more complete in themselves. Those of us pressed together around the joint tables were raised in each other’s estimation to a higher light perhaps, an amplitude that may or may not have been our natural due.*

Sparks fly between Lina and Michael, and he decides to confess his “summer crush” to Cathy.

Michael: It’s the first time in my life that I can do what I want. I met this girl... I’m going through something I don’t understand. Maybe it was a mistake coming here.

Cathy: You are the mistake, Michael!

Everyday made her more certain of my various failings... What a funhouse mirror is love.

Later that evening, Cathy half-heartedly attempts to get back at him, following a local young man (Giorgos) to his room, the walls of which are covered in 70s movie posters (Farah Fawcett and Bruce Lee among the most prominent), surrounding an old picture of a patriarchal figure, possibly Giorgos’s grandfather. Cathy does not have it in her to actually cheat on Michael, and soon flees, prompting Giorgos to say to himself with a sigh: “Americans!”

- *What about the Americans?*

- *Eerie people. Genetically engineered to play squash and work weekends*

Cathy decides to confront Lina, but they end up liking each other, setting the foundations of a love triangle that culminates in the three of them sleeping together.

Lina: Jealousy doesn’t show that you love someone. It only shows how insecure you are (actually a quote of famous anthropologist Margaret Mead).

Meanwhile, Michael seems to get more ‘native’, casually exchanging greetings with locals and even cursing in Greek a fellow American who asks about the whereabouts of Cathy: «φύγε ρε μαλάκα» (get out of here malaka!).

It means masturbator. It’s standard. A Greek will never say anything he hasn’t already said a thousand times. Here, conversation is life, language is the deepest being. We see the patterns repeat, the gestures drive the words. It is talk as a definition of itself... This is a way of speaking that takes such pure joy in its own openness and ardour that we begin to feel these people are discussing language itself. What pleasure in the simplest greeting. It’s as though one friend says to another: “How good it is to say: ‘How are you?’ The other replies: “When I answer ‘I am well and how are you?’ what I really mean is that I’m delighted to have a chance to say these familiar things – they bridge the lonely distances.”

From then on, the three “lovers and friends” are happy and inseparable until domestic complications creepily catch up with them, creating tensions, especially for Lina, who, though more confident and ‘European’ than the other two, is also prone to confusion and bursts of fatalism and existential anguish.

Lina: The most important thing you need to know about me is that I hate questions.

[We have our self-importance. We also have our inadequacy. The former is a desperate invention of the latter.]

Lina: People are like gas. When there is not enough space, there is pressure.

Lina: When I was 16 my parents fired me.

Lina to Michael: Have you ever been with a man?

Michael: I’ve been close to men.

Cathy: Don’t pursue it Michael. Life is too complicated as it is.

- *When are you two going to have children?*

- *We are our own children.*

Although the Americans seem totally at ease with the ‘three-some’ arrangement, suddenly all the ‘transcendental fun and



games’ seem to be too much for Lina, who, during a surprise party they throw for her, breaks down and cries, afraid she will get seriously hurt when it is all over.

Lina: I don’t want it to end...

I hoped this wasn’t the moment

when we become ourselves again. The island’s small favours and immunities could not have run out so soon. After the bright shock fades, after the separation, there’s the deeper age, the gradual language of love and acceptance, at least in theory, in folklore. The Greek rite.

Things get even more awkward when Cathy’s uptight W.A.S.Pish mother unexpectedly arrives with a friend of hers. As they climb the hill from the small port to the village of Oia on the backs of donkeys, she exclaims, commenting on the lack of a proper road: Aren’t they ever gonna finish Greece?

Americans used to come to places like this to write and paint and study, to find deeper textures. Now we do business.

Already experiencing a deep sense of loss, Lina disappears, hooking up with a Billy Idol lookalike who is in love with her. Michael and Lina desperately search for her everywhere on the island, but to no avail. Defeated, they decide to return to America, but at the last moment, just before they get on the plane, Lina appears at the airport for a tearful yet joyous reunion. The film ends with the three of them jumping naked from a cliff into the Aegean Sea, the shot freezing midair. What is going to happen to them? Are they going to indulge in their “permanent vacation” fantasy until the summer’s over and then everybody will return to his/her own self-absorbed routine? They are in their early twenties after all, about half the age of *The Names*’ protagon-

ist and narrator, James Acton. Like him though, they seem to prefer living in loops and endless yearning, rather than urging forward towards the next ‘appropriate’ level.

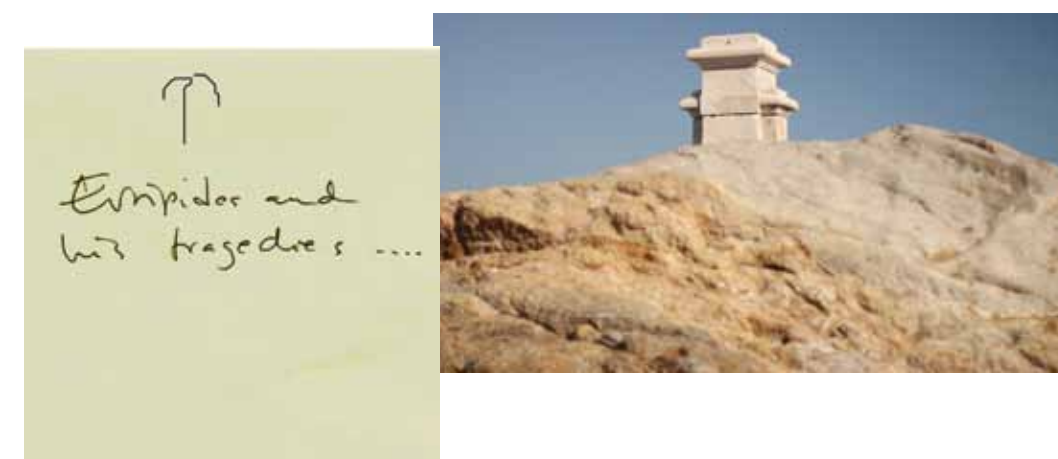
Forty was always my father’s age. All fathers were forty. I keep fighting the idea I’m fast approaching his age. As an adult I’ve been only two ages. Twenty-two and forty. I was twenty-two well into my thirties. Now I’ve begun to be forty, two years shy of the actual fact. In ten years I’ll still be forty.



**RITUALISTIC NATURE: STILLs FROM A
FILM SHOT IN ANAFI LAST SUMMER**

by Annika Larsson





SOUTHERN RELIGIOUSNESS

by Klea Charitou

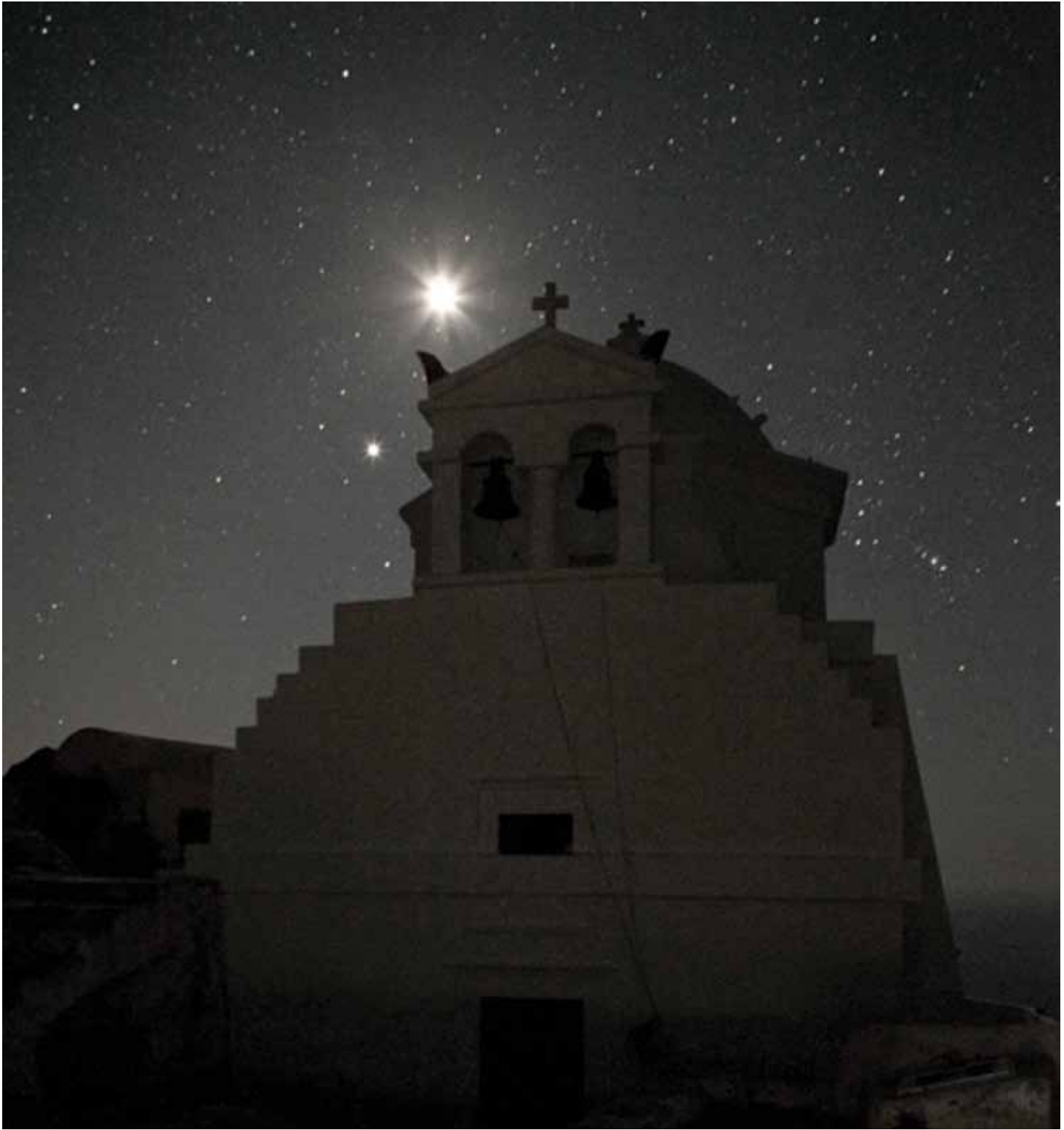
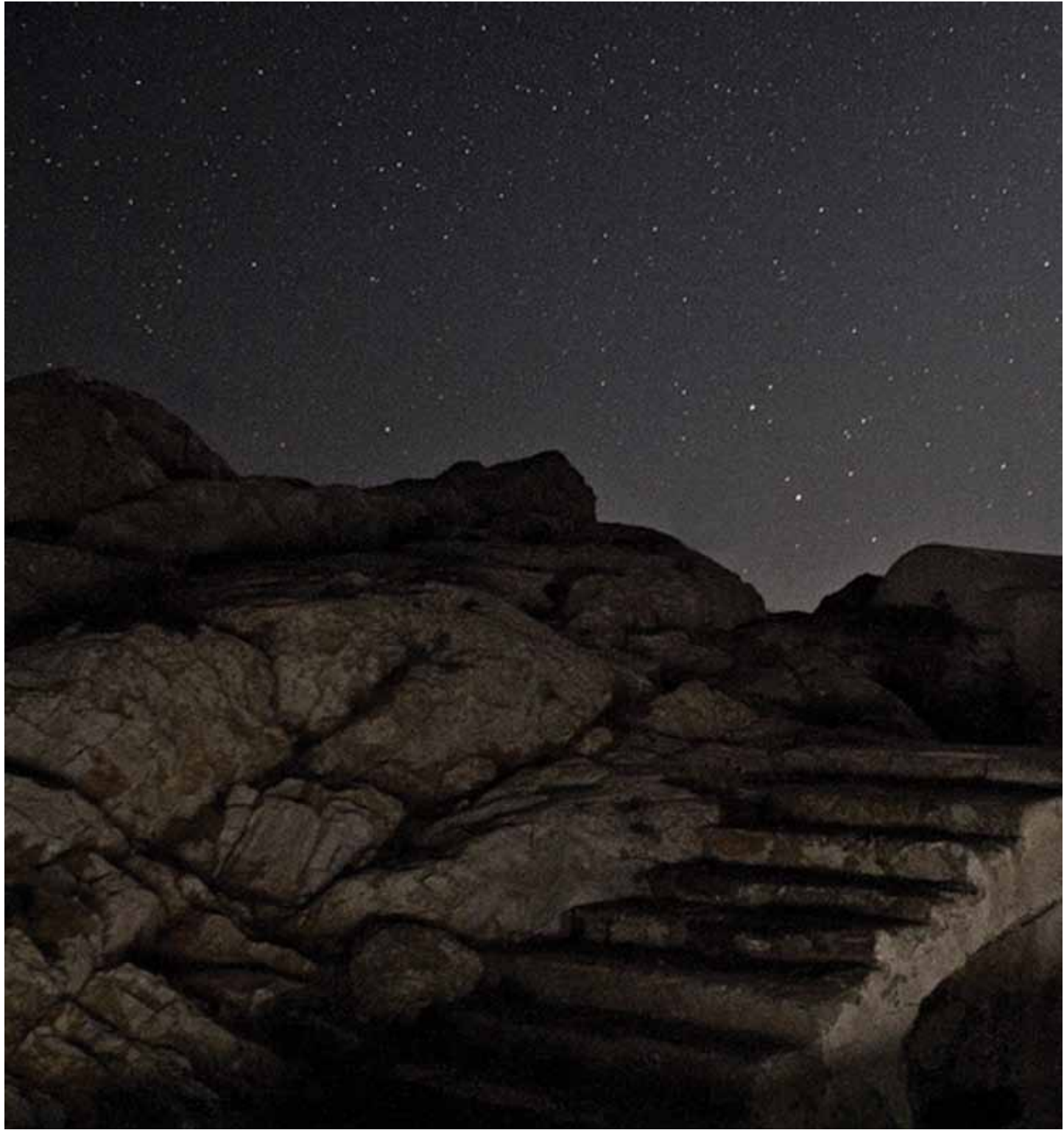
PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA DIMITRIADIS

The votive offering as a personal attempt to understand the world beyond
logic and experience

“We may not have a doctor on the island, but we have Kalamos and Virgin Mary to help us.” Nectaria’s remark in a small restaurant at the port of Anafi is a shock to pragmatism and Western European Cartesian logic. To me it would normally carry the same weight as the aesthetic of the black-clad, aged women one sees as a relic from a faith far removed from the contemporary urban lifestyle. Yet two days after climbing up to the Kalamiotissa Monastery, which since the seventeenth century has dominated the Mediterranean’s second largest monolithic peak (after Gibraltar), described by eighteenth century French traveller Joseph Pitton de Tournefort as one of the most spectacular sites in the world, I shudder at the naturalness of the locals’ faith. Their personal accounts, their votive offerings, their annual pilgrimage to the holy icon and ultimately their trust in the Virgin Mary’s powers and miracles suddenly makes sense to me in the the context of the emotional tension and sanctity of the landscape. If science and positivism is meant to be an accumulation of knowledge which replaces and complements the course towards objective truth, here the place emerges as an image of the absolute revelatory truth of the universe. Like romantic travellers from centuries past we begin our climb towards God. We feel every step weighing in thought, with the smell of thyme the local incense, and gradually the burden on the feet goes away as we gaze towards the top. The sound of the wind talking with the rough rocks and the movement of the sea attracts and invites us. We stop to catch our breath, fighting the pressing urge to taste, instinctively and all at once, the laws of the universe. The limbs are aligned: we are here. Before the inconceivable power and mysticism that emerge, I recall Andrei Tarkovsky’s description of the image as “an awareness of the infinite; the eternal within the finite, the spiritual within matter, the limitless given form” (see his *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*). How can one understand the revelation of the absolute other than as a course of faith and initiation? The Argonauts asked Apollo for an island as they fought the waves, and Ernest Hemingway’s Santiago cried out at the height of his struggle: “Hail Mary full of Grace the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (...) Blessed Virgin, pray for the death of this fish wonderful though he is.” (*The Old Man and the Sea*). The inhabitants of Anafi place their hopes with Virgin Mary, and we as passersby seek to experience the purifying light, the island’s greatest saint. Communion with the absolute in nature. Personal time recedes – several children count the stars. Wishes succeed memories in the game of the Perseids’ meteor shower.

A moment of silence. Monolithic joy.





TRANSCENDENTAL PILGRIMAGE

by Evripidis Sabatis

A journal of failed and successful attempts to climb the top of Anafi's gigantic rock and spend the night at the monastery among the clouds



Part 1

Mount Kalamos is the second highest rock in the Mediterranean after Gibraltar. It stands on the easternmost part of the island of Anafi in Greece. Its bulk and location make it visible from any part of the island's southern coast. A small monastery is perched on one of its tips. From there your gaze can sweep over the whole island and the sea. At dawn, after a long night of drinking, smoking, dancing and lovemaking, you can admire the sun rising behind Kalamos. The mountain's red and yellow hues appear half-hidden in the morning haze. At dusk, its conical shape is the last thing to fade on the horizon. Under a full moon it looms darker than the sky, like a dormant volcano or a huge whale that has raised its head to breathe.

This monolith has always fascinated me. Its shape and its presence - constant and enchanting - regularly haunts my imagination. I have dreamt of it, drawn it, and even climbed it one summer: a grumpy Koala, albeit pleased to get closer than usual to the sky, in the company of a restless Weasel and two friends. I went up thanks to the stubbornness of one of them, who insisted so much that in the end I gave in.

It was the end of August, and we had the strong wind that always blows on Greek islands around that time, a harbinger of a cruel and solitary winter. I was naturally thinking of how dangerous the climb would be. I could picture us on the brink of steep slopes, hundreds of meters high, climbing the narrow, twisting paths that would terrify the most reckless goat, and I shuddered. I was thinking also of my Weasel, so tiny and light, and at night I

had nightmares of the wind making him lose his precarious balance. In my dreams I watched him helplessly, tears in my eyes, as he fell, bouncing off the rocks and finally disappearing forever in the angry sea.

I used all my arguments to stop us from going, but our friend was persistent. Now I am grateful to him because it was a fantastic experience. The climb up the monolith was the best part of that summer; after that it was all downhill, so quickly that it left us astounded, knackered and apprehensive about the future. It was as if the wind, strong and inescapable, had caused us to fall.

One year later I returned to the island. Kalamos continued to be the one landmark that drew my gaze more than any other. Life had changed, and this time I did not climb the rock. However, several times a day I would don my headphones and go to the beach, dancing and singing, as loud as my lungs would let me, Orange Juice's *Wan Light*, the Weather Prophets' *Can't Keep My Mind Off You*, Pale Fountains' *Just a Girl* and Extraperlo's *Bañadores*. At the same time, I would keep up a silent, persistent conversation with my gigantic friend. He seemed to be saying to me "Everything will be alright... I'll be here till the end of the world."

Part 2

The years passed and I returned to Anafi twice more. The first of those times I took another boyfriend, a gorgeous fair Cat with terrible mood swings. Sometimes cute as a button, sometimes fierce as a tiger and sometimes grumpy as an old man. That year I did not even think of climbing up the steep slopes of Kalamos. As

much as I longed to show his terrible beauty to my love and live, at last, the ultimate experience of spending the night on the top of the giant, I knew that it was a bad idea.

My constant fighting with my partner could have turned any sweet dream into a beautiful nightmare. I could see us quarrelling endlessly on the tiresome way to the top, making up, fighting again, then having mind-blowing sex under the stars, fighting again... I could imagine myself staying up all night: a Koala happy to be at such great heights and still full of mixed feelings about where my relationship was leading me, if true love does exist and existential questions that were out of place on a summer vacation.

I wanted to start worrying in September, not in August. Besides, there was always something happening, every night: parties, parties and more parties. Alcohol and cheap thrills and endless conversations with friends lost for a year seemed much more important than a trip to a solemn rock. Nevertheless, I bought many postcards and an A5-sized original photo of the rock. Kalamos was always on my mind.

This summer it was different. I came back to Anafi, as a single man. My relationship had fallen to pieces just a couple of months before but instead of feeling wrecked, I was feeling enlightened. Some of my best friends were on the island, there was this SOUTH thing going on and I told myself that if the world will end in 2012, then FUCK YOU! Summer of 2012 will be the best, because if I spend it moaning and living my own personal rhapsody in blue, no one will ever give it back to me.

Anafi was a like a dear friend that you don't encounter often but who is always great to hang out with, someone you can trust, someone who can make you laugh your guts out. My oh my, did we have some days of wine and roses there ... Rakomelo and Raki seemed to pour from the skies, the food seemed to be served straight from the kitchen of Olympus and sex was in the air. I finally got to put my thoughts about Anafi into shape and realised that it is a kind of Arcadia for me: a small place where all these people that I miss throughout the year gather to celebrate life, love and maybe have an intense fight or two - with a friend, a stranger, or their own self.

As far as the Cyclades are concerned, Santorini may be breathtaking, Serifos and Folegandros may have prettier Choras, Amorgos may be wilder and more impressive, Mykonos may have more beautiful waters of emerald green, Syros might be more elegant, Koufonisi might be easier to walk around, and Kea might be less

dry and more friendly than all of the above, but none of these islands compare to Anafi in terms of finding a shelter from the outside world and living only with the stuff that really matters. And of course, no other island can boast of having a mountain like Kalamos.

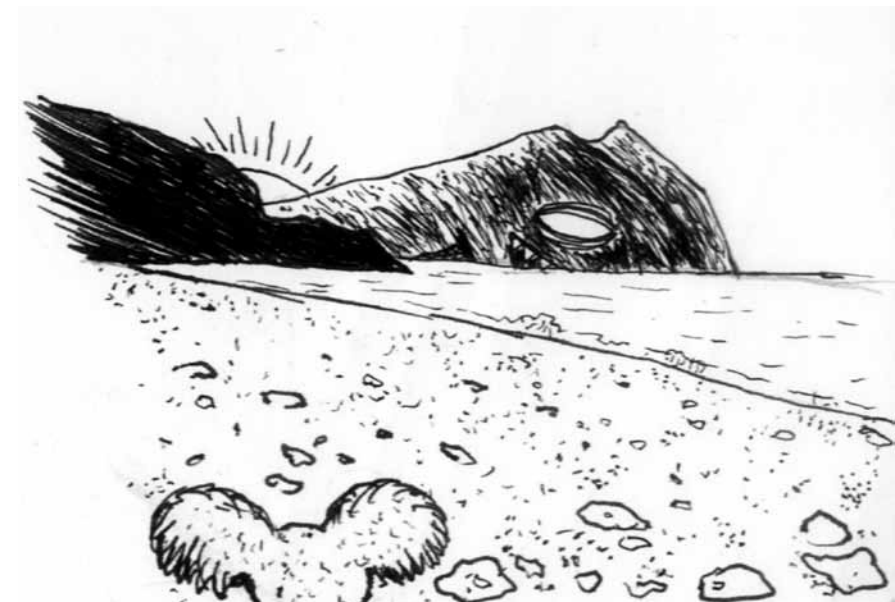
This summer I felt it was high time I climbed the rock once more in order to spend the night there. I did so with one of my best friends. Once more I was having my doubts, fearing the wind, the steep path - or missing some good party. My friend almost forced me to do it, and I am glad he did. When we reached the top and saw the sun disappearing behind Santorini, it all made sense. As the night crept in, the Milky Way seemed to engulf us and we spent the hours in our sleeping bags, watching the stars, counting passing planes, looking for UFOs and listening to Frankie Rose, Tamaryn and Beach House, while drinking, eating and talking about the most trivial and most serious stuff, all in good measure. I teased him about the mice that would probably chew on our ears while we slept.

We woke up at dawn, right before the sun came up, and took dozens of pictures, most of them taken at the edge of the void, facing the Aegean pelagos. 'Iconic' and 'ironic' pictures that eventually found their way onto every kind of social media. A sign of our times, wtf. While we were descending, we found a t-shirt with the slogan "I recycle men" and we laughed our hearts out. So I may not have spent the night on Kalamos with a lover yet, but I feel I had my chance to bond with the monolith, the one an eighteenth century French scientist described as "the most terrible mountain in the world".

During my last days on Anafi, I couldn't keep my eyes off Kalamos: bathed in the yellow and pink colours of dawn, under a cruel sun, fading into dusk or under a haunting August moon. This giant is my friend, the keeper of my dreams and hopes, a place where a melancholic Koala can go and see the world with a kind of perspective and empty his little head from mundane worries. And maybe one day this Koala will spend the night up there clinging onto some lover as if he was the strongest and highest tree trunk in the whole wide world. But that is another story.

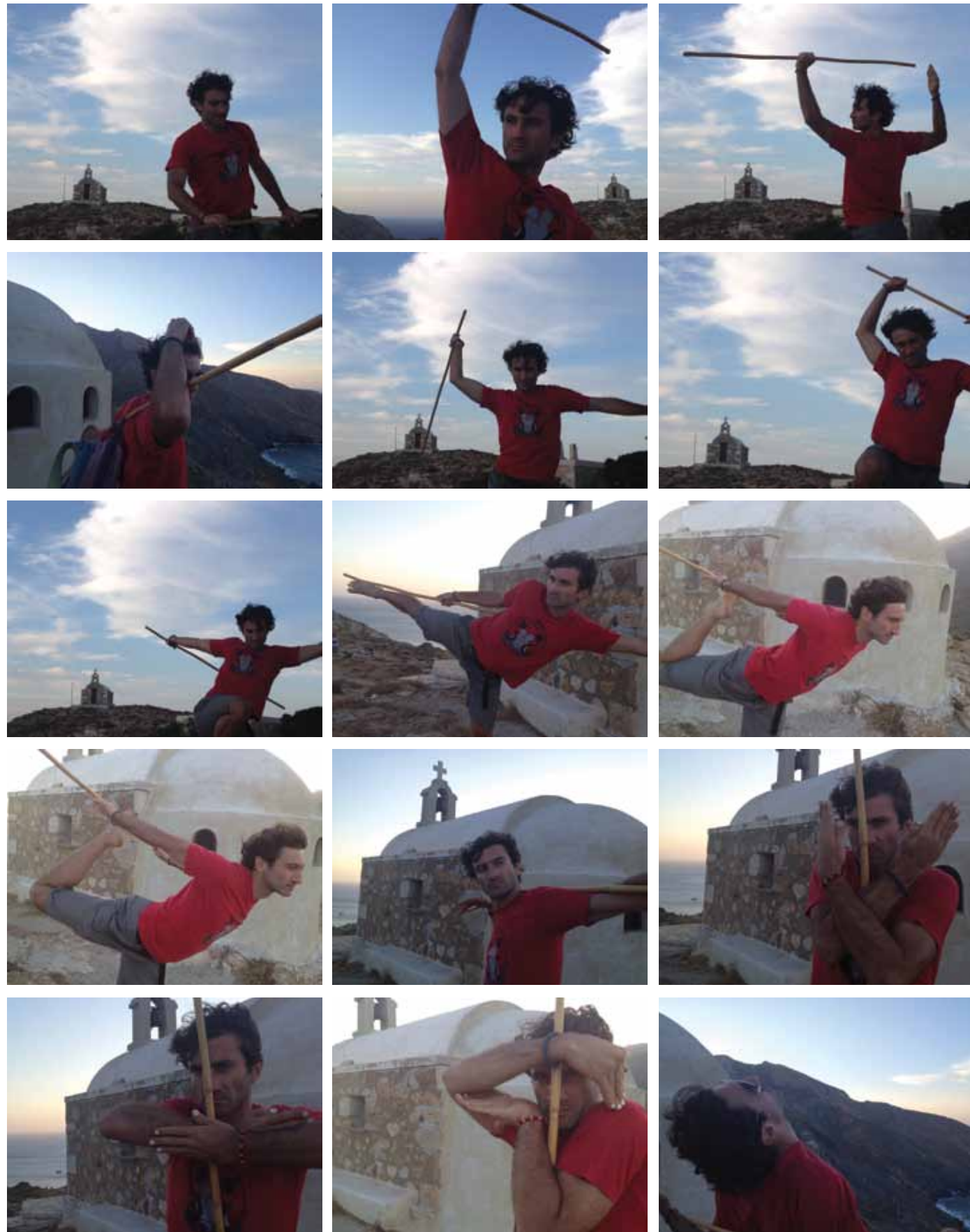
Part 1 was originally written in Spanish by Evripidis Sabatis and published in his book *El Calamor y otros mitos de la intimidad* (Editorial Morsa, 2010). Part 2 was originally written in English by Evripidis Sabatis exclusively for this publication.

Evripidis Sabatis
Kalamos 1,2
pen on paper, 2012
Courtesy of the artist



SUPERNORMAL: A DANCE PERFORMANCE

by Kostas Tsioukas



ANAFI PEOPLE

by the South as a State of Mind team

Portraits of local (or localised) central characters

1.

Andreas Syrigos a.k.a “The Vampire”, deputy mayor of Anafi, owner of Mylos club

Andreas Syrigos is the vice counsellor of Anafi. He was born on the island but moved back 10 years ago, when the city of Athens had become unbearable for him. He lives with his wife and 12-year-old daughter, but believes that after high school students should leave the island to study elsewhere and maybe come back later. His daughter is one of the 37 children who attend the public school he founded ten years ago. He seems to cope well with his nickname. He laughs. Vampires live and work at night, but Andreas has to continue in the morning too. Every morning, almost directly after Mylos, he has to address the everyday tasks of the municipality. He also stresses the importance of environmental projects like NATURA, which forbids further building on the island without the special permission of the archaeology council. Someone like Andreas holding the seat of power in a small mayoral council is a new gust of hope for Anafi and Greece in general. If only communities like his could operate using a system like that, Greece would defy absurd, centralised and globalised leadership. AR



1



2.

Athena, professional dancer for the Athens Opera House – amateur singer, musician, painter, wife of Markos, owner of Armenaki, and amateur bouzouki player

“If I was not doing what I am doing right now, I would like to be a model who advertises – live – mattresses and beds in a very big mall. To lie down eight hours per day at least, to turn just a bit from one side of the bed to the other while the bed swings around with electrical support. That is my dream,” said Athena one time she stopped by our table. “I am a very lazy woman.” During the summer she works with her husband at the most famous of Anafi’s meeting points (the restaurant and coffee bar Armenaki, which is open almost 20 hours per day and belongs to both of them). She runs around serving the customers, she sings and plays music when the programme starts (bouzouki, castanets, tabor), and even dances when in a good mood. She also paints. Armenaki is full of folksy paintings. “It’s not only these. At least half the signs and paintings on this island are made by me.” MF



2



3.

Panayotis, driver of the ‘magic bus’

He is the first person you meet when you disembark from the boat. His bus is there for all departures and arrivals and he always seems to be in a good mood. What is special about his ‘magic bus’ is the music. People have such a good time on his bus that he jokes that one day it will also become a ‘magic bar’. KC



3



4.

The priest (Not the local priest though), husband of the owner of the taverna at Roukounas beach (Papadias’s)

It was 1979 when the priest first came to Anafi – where he met his wife-to-be – to work as a priest. He is now a priest in Athens. His family owns the restaurant in Roukounas. The management, the cooking and so on are all done by his wife with the help of their three children: Irene, Anastasis and Stathis. Whenever he feels like it during his vacation on the island, the priest goes to S. Antonios church – which he built in Roukounas – to perform a mass. “There, it’s only me and God,” he says. Being a mountain lover, he actually prefers mountains to the sea, and admits to not having visited Roukounas beach for 22 years now – despite the fact that it’s so close to the tavern and his house.

The idea of opening a small tavern came around the beginning of the 1990s, while he and his family were on vacation at their summerhouse in Roukounas. His wife called him crazy at first: “Who would possibly come over here, in the Sahara desert?” she wondered. The priest built the tavern by himself with blocks of sand and little stones put together in an improvised manner. News of it spread through word of mouth. The priest is a big supporter of the free camping that happens almost in front of his house, despite the fact that it is not exactly legal. Free campers have visited the beach since 1978. “None of us owns the land,” he adds. “We are all renters. Free camping enhances tourism and the local economy.” EP



4

5.

Nektaria, owner of the fish tavern at the port

Nektaria is a genuine femme fatale who makes the best fish soup in town. She doesn’t reveal the secret that makes the fish so tasty, but for sure it has to do with the mystical powers of her mother Popi and herself. She lives most of the time in Anafi and admits that winters are sometimes very long but restful. She believes that the monastery on the Kalamos rock has sacred powers and this is why the islanders can survive so long with no proper medical care. She is certain that she owes her life to the wondrous Santa Mary icon up there, and that’s why she climbs the steep mountain barefoot, every September, to pay her respects to it. A visit to her joint is like a therapy session, since she can prove to you in a short time that faith is the most important weapon against all odds. MF



5

6.

Aggelis, a fisherman from Kalymnos island.

Usually he bursts into Anafi’s port after 2 am and brings swordfish for his friend Markos who owns the restaurant Armenaki. Every once in a while – right in the middle of the night – they bring “fresh stuff” and cut it up on the spot with two or three masterful moves and then disappear right away into the dark. He and his small crew sometimes travel nonstop from the south Aegean to the waters near Israel. MF

1. Photos courtesy of Andreas Syrigos

2. Photos by Annika Larsson

3. Photos by Eleanna Papathanasiadi, Annika Larsson

4. Photo by Christina Dimitriadis

5. Photo by Kostas Tsioukas

7.
Mrs Efthimia and Mr Antonis, wife and husband

Mrs Efthimia and Mr Antonis look like they are one of the most in-love couples in Anafi. The climate, the light, the loneliness, their needs, life itself seems to have brought them closer to each other. You always see them together, walking up and down the island's central street.

Mrs Efthimia recounts a little story from the past: "When I was 11 years old I worked as a porter here in order to support my family. My regular client was a doctor who came every summer. From Athens. There were no roads then, you see. Every morning I took him to the beach with the donkey and then took him back to the Chora. I dragged the donkey and he sat on it. He was quite old and could not walk for long. We exchanged very few words. He tried to chat with me – I was cute you see. One day I didn't say a word – the sun was very hot and my mind was elsewhere. 'Why don't you talk? What's on your mind?' he asked me. 'I am very tired,' I responded, 'and I cannot tell you what I'm thinking, because you would get extremely angry with me.' He insisted. I hesitated but I finally answered. 'You know, I was imagining myself sitting on the donkey,' I said, sweating from sun and fatigue, 'and you dragging me around, like I do now, and then taking me to the beach for a swim and getting me an ice cream.' He didn't expect to hear something like that. He became silent and serious, yet he did not descend from the donkey." MF

8.
Yorgos Gavalas & his Relationship with Electronics, son of Markos and Athena

He has been observed wandering around the island with his Nintendo, actually experiencing the whole world through it. He admits he is not the only one with a Nintendo on the island – there's another boy too, who he plays Pokemon with all the time. He likes to paint with his Nintendo too and although he loves his mum's paintings on the walls, he thinks they are boring because you cannot change them all the time, which is what he does with his. He would not exchange his Nintendo for a boat, a house or a pair of shoes. He likes the restaurant Armenaki in the morning because everybody comes to connect to the internet and then it becomes like a working office. He believes that the internet is like a limitless sea in which you can swim and find islands to play with. He professes to be satisfied with all of his electronics, but he likes 3D the best because the images are stuck in front of one's face. Three dimensions for him is like a new depth. Anafi is 3D for him. Interview by Miltos Manetas

9.
Christian, a German artist and a regular Anafi visitor for the past 22 years

Born in Dresden but based in Bonn, he arrives every year in the beginning of May and stays until the early days of September. During the peak of the season in mid-August, a fisherman friend takes him to the uninhibited little island of Ftена, where he stays for ten or eleven days, fishing and swimming in the cove. Totally alone, he spends his time watching the stars and the figures formed by sun and moonlight on the rocks, making spontaneous drawings using



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7



8

bird wings, and playing with stones. Sometimes he also sketches on his empty cigarette boxes. (For his last Ftена visit he also took his CD player and listened to an audio book by Richard David Precht.) When he runs out of food and, most importantly, cigarettes, Christian lights a fire as a signal and his fisherman friend comes to bring him back to Anafi. After all these years, he hasn't told any of his friends in Germany where exactly he spends his long summer vacation.

Christian, smiling, says: "And oh! I am glad that nobody knows that I'm Rumpelstiltskin!" (referring to the mythological creature or goblin from the Brothers Grimm stories). EP



9

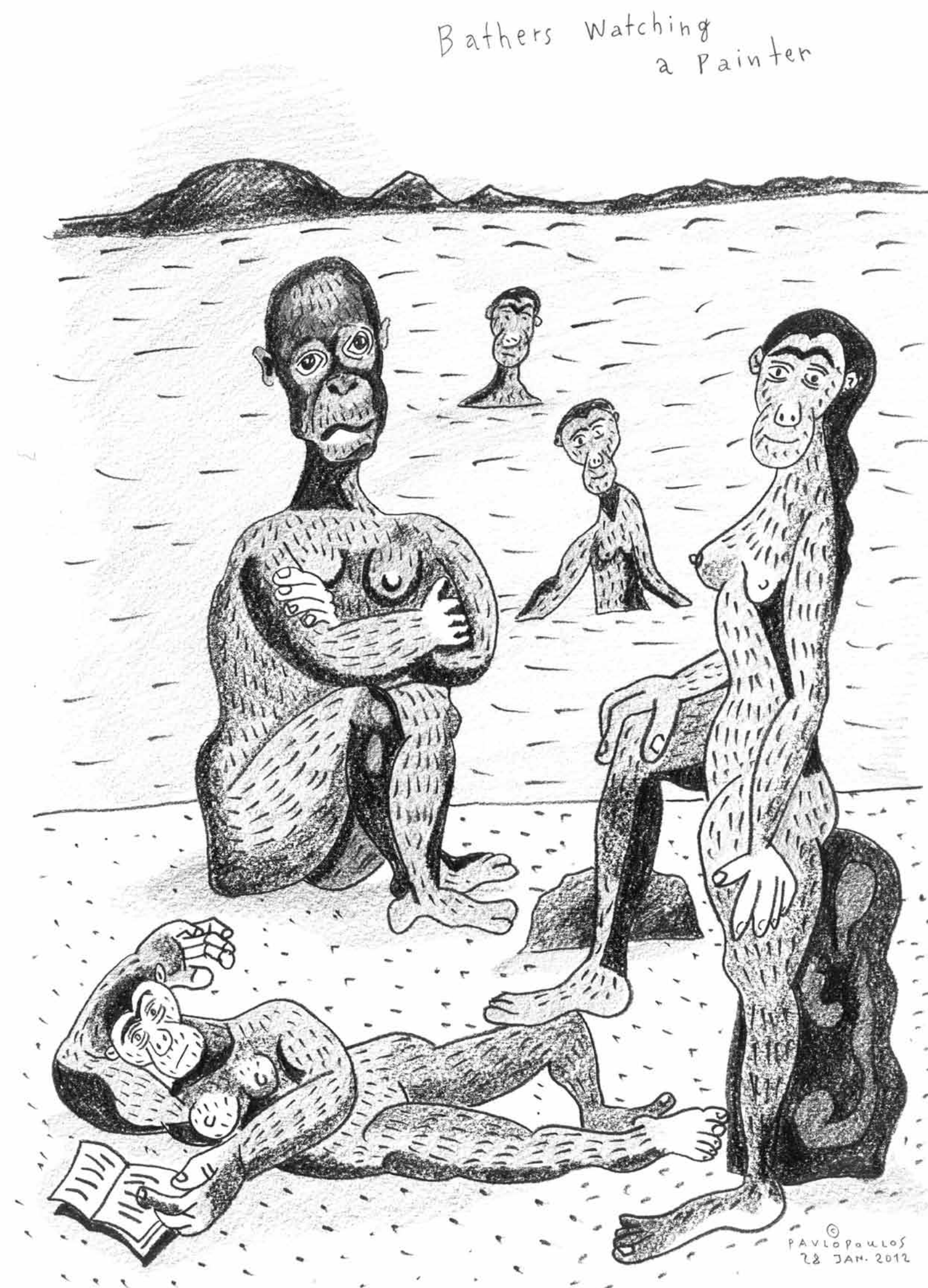
6,7. Photos by Yannis Karlopoulos

8. Photo by Miltos Manetas

9. Photo by Katerina Kana



ABOVE: *Anafi*, 1995, charcoal on paper
 RIGHT: *Bathers Watching a Painter*, 2012, pencil on paper
 by Tassos Pavlopoulos



ANAFI OVERREALITY

by Miltos Manetas



WOMAN, MAN, SHEEP, BEACH, GHOST, COPPER, STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT, VIEW, DONKEY, PIRATE, TABLE, RUIN, ARCHITECT AND THE ABBA LOVER: A POEM

by Deconstructing Arcadia Collective

WOMAN: It's nice here. There's a view. Blue. Same as yesterday. As last year. Next year is guaranteed. You see anything for sale?

MAN: Cool it, *liebe*. The prices will drop further. Next year. Guaranteed.

WOMAN: Will all this be ours then?

ARCHITECT: I sure hope so! I need work.

DONKEY: I sure don't.

ARCHITECT: I can do anything, mister and missus. Practically, I'm God. I refurbish windmills, I turn churches into jacuzzis, I shift about beaches.

GHOST: My ship was beached on these shores. Look at all those groves of tall poplars and willows shedding their fruit untimely. I have given my name away.

DONKEY: You've given nothing away, mate. No one here has a clue what you're on about.

WOMAN: This is paradise. Here. Where we can communicate with nature. Where the animals speak to us.

GHOST: Where the past speaks to you!

MAN: The hell... Are we back to repeating all that ancient history? Like, we have not forgotten enough.

DONKEY: I feel like singing.

MAN: Do you remember that song? I'll sing it for you. *We want to not know you to better know you... ouu... don't be so Germaaaaan....*

DONKEY: I wish I had tiny ears.

MAN: Rocks are not merely debris nor is wood merely fire in solid form. Wood is an extension of roots. Friction will bring fire. The view hurts my eyes. Are we to settle on this island? We are to be stretched beyond recognition into old age. The view... Ok, I get it, but we live in endless time. Rocks become mountains.

TABLE: Yep, that's how it goes. Non-stop! A bleedin' life of conversational torture above my head. True, I am wooden. But I have a database of memories. It says the same fuckers gather around me year after year, this year too. To talk like there's no tomorrow. Fifty-four cigarette burns in the last two years alone. Ten thousand lamb chops per lunch. Piercing elbows. Spillages. The other night some asshole vomited, then proceeded to a salad of imported balsamic vinegar and sprayed tomatoes. Downed with aromatic raki.

SHEEP: Ten thousand lamb chops! Who just said they're God? Save me!

COPPER: I'm on holiday, lamb. I've come here to unwind. To replenish. To finally show my face. To connect with fellow humans that I may have cracked open the heads of. You get me?

SHEEP: What?

COPPER: Lamb chops are not a bad idea. Where's that menu?

WOMAN: You know what I need tonight? A hard fuck. Fuck me! Show no mercy! Fuck me hard, over there, by the wall!

RUIN: I'm not a wall, freak.

WIND: I'm doing my best, ma'am. Your skirt's on your face. Conception guaranteed.

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: Got fuckin' windy tonight. Hate it.

THE ABBA LOVER: The summer air was soft and warm!

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: The summer air in Paris, you pop moron! The song was about a city, here's the middle of nowhere. If the bloody island was eaten by a passing fish, no one would take notice.

RUIN: Why are you here? Were you looking for me to lean on?

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: Fer chrissakes, I'm going mad... Well, *wall*, if you must know, I came here to ... what happened to me is that I feel in love with a yoga instructor. I mean, I fell. She's into this sort of thing. Place. Whatever. She can help me, she says. Do I need help? Like a hole in the head. Like I need the jackass tourists. Wasn't Arcadia supposed to be *exclusive*? Who are all these then? I had to rid myself of cargo just as I exited the boat. They had sniffer dogs. Now I got nothing to deliver. Now I must starve unless I remain in love.

TABLE: No worries, mate, you'll score. You'll see. I witness exchanges. Take a look. Who you callin' jackass, anyway? Island *crawling* with culture. Count the middle-class asses on my fellow chairs. Count the naked writers on the beach.

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: I don't do fuckin beaches. Too hot for me.

BEACH: Heat condenses time in this limited terrain. I exist in different speeds. I am history in action. I am the indented portal in this pattern of islands. You are drinking your morning away while I burn your time.

SHEEP: My time is up! Soon. That's for sure.

ARCHITECT: I'm vegetarian.

DONKEY: Yeah, wash your hands, Pontius Pilatus.

BEACH: The Charlie Addict does not frequent beaches because he feels what you will feel in time: being threatened by my natural fragmentation. All you people are *islands on my dry land*. You all thought you were Crusoe or Odysseus but this infestation will be purged. So yes, the Table is right.

DONKEY: I never thought I was Crusoe or the other dude. And the Architect doesn't either. He thinks he's God!

GHOST: There is no God.

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: Oh, no shit. But how about Santa?!

WOMAN: No God? Not even one? You sure? Not even on the green part of the island?

TABLE: Of course there is a God, you infidels. He don't do beaches. He chills out right next to me, breaking fast on vodka for three hours. Where he's eventually joined by the Philosopher.

WIND: Prey, don't let the Philosopher speak. Let us not have this odious character in our play.

TABLE: The Philosopher does not speak, you ignorant fuck. He *sits*.

SHEEP: Can someone save me?

DONKEY: Where's the woman? She might save you. She says being here makes her a better person!

WOMAN: Where's the Philosopher? I'm into guys who contemplate higher planes in silence. You only get to meet them here.

THE ABBA LOVER: Anybody could be that guy. Night is young and THE MUSIC’S HIGH.

VIEW: I see you all. Imagine me looking back at you. I see you on steep hills, hiking along and sweating the heat of your oppression. You are transported, to here, through me. Up you go. Down you go. Or still and staring. At the nothing that is something through your tired eyes. I see every fight. Every reconciliation. Every bar emptying. Every page turning. Every fly eating every donkey’s ears. What you don’t see is that I am pregnant with pirates. They are coming. The old age will become new. The...

DONKEY: What’s that rambling?

SHEEP: Must be one of them writers. Or actors. Or artists. Or architects. Thinking aloud. Thinking no one’s listening. But *they* are not listening. That’s why no one’s saving anyone else!

PIRATE: It has been years since I harboured the fantasy that whatever place I fantasised about would come into existence immediately.

GHOST: We dreamt of faraway islands in the middle of the highway. The inconsistent desire for a mythical end. We kept chanting *Aeaea* under our breath every time we attempted to cross the lanes. We longed for some sort of change. On the boat one would climb the mast and report on beautiful beaches, unimagined parts of the world. Of course, the reality evaporated as soon as she came down and her feet touched the board: there is nothing more than rocks, marble that’s left behind and saltwater. Saltwater makes the wounds from the fighting sting more. We sanctified all volunteers. Everyone can be a martyr.

COPPER: Mmm. All this reciting makes me hungry for more. Fancy visiting the monastery tomorrow, darling? I wish to delve in the spiritual. I want to be like common people, do what common people do. Yes, I do.

THE ABBA LOVER: Money, money, money.

PIRATE: True, that’s what common people are after. Like me. Where then shall I be brought?

RUIN: Pirates I’ve known. They come and go. Maybe after money, maybe after your soul.

DONKEY: What did you use to be, Ruin? A bordello of trafficked ancient virgins? You sure don’t sound like a prison for communists, though they were plenty in this inverted hellhole where the copper likes to holiday!

TABLE: Here, here. Let’s be civilised and tell stories. The other night I heard that someone nicked thirteen wallets from the tents on the beach. Was it you, Stranded Charlie Addict?

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: Yes, it was me. I nicked all that money for one last time. I wanted to be one of you, one final time.

PIRATE: I am after money although sometimes I will have your soul as well. I want to start the world anew. I want the woman too. Think of this island as an egg. I need to own the island chef. Property supersedes mythology. Too bad that bitch does not bow down like that fellow Friday used to.

MAN: I used to wonder what sort of creatures live on deserted islands. I used to feel separate but like the Stranded Charlie Ad-

dict I now want my memory to run twice as fast. I want *déjà vus* and flashbacks. I want repetition.

DONKEY: That fellow desires repetition when one only needs amnesia. The View knows of this. Success is the equivalent of surviving in a place where everything takes ages to begin anew.

WOMAN: Donkey ... are you sure you are not the Philosopher? I do not care about appearances, you know. I care about romance and depth.

WIND: What the fuck ... This *tourista* cannot tell the difference between a donkey and a local man.

PIRATE: I don’t know about this, pal, but you know these local tribes are not fully humanised. I mean no one here pays their share for being accepted to human society, right? They know neither king nor taxman.

WIND: And no nurses! I float the helicopters of the sick to the hospitals of the Kingland.

WOMAN: Does one get sick in Arcadia?

DONKEY: My lady, one gets sick *of* it.

ARCHITECT: Which is why you need me. With the right tools and wages, I can turn loneliness into solitude, boredom into introspection, dirt roads into terraces shaded by vine.

PIRATE: Ha ha. What he means is that your selfishness expressed in retreating from the world will be called ability to find happiness.

VIEW: Hey, check that out. The Stranded Charlie Addict strewn across the debris recites the directory from an unnamed mall in an attempt to reproduce the copy of a life. I used to be a constellation of catastrophes after beginnings. The Philosopher has learnt to swim in the single place on earth now uncovered by water. Look at him go!

STRANDED CHARLIE ADDICT: This is a swampy mire. The middle of the island is everywhere: but these are all landmen!

COPPER: I zoom through the collections of these ruins. I make sure they close at 2 o’clock. I used to hate the sun because it shone on everything I’d only half-finished.

WIND: The Philosopher can no longer speak. He simply lives in the ideas he thinks he owns.

THE ABBA LOVER: I have a dream, a fantasy to help me through reality and my destination makes it worth the while pushing through the darkness still another mile.

SHEEP: Baa baa baa... Is Ahab, Ahab?

The Deconstructing Arcadia Collective formed simultaneously in two different parts of Europe that cannot be revealed in 2012. It is the first collective to have come into being as a response to an invitation to contribute to a special issue of an art journal. Its first moments of existence sounded a bit like this: “Hey, was asked by South to give them something on Arcadia, and especially with reference to the Greek islands concept. You dig? If so, how about we write a poem together? I suggest that we sign it as Deconstructing Arcadia Collective, that tells you all about where I stand.” “Oh! Deconstructing Arcadia! Deterritorialised Lord Byron/Percy Shelley! You just made my night!”

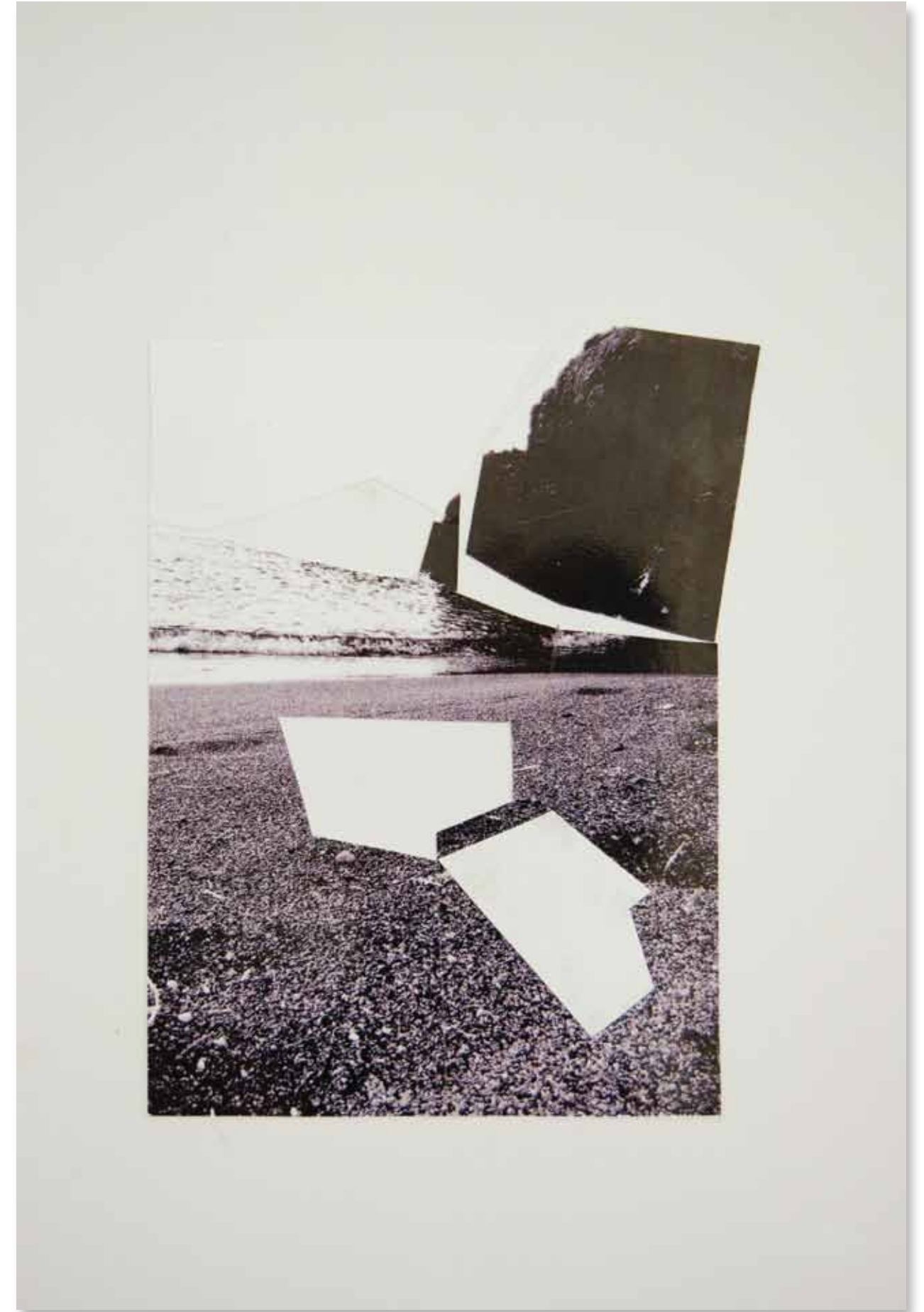


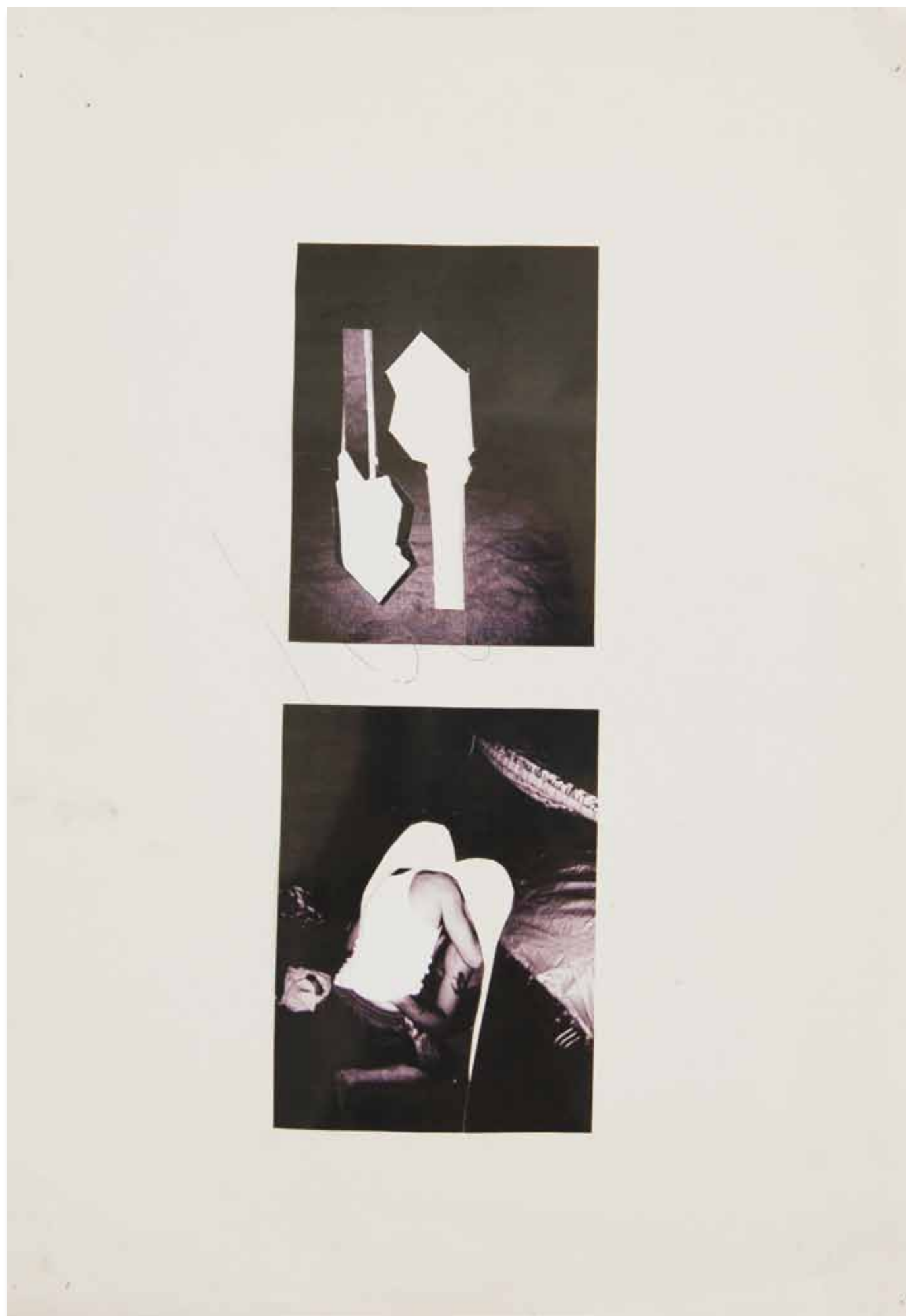
Illustration by Antoni Hervàs

END OF DOUBT

by Katerina Kana

Cut up for the summer





Katerina Kana
Untitled 1,2,3, 2012
 photo collage on paper
 Courtesy of the artist

SHOOTING STARS, BLOWING WIND, LOVING HEARTS

MIX LIVE RECORDING AT 14/08/2012
 FOR THE SOUTH AS A STATE OF MIND PARTY
 ON ANAFI ISLAND

by Amateurboyz



You can listen to it and download it here: <http://amateurboyz.net/southmix>

ATHENS GALLERIES AND INSTITUTIONS

3 137

www.3137.gr

info@3137.gr

open studio

(November, 2012)

Wheel, Schoolbag, Skive (Happening - in collaboration with www.createanaccident.com)

(December 14, 2012)

Dimitris Antoniou (lecture)

(December 19, 2012)

Group Show curated by Galini Notti

(January 16 – January 27, 2013)

Talks, screenings

(February, March, April, 2013)

radius 10 to 15 v.1 (European contest for short radio plays - winner announcement - by www.createanaccident.com)

(May, 2013)

a.antonopoulou.art

www.aaart.gr

T: +30 210 3214994 info@aaart.gr

Christos Athanassiadis *The Cloven Knight*

(November 10 – December 8, 2012)

Kalliopi Lemos *Encounters with Less Remembered Lives*

(December, 2012 – January, 2013)

Young artists group exhibition
(February, 2013)

Anna Lascari

(March, 2013)

Michalis Kallimopoulos

(April – May, 2013)

A.D. Alpha Delta Gallery

www.adgallery.gr

T: +30 210 3228785 ad@otenet.gr

Nelly's *Un nouveau regard (1899-1998)*

(November 7, 2012 – January 12, 2013)

Andreas Melas & Helena Papadopoulos

melaspapadopoulos.com

T: +30 210 3251881 gallery@melaspapadopoulos.com

Liz Deschenes / Charlotte Posenenske

(September – December, 2012)

At Table and In Bed (group exhibition)

(November, 2012 – January, 2013)

Erica Baum

(February, 2013 – April, 2013)

Michele Abeles

(May, 2013 – July, 2013)

ATOPOS Contemporary Visual Culture

www.atopos.gr

T: +30 210 8838151, +30 210 5242004 info@atopos.gr

ZZZZzzZZZZ Giants

SHOBOSHOB + ATOPOS CVC at MAS Museum

aan de Stroom, (Antwerp-Belguim), www.mas.be

(October 1, 2012 – March 1, 2013)

PAP(1)ER FASHION

ATOPOS CVC with its unique paper garments

collection at Galerie Stihl Waiblingen, (Waiblingen-Germany), www.galerie-stihl-waiblingen.de/2012-2.html

(January 25, 2012 – April 21, 2013)

ARRRRGH! Monsters in Fashion

ATOPOS CVC organizes a vast group exhibition

at La Gaité Lyrique, (Paris-France), www.gaite-

lyrique.net/theme/arrrrgh-monsters-in-fashion

(February 12, 2012 – April 7, 2013)

Batagianni Gallery

www.batagiannigallery.com

T: +30 210 3618188 info@batagiannigallery.com

Vasilis Zografos *Backhome*

(November 1 – December 8, 2012)

Group exhibition (Lena Athanasopoulou, Andreas

Lyberatos, Eleanna Martinou, among other

participating artists)

(December 5, 2012 – January 12, 2013)

Georgia Damopoulou

(January 17 – February 28, 2013)

Filippos Tsitsopoulos

(March 7 – April 27, 2013)

Bernier / Eliades

www.bernier-eliades.gr

T: +30 210 3413936, +30 210 3413937 bernier@bernier-

eliades.gr

Dionisis Kavallieratos

(November 22, 2012 – January 17, 2013)

Charles Sandison

(January 24, 2012 – February 28, 2013)

Valerie Mannaerts

(March 7 – April 6, 2013)

Lari Pittman

(April 11 – May 11, 2013)

Edy Ferguson

(May 16 – July 13, 2013)

Beton7

www.beton7.com

T: +30 210 7512625 info@beton7.com

Do You Remember? (group show)

(December 6 – December 28, 2012)

CAMP

www.campoint.gr

T: +30 210 3247679 info@campoint.gr

βunderground 1983 - today

(October 19 – November 21, 2012)

CAN Christina Androulidaki GALLERY

www.can-gallery.com

T: +30 210 3390833 info@can-gallery.com

Tula Plumi

(November 8 – December 15, 2012)

cheapart

www.cheapart.gr

T: +30 210 3817517 info@cheapart.gr

CHEAPART Athens

(December 1 – December 23, 2012)

CHEAPART Limassol

(March 2013)

Eleni Koroneou Gallery

www.koroneougallery.com

T: +30 210 3411748 info@koroneougallery.gr

John Bock *Die Walze*

(September 18 – November 24, 2012)

Helmut Middendorf *True Lies*

(December 6, 2012 – January 26, 2013)

More shows

(please contact the gallery for more

information)

(February – May, 2013)

Elika Gallery

www.elikagallery.com

T: +30 210 3618045 welcome@elikagallery.com

Vangelis Gokas

(November – December, 2012)

Ionanna Ximeri

(December, 2012 – January, 2013)

Gagosian Gallery

www.gagosian.com

T: +30 210 3640215 athens@gagosian.com

Taryn Simon *Black Square*

(September 25 – December 7, 2012)

Kalfayan Galleries

www.kalfayangalleries.com

T: +30 210 7217679 info@kalfayangalleries.com

Panos Tsagaris *Clothed With the Sun*

(November 22 – January 12, 2013)

Medusa

www.medusaartgallery.com

T: +30 210 7244552 medusa7@otenet.gr

Ink (Lina Bebi, Ioanna Gouma, Nikos Houliaras,

Giorgos Kontis, Varvara Liakounakou, Barbara

Mavrakaki, Yannis Mihailidis, Giorgos Rorris,

Stergios Stamos, Panayotis Tetsis, Yannis Tzermias,

Nikos Vlachos, Curated by: Elizabeth Plessa)

(November 21 – January 19, 2013)

Rebecca Camhi

www.rebeccacamhi.com

T: +30 210 5233049 gallery@rebeccacamhi.com

Konstantin Kakanias *Tependris Rising*

(October 24 – December 22, 2012)

Group show

(February – April, 2013)

The Breeder

www.thebreedersystem.com

T: +30 210 3317527 gallery@thebreedersystem.com

(please contact the gallery for

more information)

XIPPAS Gallery

www.xippas.com

T: +30 210 3319333 athens@xippas.com

Nikos Moschos

(October 25, 2012 – January 26, 2013)

Zoumboulaki

www.zoumboulakis.gr

T: +30 210 3608278 galleries@zoumboulakis.gr

Egneus, Koutsikos, Vasmoulakis *Astray*

(November 8 – December 8, 2012)

art
athina

16-19.05.2013
Taekwondo

info@art-athina.gr
www.art-athina.gr

tradition

MOMAS: THE UNLIKELY MUSEUM

by Katerina Gregos

Every year, from 1992 to 1996, an exhibition took place at the Museum of Modern Art on the island of Syros, in an abandoned building near the port. The museum / project was conceived by wildly prolific artist Martin Kippenberger (1953 – 1997)



The MOMAS (unfinished slaughterhouse)
on a hill close to Ermoupolis, the capital of Syros island, 1994
Photo by Helmut Middendorf

tradition

Of the numerous projects Martin Kippenberger initiated during his short but prolific life, there is one which perhaps has not received due credit. This project is *MOMAS*, the artist's Museum of Modern Art Syros, on the Cycladic island of Syros, Greece. Most people who are familiar with Kippenberger's work know something of *MOMAS*, but little detail is known about what actually took place there, except for the few who visited it – a very small group consisting mostly of artists and close friends of Kippenberger. In biographies of the artist, *MOMAS* is almost always mentioned, but only in a couple of lines and not entirely accurately. Even though awareness of *MOMAS* has grown since Kippenberger's death, its conceptual importance has been underestimated, perhaps because the project is at odds with the idea of Kippenberger as prolific artist-prodigy is overshadowed by his capacities as a painter and his bad boy antics. As *MOMAS* now largely exists only in the memories of those involved (and in the sparse documentation), I am indebted to all the artists who recounted their experiences in Syros and shared information about the projects they instigated there. With their invaluable help, this text aims to shed some light on this modest yet very important part of Kippenberger's oeuvre.

MOMAS, of course, was not a real museum – on the contrary, it was more of a virtual, ephemeral, imaginary museum, a challenge to the traditional idea of the museum, even an *anti*-museum. Kippenberger 'founded' it in 1993 while en route to Syros with his friend Michel Würthle, who owns an estate on the island. As the story goes, Kippenberger spotted the cement skeleton of a building at the entrance of the island's harbour, Ermoupolis, from the boat. Apart from being intrigued by its air of abandoned desolation, he was also reminded of a Greek temple, a 'modern' Greek Acropolis. Not long after, he decided to proclaim it his Museum of Modern Art. He founded the museum in a single act, instantly appropriating the idea of the existing building and 'claiming' it through language.

The museum did not have walls, a collection, nor anything in the way of tangible, material objects; it hardly had a budget, but it did have an inspired, inventive director in Kippenberger himself and it did organise exhibitions, print invitations and host openings. He did not show his own work, but rather invited other artists to do projects there. In addition, it did not cater to a large audience. On the contrary, it was perhaps the smallest museum audience in the

world. As Würthle aptly put it, "we were a 'crowd' of between 9 and 11."

MOMAS was a tongue-in-cheek critique, a parody, of the institution of the museum. Kippenberger often reflected on the uneasy and frequently thorny relationship between artist and museum, as well as problematising the nature, role and function of the museum itself. Kippenberger was well aware that artists need museums and that museum exhibitions are still prerequisites for artists' careers, while simultaneously being conscious of the conflicted nature of this relationship. So he decided to make his own museum, on his own terms; a museum which was not hampered by the considerations and compromises that 'real' museums often have to make.² But 'creating' the museum was not enough; he also became its director, assuming authority over it in one symbolic act.

From the start *MOMAS* was to be a transgressive and subversive project, for it questioned the notion of the nature of artistic 'production', went against the formal and conventional structure of the museum, and challenged the traditional, regular function of the museum by proposing a more flexible, less moribund, less bureaucratic and altogether more fun and laissez-faire alternative. It was never intended to be completed as a museum building nor was it intended to be a regularly functioning museum.³ Regular museum 'routines' were carried out, however, from the printing of invitations to opening receptions, formal speeches and after-opening dinners. The rest was all improvisation, imagination and surprise. Kippenberger also really liked the idea of *MOMAS* figuring on artists' biographical notes, as did the artists who contributed, who were 'conspirators' in the irony. He also liked the inevitable parallel conjured up by the museum's abbreviation: *MOMAS*(yros) and *MOMA* (New York). Two museums that sound almost the same but couldn't be further apart.

In a sense, *MOMAS*, just like Kippenberger's *Metro-Net* subway stations, which basically aimed to 'connect' his friends in different parts of the world, was a utopian project. It was entirely his invention and creation, it was his kingdom and playground in which he could have all the freedom he desired. It also constituted a kind of refuge, an escape from the art world that he often felt at odds with or alienated from. At *MOMAS* he could spend time with friends, artists whom he respected and people of his choice, far from the maddening crowd and the main channels of



MOMAS, Photo by Lukas-Baumewerd
Photograph © Estate Martin Kippenberger, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne

tradition

the art world. “It was the ideal museum, a perfect ‘frame’ for a series of various aspects: the dream of an ideal museum, a replica of Marcel Broodthaers’ formula ‘This is not a museum’ and especially, of course, a parody of the contemporary museum including administration wing and museum shop.”¹⁴

Apart from his obsession with art, Kippenberger also had a keen interest in architecture and its sculptural qualities. Already in his 1988 series *Psychobuildings* (and even in some of his previous paintings) Kippenberger demonstrated a sensitivity to architecture and the built environment, seeking out architectural oddities and unusual structures. The MOMAS building is also an example of anomalous architecture and bungled development. For years the building stayed unfinished, a ghostly shell. It was intended to be a slaughterhouse but somehow had idled, trapped in some Greek planning bureaucracy and, perhaps, a little scandal. In her preface for the catalogue of the 2003 Kippenberger exhibition *Nach Kippenberger* at the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Eva Meyer Hermann states that the artist’s whole life and work “were defined by this constant search for ‘the place’”¹⁵, a place where he could find meaning and space for his own artistic existence. His consistent interest in architecture and use of architectural motifs are part of this quest and MOMAS seemed to be an important such “place”; far from the art world, in the company of friends and artists he admired, a “place” of his own. But, as with many Kippenberger projects, MOMAS was also characterised by a dual character: this perfect, utopian place was, in effect, beyond reach since it did not really belong to him, but was hijacked, squatted and borrowed: “Everything Kippenberger built in the way of forms, architecture and (largely) virtual constructions was a means and a method to open up reality. The architecture in these pieces is communicative. The place itself remains indefinable and unattainable, a distant goal.”¹⁶

The first MOMAS project was by the artist Hubert Kiecol. Like many subsequent MOMAS projects, the work was a found object. Next to the main MOMAS ‘building’ – which was in fact being trespassed on for this and all subsequent

openings – there was a smaller concrete building which looked like an oversized table. Kiecol declared this to be his artistic contribution. As the conceptual museum that it was, MOMAS was more concerned with engendering situations than the production of objects. The opening took place at 7 pm on the 10th September 1993. It was a bizarre opening in an unlikely setting. It was a social occasion like all openings but instead of enjoying artworks on the non-existing walls, attendees admired stunning views of the Aegean Sea. The Kiecol exhibition coincided with the unveiling and inauguration of *Lord Jim*, the first of the subway entrances for Kippenberger’s *Metro-Net* project, which was constructed on Ktima Kanné, Würthle’s estate in the countryside of Hroussa, Syros. It was an appropriate and delightful coincidence: the simultaneous inauguration of a subway entrance leading nowhere and a museum in which, in most cases, there was almost nothing to see.

Every year from the inauguration of MOMAS until 1996 an exhibition took place at the museum, the only material part of which was the invitation card designed by the artist himself and the visitors present at the official opening. At all these openings – which in fact constituted the museum’s core ‘activity’ and *raison d’être* – there was always a handful of people: the artists, some of Kippenberger’s friends, some art people from Athens,¹⁷ some art aficionados from Syros. In 1994, Christopher Wool and Ulrich Strothjohann were the invited artists. Strothjohann declared a concrete waste pipe which lay in front of the “museum” his artistic work. The project was a conceptual counterpart to his photographic series *Holes of the World*. On the day of the opening Strothjohann found out that the concrete pipe had had building work carried out around it, concealing it from view. Kippenberger invited Wool to do the signs for the museum: made with Wool’s characteristic typography, they were installed by Wool and Kippenberger at various locations on the island, including in the sea for a photo opportunity. Wool’s road signs were in fact the only real physical works actually produced.

In 1995 Kippenberger invited Stephan Prina, Christopher Williams and Cosima von Bonin. Prina shipped over

tradition

a broken reel-to-reel tape recorder from Los Angeles. At MOMAS, he unpacked the tape recorder, used the crate and box as a ‘pedestal’ and placed the broken tape recorder on top. Prina liked the idea that the tape recorder had been “transformed” back into “base material” to be observed as obsolete technology but also a work of “sculpture”. The event took place inside the Kiecol ‘work’ (the concrete building resembling an oversize table). The tape recorder was doomed never to play, as there was no electricity in the museum.¹⁸ Von Bonin organised the “benefit lunch for the trustees of the museum”. The lunch served was a dish of thin spaghetti stuck into hollow spaghetti (the kind that is used to make Greek *pastizzio*, a baked macaroni, mince-meat and béchamel dish), boiled in salt water onsite by Würthle’s gardener and served with a simple garlic, oil and pepperoncini sauce.

The following day Williams, who was designated director of the museum’s “film department”, organised a screening of experimental films by Morgan Fisher and David Lamelas in an old neighbourhood cinema, in the capital Ermoupolis. The films, screened to a very small audience, were Fischer’s *Projection Instructions* and *Picture and Sound Rushes* (1969) and Lamelas’ *A Study of the Relationships between Inner and Outer Space* (1973). Williams took Kippenberger’s request to be a proper curator very seriously, proposing films that were in line with the conceptual nature of the museum.¹⁹

The following year Kippenberger invited Johannes Wohnseifer, Michel Majerus and Heimo Zobernig. Wohnseifer, who was Kippenberger’s assistant for a while, was initially involved as an ‘employee’ of the museum, based in Cologne. In 1996, when Kippenberger invited him to Syros, he became the MOMAS guard. (Wohnseifer and Williams were, incidentally, the only two people apart from Kippenberger who had real ‘job descriptions’.)

Majerus’ contribution was a project called *Summer Hits 96*, a video compilation of summer hits from 1996 taken from MTV and VIVA channels. The video was played on a brand new video camera with a small rotating screen,

mounted on a tripod, which Kippenberger had given as a gift to his wife Elfie Semotan. The image on the announcement card was taken from a TV guide listing the programmes of the two channels. Zobernig, the other invited artist, could not make it to Syros so sent his proposal by email. His idea was to ‘do’ the MOMAS floor and proposed to paint it grey, which it already was since the floor was concrete. Only the invitation card gave some hint of his intervention.

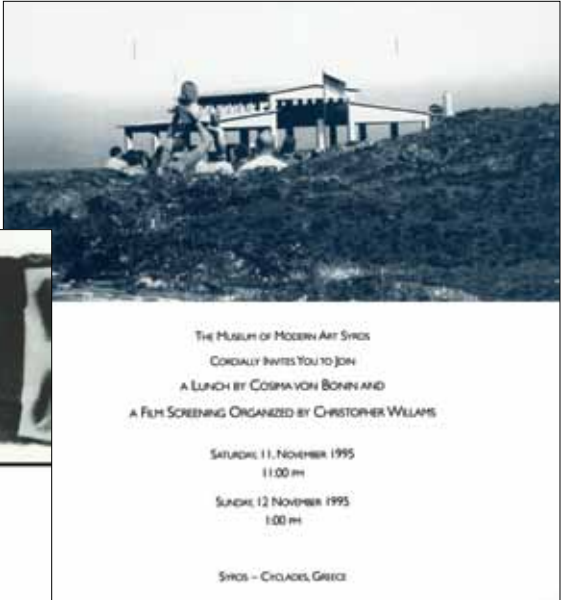
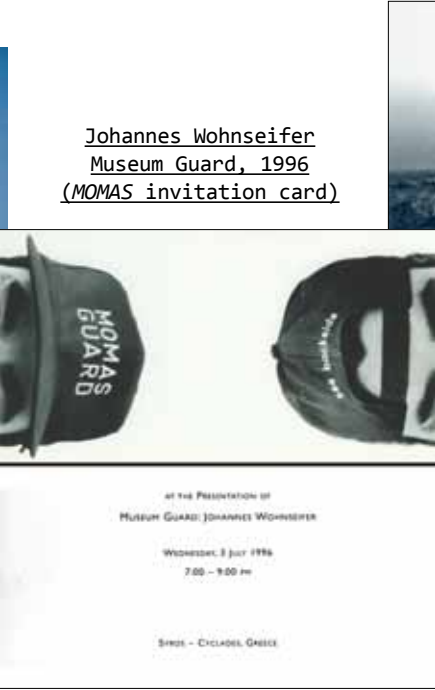
The last project planned in relation to MOMAS was not realised. Kippenberger had been invited to participate in documenta X in 1997. In his initial proposal to curator Catherine David, he proposed to open the MOMAS exhibition he planned for that year at the same time as the documenta opening, and somehow project or connect the MOMAS opening to the opening of documenta. The proposal was rejected outright and Kippenberger went on to show his mobile subway station rather than his MOMAS project.¹⁰

No one really knows what Kippenberger’s intentions regarding the future of MOMAS were. Depending on who one talks to, there are different ideas of what was to become of MOMAS and conflicting reports about its possible development (or not). Some say he intended to end the project after five years, others believed he would continue it, and one or two people were convinced that with the financial resources he may have had today were he alive, he would have pushed the project further. The fact is though that with Kippenberger one never really knew. Perhaps the most significant aspect of MOMAS is its importance as a conceptual project, its symbolic potency, the kind of power it exerted and continues to exert on the mind, and the fascination it engenders in our imagination as pure concept. And MOMAS was a very pure museum, because it proved that one *can* have a museum inside one’s head, just like André Malraux had suggested.

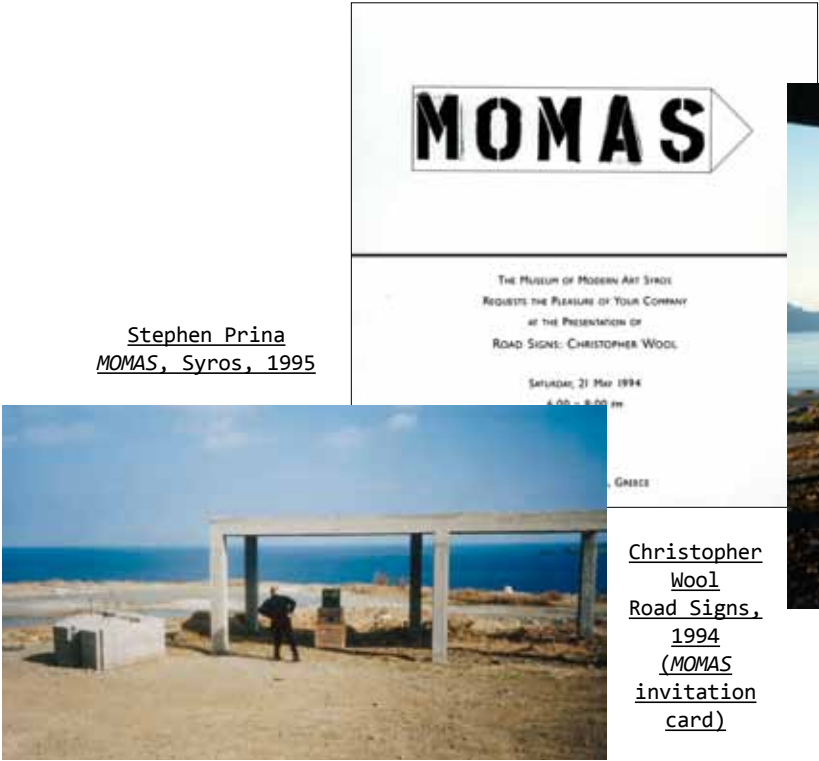
This is an excerpt of a text originally published in the catalogue: **Model Martin Kippenberger: Utopia for Everyone, for a solo exhibition of the artist’s work at the Kunsthau Graz, Austria, in 2007 (Publisher: Buchhandlung Walther König)**



1996 Museum of Modern Art Syros (Greece)



1995 Syros (Christopher Williams)



Stephen Prina MOMAS, Syros, 1995

Christopher Wool Road Signs, 1994 (MOMAS invitation card)



The MOMAS audience

All photographs © Estate Martin Kippenberger, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne

POSTSCRIPT

Today the *MOMAS* building has actually been completed. It is not a museum, of course, but has been turned into an environmentally friendly sewage processing unit, financed by the EU. Probably only a handful of the 20,000 inhabitants of the island of Syros know of its secret illustrious history. I am sure that the idea that this building has a hidden life unknown to most would have thrilled Kippenberger.

POSTSCRIPT II

It may have seemed like an unlikely location but Syros was probably one of the least improbable of the Greek islands to establish a museum on, as it has a particularly rich cultural history. Unlike many other islands whose economies were based on farming and fishing and where poverty

NOTES

- 1 From a telephone conversation with Michel Würthle, 24 July 2007. Würthle was not involved in any artistic decisions in relation to *MOMAS* but was instrumental as a friend and supporter of the project, as well as a facilitator and organiser on the island, providing accommodation for artists, lending out his staff and providing a workspace for Kippenberger on his estate.
- 2 Ulrich Strothjohann, who was Kippenberger's assistant, also adds the following insightful comments about Kippenberger's relationship with the museum: "I think the idea of *MOMAS* was [also] the reaction of Kippenberger to the breakdown of the art market at the beginning of the 90s... He thought: 'if they don't give me a museum show, I [will] establish my own museum, far out, at the periphery of the art world. [I will] invite my friends and colleagues and mail invitation cards. These invitation cards will be the only [evidence] concretely.' Today maybe art people will think of *MOMAS* only in the sense of a neo-conceptual artwork. But in fact it was a very personal reflection on [the] art market, presentation, [the] art scene and relations between artists." From an email interview with Strothjohann, 4.8.2007.
- 3 The Greek artist Maria Papadimitriou made efforts to turn *MOMAS* into a 'real' museum. She instigated meetings with officials in Athens and Syros, including, at some point the mayor of Syros and the then Greek minister of culture, to convince them to support the idea. She mentions that she tried to persuade the officials that completing the building as a slaughterhouse would be a disgrace and a bad image for Syros since it was situated in such a visibly prominent location, at the entrance to the island's harbour. According to Papadimitriou, at some point there seems to have been a dinner hosted by Michel and Katerina Würthle on Ktima Kanné, to which the mayor of Syros together with local art aficionados were invited, in order to further this idea (Kippenberger was not there). Kippenberger himself was not interested in a real museum on Syros, but he never halted efforts by others in this direction, knowing full well that these efforts would not succeed.
- 4 Manfred Hermes, "Museum of Modern Art Syros, ab 1993" in *Nach Kippenberger*, exhibition catalogue, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien and Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Vienna, Schlebrügge 2003, p. 179.
- 5 Eva Meyer Hermann, "After Kippenberger" in *Nach Kippenberger*, exhibition catalogue, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Vienna and Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Vienna, Schlebrügge 2003, p. 19.
- 6 Ibid, p. 25.

was not uncommon, Syros became a wealthy merchant centre with an educated and cultured bourgeoisie. During the Greek War of Independence (1821) it became a safe haven for Greeks being persecuted by the Turks, as the island remained under French protection because of the high number of Catholics residing there. These *émigrés* – a number of whom were from wealthy shipping families from other islands – built the island's beautiful neo-classical capital, Ermoupolis, inviting foreign architects and artists to work on the construction and embellishment of the city. From then on the island's culture and economy flourished until the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, in the nineteenth century Syros was not only the commercial but also the *cultural* capital of Greece. Today, it is the administrative centre and capital of the Cyclades as well as an important centre of trade due to its shipyard.

- 7 Kippenberger had relationships with Athens through the gallerist Eleni Koroneou and her husband, artist Helmut Middendorf. Kippenberger actually had two shows at the Eleni Koroneou gallery: *M.K.-M.K.*, a duo exhibition with Michael Krebber, 1993, and *Made in Syros* (1996), a series of paintings he made on the island. The paintings were priced at 7,000 euros and not a single one sold during the duration of the exhibition. Kippenberger also curated an exhibition at the Eleni Koroneou gallery entitled *The Super Shadows of Understatement* with Christopher Wool, Ulrich Strothjohann and "special guest" Katerina Würthle (1994). A handful of people from Kippenberger's Athenian circle would visit Syros to see the *MOMAS* exhibitions, including Maria Papadimitriou who was at the time represented by the Eleni Koroneou gallery. There is an anecdote, a *MOMAS* inside joke, mentioned by Johannes Wohnseifer about people arriving from Athens at Syros and asking taxi drivers to "take them to *MOMAS*!"
- 8 There is an amusing anecdote threaded through the story of Prina's contribution to *MOMAS*. The tape recorder Prina used was purchased by him from the writer Tim Martin. Legend had it that, at the time, Martin and the artist Michael Asher were busy working on a 'band' called Pre-Stressed Concrete. Part of the procedure in producing the music was to attach amplification equipment to concrete buildings and amplify it. It may have been that the tape recorder would be used to record these amplifications. When Prina told Martin about the *MOMAS* project and the tape recorder, Martin told him that they never actually formed this 'band', they had merely announced that they would.
- 9 Fisher's works explore the machinery of cinema. Fischer sets up systems and rules which used the apparatus, physical material and production methods of cinema. *Projection Instructions* engages the projectionist himself by means of simple instructions to be carried out: basic operations such as putting the projector lens in and out of focus or switching the projector on and off. All of these actions are highlighted to draw attention to the invisible 'actor' behind the film's projection, the projectionist. *Picture and Sound Rushes* (1973) takes the form of a lecture which describes how sound and image are brought together and talks about how the variations between sound and silence and picture or no picture are created. Lamelas' *A Study of the Relationships between Inner and Outer Space* (1969) is, on the other hand, a film about the visual analysis of an exhibition space – in this case, the Camden Arts Centre – and London (where the centre is located), with an interwoven story about the imminent arrival of man on the moon. Williams told me he still considers himself the acting film curator for *MOMAS* and occasionally programmes screenings under the *MOMAS* rubric, at off-site locations such as, recently, the Getty Museum.
- 10 From a conversation with Johannes Wohnseifer, 2.8.2007.

RECORDS

by Helmut Middendorf



Martin Kippenberger with Breadbasket-hat, Wool Sign-Opening Party, Syros, 1994

tradition



MOMAS event, 1994. Cosima von Bonin, preparing to cook spaghetti in the *MOMAS* 'Building', in the background Christopher Williams

tradition



Christopher Wool and Martin Kippenberger with *MOMAS* sign and *MOMAS* T-shirts, also created by Christopher Wool, 1994



Helmut Middendorf, Martin Kippenberger, Michel Würthle on Syros, 1992 (In the house of Katherina and Michel Würthle where all *MOMAS* activities started)

tradition



Christopher Wool takes a photograph of his *MOMAS* sign that he placed in the sea on Syros, 1994

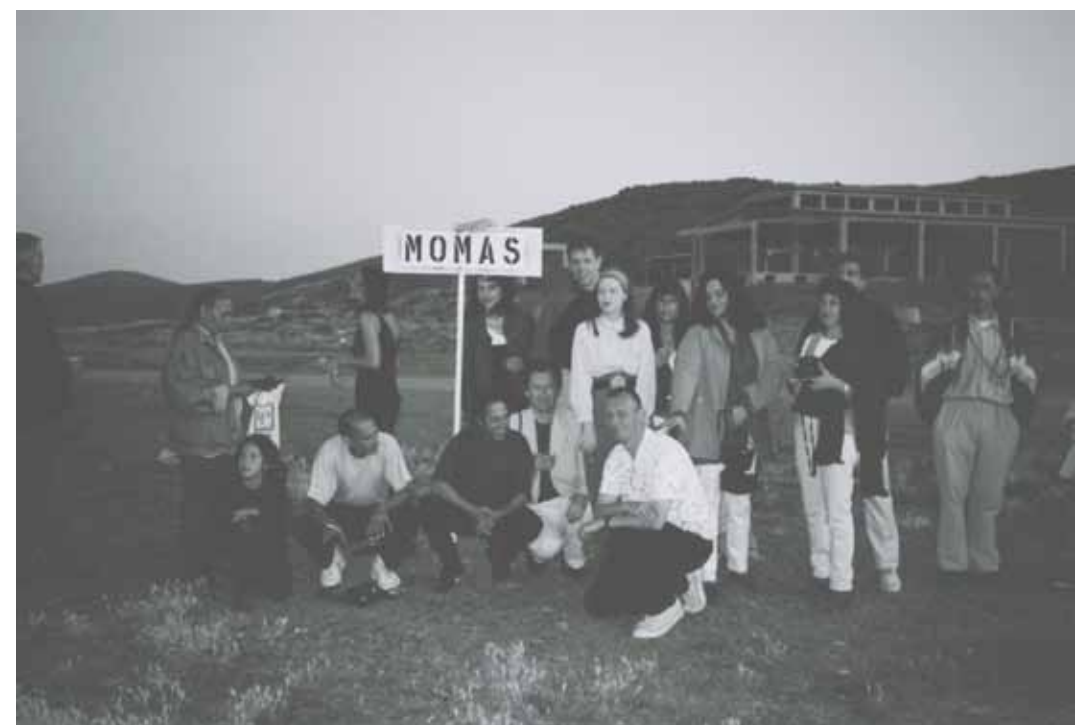


Another *MOMAS* event, 1994. Chistopher Williams and Stephen Prina. Christopher Williams showed early 1960's avant-garde films in a small cinema in Ermoupolis and Stephen Prina did a Performance on the *MOMAS* site

tradition



Martin Kippenberger and Helmut Middendorf, nightlife on Syros, 1995



MOMAS event with Christopher Wool who created the *MOMAS* signs for the island, 1994

All photos by Helmut Middendorf

tradition

“TWO OR THREE THINGS I KNOW ABOUT HIM”

by Maria Papadimitriou

Maria Papadimitriou remembers Martin Kippenberger



I met Martin Kippenberger in 1992 in Athens.

A year later he invited me to Syros on KTIMA KANNÉ which belongs to his close friends Katerina and Michel Würthle.

In 1990 he lived and worked on the property for great lengths of time in an attempt to recover from the debauchery of the art system.

Here in 1993 he built the first subway station.

In the same year, he founded MOMAS (Museum of Modern Art Syros).

He was inspired by the skeleton of the abandoned slaughterhouse in the port of Syros which reminded him of the Parthenon.

MOMAS opened with the exhibition of Hubert Kiecol, and then other shows with “nonart” works, as he called them, featuring artist friends of his such as Ulrich Strothjohann, Christopher Wool, Cosima von Bonin, Stephen Prina, Christopher Williams, Michel Majerus, Johannes Wohnseifer and Heimo Zobernig.

The images I present are random moments from our communal life on Syros.

They are the tangible results of a meaningful dialogue with Martin which lasted from 1993 until 1996.

We used to spend hours on end talking, working and playing the MAU MAU cardgame.

I made many drawings for him and he for me.

Every evening we watched B-Movies and then we would explore the island.

Martin was highly intelligent, generous, sensitive, romantic, intuitive, a visionary, a traveller, a tender cowboy, an inventor, a jokester, a profound teacher, a dancer, a painter, a sculptor, a photographer, a performer and a big baby.

He made people have fun but he would also shock them through his lifestyle and his art which were one and the same thing. He hated stupidity and inertia and when he came across them he would run for miles.

I miss him.

Maria Papadimitriou, *the best of Syros*, 1994, cover
Courtesy of the artist



Maria Papadimitriou, *Syros airport 1,2,3*, 1994
Courtesy of the artist

THANASSIS TOSIKAS A LIFE IN THE WOODS

by Christoforos Marinos

The radical pastoralism and fiercely uncompromising vision of multi-media artist Thanassis Totsikas, whose “every work is a valid indicator of Greece’s contemporary ideology”



Thanassis Totsikas, *Untitled*, 2002
lambda prints, 170 x 130 cm each
Courtesy of the artist

Ever since the beginning of his career in the mid-1970s, Thanassis Totsikas has persistently gone after the ‘new’ in art. This is borne out of historical developments, as his dynamic appearance on the Athenian art scene in the early 1980s coincided with the notion of *allagi* (change) in art, politics and in society. In art, change was marked predominantly by the attempt of art critic Eleni Vakalo to describe the physiognomy of Greek post-war art – indeed, she classified the art of Totsikas as “post-abstract”. In society, change was reflected by the rise to power of the socialist PASOK party. The ‘post-abstract’ dimension in Totsikas must be seen through a hermeneutic prism which will take into account the social parameters of the time as well as his own particular artistic approach. As Haris Kambouridis aptly notes, “every work of Totsikas is a valid indicator of the country’s contemporary ideology”.

Born in 1951 to a farming family at Nikea, Larissa, Totsikas is one of the few Greek artists to have experimented with various media and has displayed an unprecedented pluralism in his creation of images. We could borrow the title of his first solo exhibition in Athens (Desmos Gallery, 1982) and say that his work is a constant ‘transmutation’, a strong reflection on the appeal of the new. The fact that we

are dealing here with a self-taught artist (in his résumé we find transitory stops at the Athens School of Fine Arts and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris) may explain the pluralism in his choice of media. In any case, after thirty years of his creative career it seems increasingly imperative to give some answers about what some people see as the enigmatic attitude of this artist.

As with many other artists before him, from Picasso and Joseph Beuys to Bas Jan Ader and Martin Kippenberger, Totsikas succeeded in establishing a unique and peculiar persona. Throughout his career, the persona TOSIKAS has been inviting viewers to see the “reality of unbounded thinking”, participate in “building an arbitrary proposition” and understand that “art belongs in the realm of negative disciplines” (the quotations are his). Over the years, this persona has assumed various guises: the artist as collector and maker of musical instruments, motorbikes and ultimately houses; the artist as lone traveller and rambler, who goes as far as India in his quest for the music teacher, the mystic who will bring him closer to the secret of life and happiness; the artist as a hermit who watches cultural developments from afar.

Although Totsikas has been active in art since 1974, his

work becomes systematic after 1979. In a résumé compiled for his solo show at Desmos, we read that in 1977 the artist once “created in a public place (a square in Larissa) until stopped by the police”. This was actually an impromptu (and unrecorded) performance that reveals the relationship of young Totsikas with habitation: in a single day he took out into the street all the belongings from the house he rented in Defkalionos Street in the centre of Larissa. In Heideggerian terms we might say that the artist had yet to “come to peace”, since he had not proceeded to building.

In addition to *Transmutations*, the first period in his career (1979-1989), which roughly coincides with the second political phase after Greece’s restitution of democracy, includes murals with Shaman symbols, photographs of ritual places (*For Sylvia Plath*, 1982), a host of self-portraits and the construction of musical instruments. Many of these works are comments on consumerism, religion and the sacred. Also emerging gradually during this period are elements such as self-sarcasm, parody and humour, which would become major instruments in his work after the early 1990s and influence some talented Greek artists of the younger generation (Maria Papadimitriou, Miltos Manetas and Poka-Yio, among others).

In his works from the 1990s Totsikas deals with his identity and his relationship with technology, the contemporary, nature and dwelling. This category comprises a series of sculptures where light is the main element, installations with incandescent objects (*Burning House at Night*, 1992), monochrome paintings on metal sheets and slide projections. A decisive factor in his career during this decade is his participation in major events such as *Artificial Nature* (1990) at the DESTE Foundation, documenta IX (1992) and his presence in the Greek Pavilion at the 47th Venice Biennale (1997).

The transformation of Totsikas’s persona was ‘completed’ around the end of the 1990s when he built two small cottages at Mavrovouni, Larissa, one by the river and one by the sea, which he uses as studios. The construction of these two buildings represents the culmination of a ‘radical pastoralism’. To critic George Steiner, who coined the term, this pastoralism promotes a policy of authenticity, favours the nudity of the ‘I’ and condenses the true meaning of life as a vital force as opposed to grey knowledge. Steiner cites the romantic poet William Wordsworth to explain his argument: “One impulse from a vernal wood may teach you more ... than all the sages can”. It is this pure experience that



Thanassis Totsikas, *Untitled*, 2002
lambda print, 170 x 130 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Totsikas has tried to convey in many of his works, often in provocative ways – above all with the five-part photographic work for the *Outlook* exhibition of 2003, or with the video he presented at the 1st Athens Biennale, *Destroy Athens*, in 2007. Starring in both works, in the former he copulates with a watermelon and in the latter he keeps vomiting, out of sickness or revulsion. In the meantime, between 2004-2006, he walked around Mavrovouni with his easel, in the manner of Paul Cézanne, and painted a series of alfresco abstract landscapes of an impressionist type.

The history of art and literature contains other examples of creators and heroes who seemed to share Totsikas's vision about nature and the landscape. Anselm Kiefer had retired to a farm in Nîmes, France, building a maze of buildings that served as his studio. What Kiefer implies is that these creations were simply an extension of the four sides of the canvas – and one might claim the same about Totsikas's buildings. Another example is Derek Jarman's garden at Prospect Cottage, a deliberate version of Adam's cabin and a lifetime's work which, as Peter Wollen aptly remarks, places Jarman within a long tradition of revolutionary utopians and fringe artists. An outstanding case among those visionaries is that of Henry David Thoreau, who spent two years (1845-1847) in a makeshift cabin on the shores of Lake Walden. The distillation of this experience, the famous *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (1854), is useful in interpreting the pastoralism of Totsikas, his spiritual quest and his decision to live and work close to nature.

The concept of the avant-garde in the oeuvre of Totsikas – an artist who lives and works away from the centres of art, international as well as national – should be interpreted through the element of 'stopping' rather than 'progressing'. As described by theoretician Susan Buck-Morss, this kind of avant-garde is based on stopping time, lagging behind, accessing a forgotten time, i.e. adopting an attitude that "shatters the calm surface of the present". According to her, one can find a contemporary meaning of avant-garde in an art which disrupts the global distribution of images and cultural practices in a way that makes us take a more critical look at our everyday life. The model proposed by Buck-Morss is probably the most suitable for approaching an artist like Totsikas, who has chosen to live silently and autonomously, outside the centre of art but in the very heart of its language.

Totsikas delves into the ecstasy of communication but also into the human condition – and his works contribute to a better understanding of it. While most Greek artists of his generation were trapped in a sterile representational idiom, 'translating' the works of their foreign colleagues, Totsikas realised his anti-bourgeois vision by showing excerpts of pure experience. The cube, the cylinder, the sphere and energy as well as elements from the countryside of Thessaly have featured prominently in his imagery. Totsikas's artistic calibre lies in the fact that he can translate the original (even though he does not need to), and that's what makes his work subversive.

“I AM WATERING THE OLIVE TREES AND GAZING AT THE SEA”

Interview by Helena Papadopoulos

Thanassis, how would you describe your relationship to architecture? I am thinking of the works you showed at documenta 9 in Kassel, both the rotating cylinders and the architectural model of your house, and also your country home and all the interventions at your estate in Larissa.

My relationship with architecture is one of organisation and balance, of a practical and ideological choice of the most economical way of realising an idea. It is an architecture beyond the minimal, because you have to tumble down into your personal need to be conscious of your own historical space-time in order to shed binding cultural values. The axes of Kassel possess an architectural balance, to the point where they move in an outcome of serenity. These axes/columns are round and revolve quite quickly. I have observed that the greater the action the more quiet the result. The metal model of a house goes up in flames. The incandescent metal surfaces in the night time take this into the realm of family tragedies. What interests me in all this is the element of energy to the maximum degree. My presence in a totally isolated place in the wood is an action meant to sort out certain things and distinguish between the secular and the otherworldly.

The image of the artist living in isolation resonates as terribly romantic and unusual. You demystify this a little bit through works such as the photographic series in which you pose in a straw hat and blue swimsuit at the beach or the ones where you develop an erotic relationship with a watermelon. The landscapes you depict are always sublime, yet by introducing the human figure you bring viewers down to earth. How does nature affect you?

I am not there to isolate myself but to focus on my interests. When I place myself in the wood I am trying to justify my presence there, and how the real sometimes becomes so metaphysical. Nature has always existed, and will continue to exist. What matters is what you do within nature. You should not do things which imitate it and thus disturb it. As long as you do things quite contrary to nature, you are leav-

ing it alone. And the things you do look better within nature – it's the anthropocentric presence in its realm.

Can you describe your process when you decide to work with video, installation, sculpture, painting, drawing or photography? You move so freely in all these territories.

There are many ideas, but what matters is how you prioritise them. Mood is the most important element in implementing an idea. I always try to detect my mood in order to make a work; without it, it's meaningless. Media are just media. What you want to build is meaning; the choice of media has to do with your own course in art and with knowing certain things consciously – it enables you to work without committing blunders.

Are you interested in sport? I am thinking of an essay by [Jean-Luc] Godard that connects sport to cinema and then something I read in *The New Yorker*: when he was young he was so strong he could walk down steps upside down, on his hands. Is there a relationship between sport and art?

If the parallel with sport is to be taken as the notion of power in art, then you need to reach the weakest point to understand the necessity for the strongest. The maxim *mens sana in corpore sano* [a sound mind in a healthy body] does not apply to art; the other saying, 'those without a brain have to toil harder,' confirms this.

What would you cite as having influenced you? What has made a mark on you?

It is the influence of art itself that forces me to try to get out of it and shed its constraints. This is also true of the birth of the new. It is hard to get out of art and rid yourself of its values so that you can stay clean in what you want to make.

What are you working on these days?

This is something I do not know; right now I am watering the olive trees and gazing at the sea. I have this idea that we should cook [Theodoros] Pangalos, [Evangelos] Venizelos and [Kostas] Karamanlis because the people are hungry. We are starving. I don't know whether it will be a video, painting, photograph or sculpture.



Thanassis Totsikas, *Untitled*, 2002
lambda print, 173 x 125 cm
Courtesy of the artist

HORRORSCOPE

by The Phoenixz Boyz

Illustrations by Evripidis Sabatis

In 1896 the Russian-Canadian archaeological excavation under the inspired supervision of Dr Igor Vrablich uncovered the secret underground aisle of the Temple of Apocryphal Dionysus in the location of Vothrolakos, Antikythera. Among the various finds which gave invaluable insight into ancient Greek apocryphal knowledge and practice (14 engraved golden daggers, a gold-and-ivory buckle of colossal dimensions, two dinner sets for 6 persons, 12 brainless statuettes made of exquisite Penteli marble, a gold-studded folding recliner, four empty minute jars, one shield painted black and ochre with a two-headed monster and the still un-deciphered letters KA, 12 mid-sized amphorae with risqué depictions of erotic acts between humans and mythical beings like the legendary Kourkouvilos, 12 unattributed heads made of fine Penteli marble, one coin made of cheap clay and carrying on the one side a moustachioed figure with a helmet and on the other a circle made of 12 stars, a silver-plated chalice with an iron lid and an inexplicable minute hole with remnants of what was probably a stimulant, and one ice holder) there was also, wrapped in wild olive-tree fibres, a copy of the work *Discourse on Stars* by Asteroscopion Anapheus. The very existence of this apocryphal text had been disputed – heatedly or otherwise – and remains a ‘holy grail’ for students of ancient Balkan apocrypha, and hitherto the only indication of its existence had been the famous note in Hesiod’s *Theogony*. *

*ΑΣΤΕΡΟΣΚΟΠΙΩΝΟΑΝΑΦΕΥΣΕΦΑ; “Asteroscopion Anapheus said [it].”

According to Hesiod, Asteroscopion Anapheus was the first chronicler of the famous Titanomachy, which, according to recently revised calculations, took place approximately 24,000 years before the certain and fully documented advent of Jesus and resulted in the establishment of what we all know as the Dodekathion of Olympian gods.

The authentic text, written in fluent xyngrammic – the written form of the dialect spoken by the Doric tribes of the southern Peloponnese – remained an unsolved mystery for years.

In 1966 an airplane carrying Drs Carsten Jancker, Anto-

nio Di Livio and Agapios Kaltaveridis crashes in the jungle of Berkeley University, California. They are met by the tribal Chief, who tells them to translate Asteroscopion’s work or die in a horrible way. Dr Carsten begins with typical German assurance but is lost in translation, i.e. he is killed in a horrible way. Next comes Di Livio, who says with typical Italian cunning: “Chief, *caro mio*, I worked all night and I think I did it.” The chief reads, shakes his head, bursts out laughing and kills him in a horrible way.

Agapios was a different kettle of fish. “*Mene spalts apothēn exeves*,” he says to the Chief; “don’t forget where you come from.”

“*Temeteron*” replies the Chief, who was actually from Pontos, with a hearty laugh: “one of ours.”

Thus came to be translated, 25,000 years after it was written, the apocryphal text of Asteroscopion.

It goes as follows:

Theia, Euryphaessa or Euryphatea or Eury {...}, daughter of Uranus and Gaea, although married to the Titan Hyperion {...} with the Titan Creios and gave birth to 6 male and 6 female subtitans, these {...} Gigantuas, Colosseon, Terastion, Pelorion, Alphamelion, Godzileus, Eubustea, Derekyia, Phalaene, Terpsimegiste, Eukoite and Orcasta. When the children of their mother’s and father’s brother Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Ares, Hestia, Hephaestus, Artemis, {...}, Aphrodite and Dionysus justly revolted against their father, Cronus, who had previously swallowed them unchewed, their 12 first cousins decided to help. They distracted their uncle Cronus with dancing and stupid acrobatics long enough for Zeus to cut his belly open and take out his {...} siblings. Fatally wounded in both his belly and his ego, Cronus used his remaining force to grab the 12 dancing siblings and hurl them into the cosmic realm of {...}. Since that time the {...} remain perched in their celestial thrones and influence the fortunes of mortals, gods and {...}.

May the 12 gods’s cousins illuminate your way at night and {...}* you every morning.

TRANSLATION NOTE: The family roots of the translator/decipherer played a major role in the loss of parts from the text when, like a typical moron, he switched on the large hob of the cooker – on which he had ‘ingeniously’ placed the unique and priceless manuscript of Asteroscopion – instead of the small hob which had his coffee mug on it. Go figure.



Colosseon

leads those born in the month of Hekatombaion (16 July - 15 August) towards the wisdom of knowledge, teaching and passing on the {...}, the universal knowledge of {...} the art of medicine {...} healer of the sickness of the world {...}



Gigantuas

leads those born in the month of Maimakterion (16 November - 15 December) along the way of Justice as well as {...} fair, strict, impeccable, moral, a judicious champion of the Law and {...}



Godzileus

leads those born in the month of Elaphebolion (16 March - 15 April) along the way of animal instincts, voluble and virile, {...} smell-loving, brutal, domestic but also a goat-lover {...}



Terpsimegiste

leads those born in the month of Metageitnion (16 August - 15 September) towards hard work, industriousness, as indefatigability, {...} robust and persistent wringers of stones, {...} unemployed, uninsured, {...}



Pelorion

leads those born in the month of Poseideon (16 December - 15 January) along the way of the Arts where the melodious lover of the godly rhythms meets the musically gifted avant guard and the ultra sensitive fine artist greets the restlessly hyper creative master of {...}



Alphamelion

leads those born in the month of Mounichion 16 April - 15 May along the way of the two-sided {...} the ambivalent, Hermaphrodite androgyny, three-sided, combining the male and the {...} side {...}



Terastion

leads those born in the month of Boedromion (16 September - 15 October) along the way of benevolence, generosity {...} loved and popular, proficient in community matters {...}, open-handed {...}



Eubustea

leads those born in the month of Gamelion (16 January - 15 February) along the way of love with the Voluptuous {...} lover of beauty {...} handsome, Oedipal, softpornic, lustful, healthy, priapic, virile, great bootied, {...} multicum, sheswallows {...}



Derekyia

leads those born in the month of (16 May - 15 June) along the dark way of the earthy {...} a death-loving mystic, black-shirted {...} the sinister goth {...} post-punk priestess {...}



Phalaene

leads those born in the month of Pyanepsion (16 October - 15 November) along the way of bravery and {...} epic warriors, fearless heroes, invincible, trigger-happy, merciless yet generous, {...} and a little touchy {...}



Orcasta

leads those born in the month of Anthesterion (16 February - 15 March) along the way of devotion, obsession {...} the road of faith is travelled on the knees by the adaptable ones who uncomplainingly {...}



Eukoite

leads those born in the month of Skirophorion (16 June - 15 July) along the way of inventiveness {...}, vulgar and sly, Greek resourcefulness my ass {...}

SPATIAL POETRY

by Petunia Exacoustou

Network integration of isolated communities and other fascinating paradoxes in the work of communication theorist and architect Mit Mitropoulos

What fascinates me most about Mit Mitropoulos is the paradox that although he has dedicated himself – with an almost obsessive devotion (as every respectable artist and scientist should do) – to the broader domain of communication, the myth that surrounds him makes him rather difficult to approach. A contemporary master of technology and its media, he looks for the parameters that coordinate the unobstructed flow of information, or the possible entanglements networks that play a decisive role in the broader field of communication. Selectively distant, he creates the impression that he applies to a certain extent the ancient story of Persephone to his everyday life. For the six-month period every year that he is based in Brussels, he can be reached mainly by mail (he calls it “an offline period”), whereas when he returns to his homeland he becomes more integrated, as he can be additionally contacted via email, telephone or even in person. His own self is becoming a crucial part of his investigations as he provokes us to find him, and to invent possible ways to approach him. Involved in fast paced activities of research and creation, he meticulously controls the accessibility of his private networks by intentionally filtering useless and time-consuming information and letting through only essential transactions between recipients that share a common language with him.

I feel pleasantly entrapped by his overwhelming childhood stories about sailing on a boat with his family, which possibly led him to appreciate the nature of networks and created his growing interest in the various characteristics of informational flow, that is, the transfer of various types of messages from one kind of place to another. Experiencing literally and in excess the true limits of life in solitude and the quest for any kind of data, he was confronted by the bold antithesis between overbearing informational excessiveness (met in noisy harbours) and the peaceful serenity of the empty horizon (while at sea).

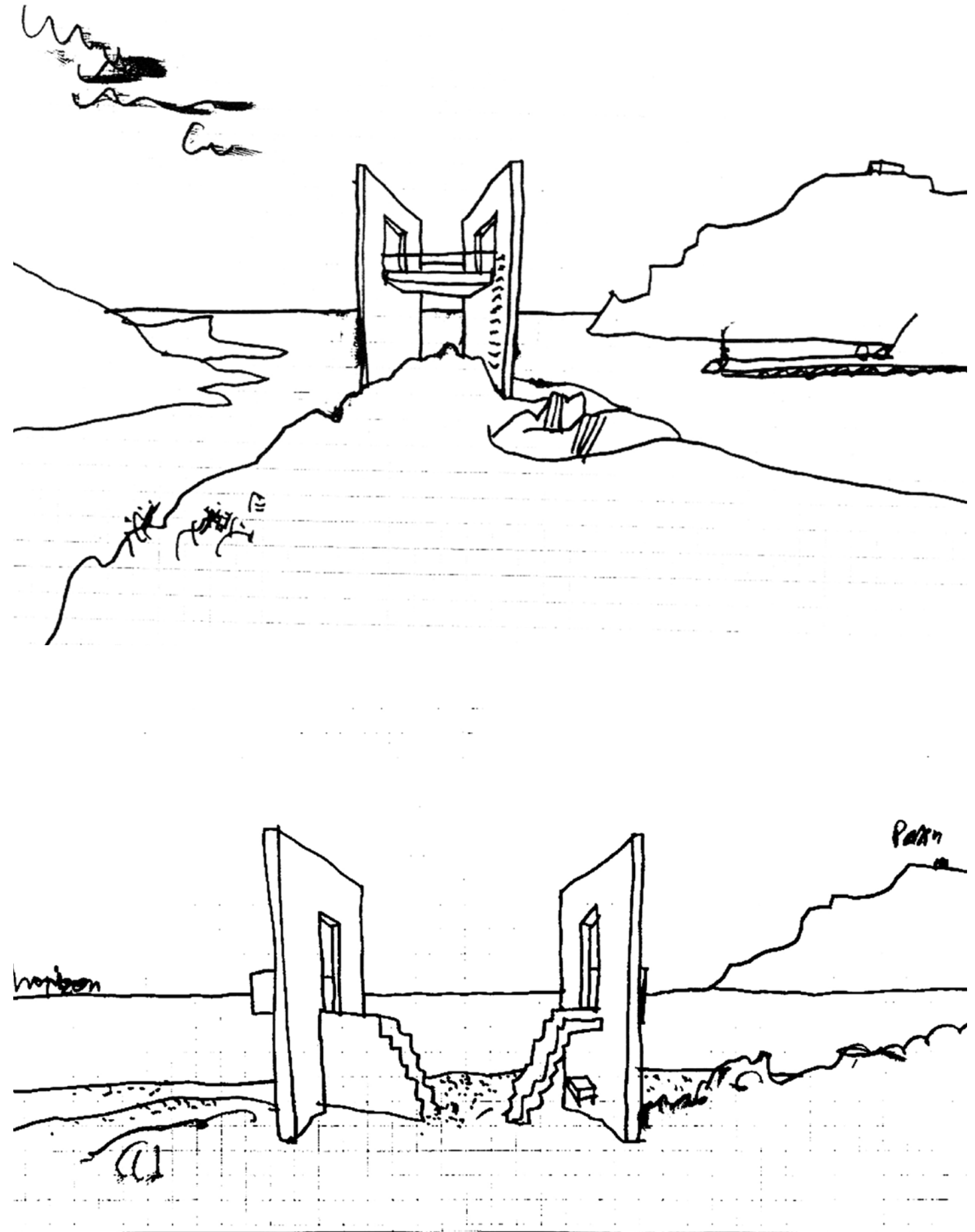
His multilayered, complex mode of thought is at times esoteric and apocryphal, and prompts the reader to return several times to the given text, in order to seek further

meanings. Frequently, additional knowledge on a specific subject is required to satisfactorily follow his undoubtedly deep reflections. And here lies another paradox: his essays are deliciously intoxicating even when you cannot fully comprehend them. You simply let yourself indulge in his spatial research, seeking to unite reflections that probe your understanding, following almost mystical geographical coordinates, and collecting traces of scattered notions and ideas, like fragments of his beloved obsidian stones, which show signs of communication in prehistoric times.

In his research, there is an explicit differentiation between the quality and the quantity of given information, and the constituents that synthesize and establish symbolic, spatial, visual, kinaesthetic and other parameters embodied or even entrapped in the act of communication. As architect and artist, he finds plausible ways of expressing this informational database in a systematically studied body of spatial (or other) occurrences. Carefully scattering fragmented messages in possibly deserted landscapes, Mitropoulos presents us with a potentially architectural poetry. These intentionally made non-finito structures are related to some vernacular typologies of semi-private-public spaces, revealing, among other things, a profound connection between his scientific thought and his artistic expressiveness.

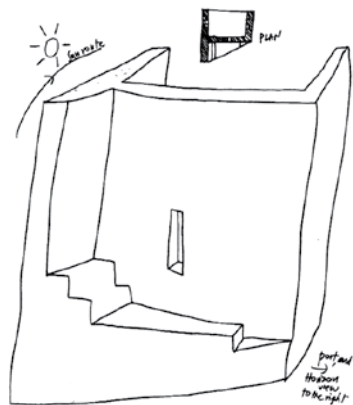
In his project “Constructions for Deserted Coastal Areas” Mitropoulos clearly differentiates between the potential recipients of his work, namely the two types of visitors to the Greek islands: tourists and travellers. He is not involved with the first group. Tourists are people that have already experienced their journey without travelling. They are prepared for any setting that they will encounter. They have already read about it, fantasised about it. They think they know it. Their movement, their goal, is of a destination and directional nature. Their intention is to go from one location to the next. The intermediate is of little interest and will be barely perceived. And lots of pictures will be taken to provide evidence of acclaimed visits: the ones you find in all the tourist guidebooks. Hence, the tourists

Mit Mitropoulos
“Minimal design constructions for remote
coastal sites on islands in the Aegean”, 1998

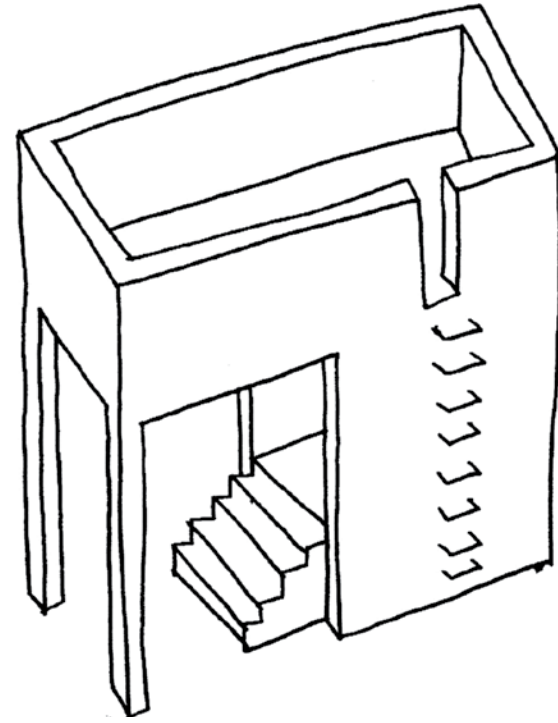


act as indifferent, forceful intruders, entrapped in their mania to record and carefully list all the information of their almost superficial experience. They certify their presence in any topos (place) and then safely retire and leave the set, contented but ignorant. In that way they are naturally excluded from the possibility of any adventure, as the spatial elements of the islands, the geographical distance, the insufficient maritime and road networks and, most of all, their inherent personal indifference to any kind of exploration create barriers obstructing their sight.

Quite unlike the tourist, the traveller fully experiences a journey by letting every step reveal its hidden meaning. For the traveller, the trip is full of images and feelings, a storm of impressions bombarding the senses. Potential human encounters are considered to be very important. The traveller is not involved in any formal or typical act of sightseeing, nor in defining a space as the highlight of the trip; the traveller explores any given site equally and treats the continuous flow of information as a serious part of the overall travelling agenda. Such a visitor discovers in Mitropoulos's deserted coastal sites signs of previous human presence, together with sculptural messages, lookouts, steps leading nowhere and open-air shrines. Through them travellers will be invited to look for the unregistered space-to-time variables and will search for more by letting their senses take charge, challenging themselves to withdraw from the continuous set of everyday life experiences and processes. An environmental artist, Mitropoulos encourages and provokes us to explore hills and slopes, distant human settlements and remote coastlines, searching for their hidden and long forgotten symbolism, their quiet, sensitive and discreet magic, lying there almost unnoticed. Most importantly, he also challenges us to function interactively and interpretatively, permitting ourselves the luxury of peaceful meditation.



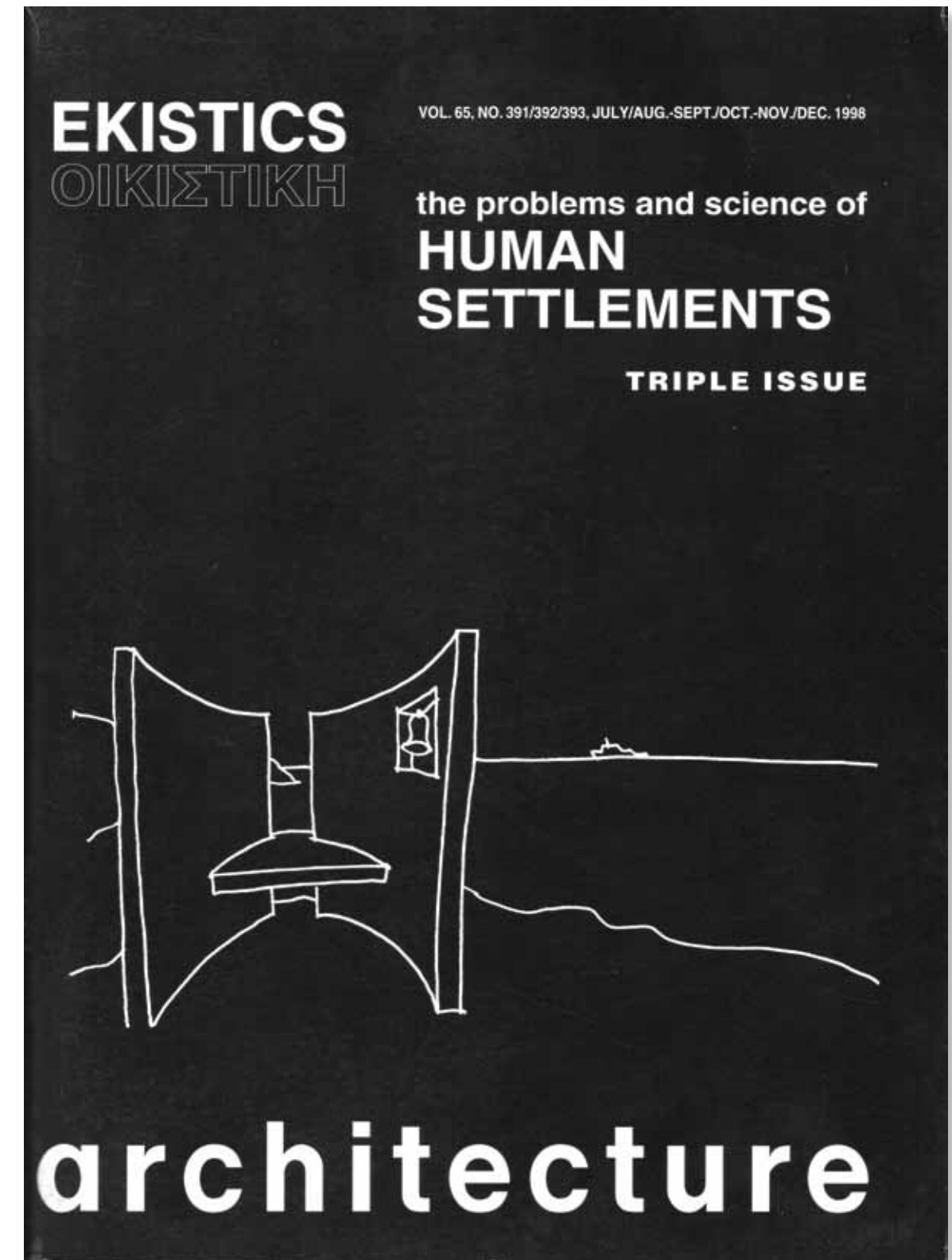
Mit Mitropoulos
"Minimal design constructions for remote coastal sites on islands in the Aegean", 1998



Mit Mitropoulos
"Minimal design constructions for remote coastal sites on islands in the Aegean", 1998

Mit Mitropoulos

Dr Mitropoulos is an expert on communication, with or without the use of technology, and on space networks, specifically the concept of space as a network rather than as a 3-dimensional place. Apart from his scientific and artistic research, he has also served as a consultant on matters of technology, policy and legislation, for national and international organisations and institutions, such as UNESCO, EVR of MIT, USA, the Greek Ministry of Culture, and the Council of Europe. An environmental artist and one of the first media artists, his work combines behavioural sciences with visual arts and focuses on relationships between art, science and technology. His projects include 2-way face-to-face interactive video-communicational installations, comparing physical to electronic space not as continuative extensions of one another, but as parallel entities. Furthermore, electronic space is seen as a field open to discovery and collective behaviour, and certainly not as an invented space. Mitropoulos is a member and a former vice president of the World Society for Ekistics, and as a student he participated in the 1969 WSE Doxiadis Delos Symposium on Networks. During the symposium he was introduced to the scattered obsidian stones in the Cyclades islands of the Aegean sea and to their inherent prehistoric information, which opened up a wide field for his future investigations. The issue of physical distance in isolated communities of the Greek islands and their network integration possibilities recur in his body of work, along with the quest for the social context of innovations, and the spatial, or other, network arrangements that activate and support them.



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UTOPIA IN EXILE

by Margaret E. Kenna

The community of exiles on the island of Anafi during the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-1941) were able to set up an isolated microcosm of the kind of society that their political views advocated



Panorama of the celebration in the village square on 25th March 1941
(before the Italian Occupation of the island)
Photo by Takis Kouroros

From the earliest times for which records of Anafi exist, there were two types of visitor to the island – those who came voluntarily and those who were forced to go to the island. Voluntary visitors in ancient times included pilgrims to the temple of Apollo, pirates in search of plunder, and, in the past four hundred years, pilgrims to the shrine of Panayia Kalamiotissa. Explorers and researchers have also chosen to visit Anafi: botanists such as Pitton de Tournefort (18th century) and archaeologists/ epigraphers such as Hiller von Gaertringen (19th century) and Angelos Matthaiou (20th and 21st century). Post WWII travellers came to the island in small numbers, but after 1974, when an electricity generator was built, many more tourists and travellers arrived, and the island migrants who had left for the city returned to take advantage of this new economic opportunity. Further developments, such as the construction of a more sheltered harbour where ferries could dock and off-load passengers and motor vehicles, increased tourist access. Later still, the building of paved and unpaved roads leading to almost all parts of the island helped islanders to reach neglected agricultural land by car, truck, mini-tractors,

quad bikes, motor bikes and scooters, and to renovate and rebuild old properties and to build new ones. The roads and cleared paths have also helped hikers and explorers to discover previously inaccessible areas of the island. While most tourists visit the island in High Season (July and August), there are others who come in May for the spring flowers or in September for the migrating birds. Those who visit at the start or the end of the season may well experience early spring or autumn storms, and get a glimpse of the physical difficulties of living at a time of strong winds, rough seas, cancelled ferries, food shortages, power cuts, and other privations. Few of them stay through the months of November to February on the island, so the months from October to the following spring can only be imagined – wind, cold, sometimes snow, delayed letters, but also clear crisp days with wonderful cloud formations and sparkling seas. The other category of visitor – those forced to go to the island – existed from Roman times onwards; people sent into exile to keep them out of public life and to punish them. In modern times (from the 1920s onwards), categories of

people who were thought to be ‘public dangers’ were sent into exile. These categories included those convicted either for their life-style (such as animal thieves, bandits and drug addicts, musicians who played *rebetika* – ‘the Greek blues’, regarded as a degenerate form of music by the authorities – and hash smokers) or for their opinions (political dissidents). Several waves of people exiled for political reasons came to Anafi over five decades, with the last few living on the island during the Junta (1967-1974). For one set of exiles on Anafi particularly rich written and visual materials exist to allow an insight into their lives in the form of handwritten newspapers and glass negatives. These were people sent to the island by the ‘Regime of the Fourth of August’ (the Metaxas Dictatorship of 1936-1941). Men, and a few women, who were members or officials of trades unions, as well as the members and adherents of any organisation deemed to hold anti-government views (usually left-wing but also including Old Calendrists) were defined as dangers to the body politic. Many were ‘administratively deported’ (i.e. without a trial which could be reported and give the opportunity for speeches denounc-

ing the regime). These exiles were more or less left to their own devices, as indeed were the other categories of exiles. They had to find their own accommodation, food, etc. The political exiles set up a commune of the type which some of them had experienced in prison, usually organised by the Communists there, a commune which any ‘political’ exile was free to join. The idea that all exiles were Communists is incorrect – the majority of them were not – but it was the Communists among them who had the training to set up prison collectives and exile communes which then organised almost every aspect of daily life. The commune rented houses in the village (many had been left empty by migrant islanders) as dormitories, rented agricultural land, and arranged work groups for farming work, building furniture, repairing and making shoes and clothes, and for baking and cooking. With the money derived from members and other sources, they were able to order bulk supplies of dried foodstuffs from the mainland (or through the local grocers), as well as the large cooking vessels required for catering for several hundred people. They also asked their professional members to provide medical



Images courtesy of the writer and the publication
Social Organization of Exile: Greek Political Detainees in the 1930s
by Margaret E. Kenna
Publisher: Harwood Academic Pub, UK, USA, 2001



and dental aid to commune members and this was extended to the islanders. Half of anything received by members (money, food, clothes sent by their families) had to be given to the commune, and all participated in work rotas according to their abilities, for example, collecting brushwood from the hillsides and fuel for the commune's ovens. In return, the commune made sure each member was housed, clothed and fed. In the early days of the Metaxas Regime there were as many as seven hundred exiles on the island, but the number dropped to three and then two hundred, particularly as pressure was put on them to sign 'declarations of repentance', renouncing Communism (whether or not they actually were Communists), and this act allowed them to leave exile and return home.

Those from different parts of Greece set up regional organisations, which took turns to organise various kinds of leisure activities for other members which broke the monotony of daily life. Some produced their own regional handwritten newspapers, while one group was in charge of a commune newspaper called *Antifascist*. There was a music group, including musicians and singers, and on special occasions plays would be put on, to which villagers were invited. The organisers of the commune were insistent that good relations with the islanders were essential; to avoid any controversial topics of conversation, most members were not allowed to say more than good-day to an islander, and the well-known 'Article 10' of the list of rules forbade any romantic or sexual association between commune members and locals (or between themselves – there were a few women exiles). Theft was severely punished – sometimes by the offender being expelled from the commune. The commune was not without its inner tensions, controversies, conflicts of personality and ideological disagreements. But, ironically, exiles were able to set up a microcosm of the kind of society that the political views of some of them advocated – a Utopia of shared skills and resources, communal activities and a voluntary code of ethics with its own system of rewards and punishments.

The exiles' lives changed dramatically during the Occupation, when an Italian garrison arrived on the island in May 1941. As one of the exiles remarked, they were no longer detainees of the Greek state but 'captive-hostages', often used in reprisals for attacks on the occupying forces. Their basic supplies from the mainland were cut off, and they were forced to live on a diet of wild greens and snails. A few members died of illnesses brought on by malnourishment and lack of food. Life at this time was hard for the islanders too, but they had their lands and livestock, and could often conceal supplies when there were searches. The exiles were finally transported from the island during the last months of 1942. Some were further imprisoned, or sent to holding camps, and some of these died or were executed; some were taken to hospital, others escaped; some joined the Resistance.

These extraordinary events are 'forgotten' to all intents and purposes on the island, because they are not relevant to any local concerns, and they do not form any part of whatever 'history' may be recounted orally, in print, or on island websites. Young women of a few village families married a few of the exile men, from both categories, criminals and politicals, and it is among their descendants that these forgotten histories and memories are still transmitted.

Very few tourists and travellers, many in search of their own Utopias, know about this part of the island's history, and, indeed, there are very few traces of the existence of any exiles in the island's one village or in the countryside. Most visitors see the island in comparison to something else, usually urban life and the anonymity of the city, and construct a vision of Utopia as 'eutopia' (the good place), which they hope they will find on the island. What they seem to crave in this location (positive social interaction on a small human scale in a pleasant landscape and climate) is indeed possible (provided that the winter months can be endured). But studies of small communities all reveal that none is without its tensions, rivalries and negative elements (as was the case in the exiles' commune). Maybe their Utopia is rather 'outopia' (no place, an unrealisable dream).



MIKHAIL BAKUNIN LEAVING FRANCE

The texts selected in this section of the publication function like a domino game and invite us to follow the paths of main actors in the cultural history of the Southern part of Europe, and beyond. Altogether, they form a possible portrait of the South as well as a cartography of artistic, political or philosophical initiatives that shaped it

by Florence Derieux

In episode one, Isadora Duncan recalls the arrival and stay of herself and her family in Greece in 1904. Later, in 1913, Duncan stayed for a short period of time in Monte Verità, near Ascona, in Ticino, Switzerland. Monte Verità is a colony which was created in 1900 by Henri Oedenkoven and Ida Hofmann, who wrote as an introduction to her memoirs: “I want to narrate the life of some people who, born into a conflictual reality where interhuman relations were dominated by egoism, luxury, appearance and lies, and becoming aware of their condition through bodily or spiritual ills decided to change their lives to lead a more natural and healthy existence. Truth, freedom of thought and actions would accompany their future aspirations like a constant point of reference.”

The history of Monte Verità comprises a tradition of historical and political upheavals that cannot be

understood without considering the previous presence of Mikhail Bakunin (1814, Russia - 1876, Switzerland) in Ticino. In the complex elaboration of the renewal of ideas and life that appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century around Monte Verità and Ascona, anarchist ideas had indeed a special significance. Bakunin stayed in Locarno from 1870 before settling from 1873 to 1874 in La Baronata, in Minusio, a house bought by Carlo Cafiero to serve as a refuge for Italian revolutionaries and as a weapons cache. He then moved to Lugano where he stayed until 1876.

The text that follows is an excerpt from Bakunin's *God and the State*, which he wrote between February and March 1871, shortly after he was forced to leave France and moved back to Switzerland. It was found after his death by Carlo Cafiero and Elisée Reclus who translated it into French and published it in 1882.

WHAT IS AUTHORITY? Is it the inevitable power of the natural laws which manifest themselves in the necessary linking and succession of phenomena in the physical and social worlds? Indeed, against these laws revolt is not only forbidden - it is even impossible. We may misunderstand them or not know them at all, but we cannot disobey them; because they constitute the basis and the fundamental conditions of our existence; they envelop us, penetrate us, regulate all our movements, thoughts and acts; even when we believe that we disobey them, we only show their omnipotence.

Yes, we are absolutely the slaves of these laws. But in such slavery there is no humiliation, or, rather, it is not slavery at all. For slavery supposes an external master, a legislator outside of him whom he commands, while these laws are not outside of us; they are inherent in us; they constitute our being, our whole being, physically, intellectually, and morally; we live, we breathe, we act, we think, we wish only through these laws. Without them we are nothing, *we are not*. Whence, then, could we derive the power and the wish to rebel against them?

In his relation to natural laws but one liberty is possible to man - that of recognising and applying them on an ever-extending scale of conformity with the object of collective and individual emancipation of humanisation which he pursues. These laws, once recognised, exercise an authority which is never disputed by the mass of men. One must, for instance, be at bottom either a fool or a theologian or at least a metaphysician, jurist or bourgeois economist to rebel against the law by which twice two make four. One must have faith to imagine that fire will not burn nor water drown, except, indeed, recourse be had to some subterfuge founded in its turn on some other natural law. But these revolts, or rather, these attempts at or foolish fancies of an im-

possible revolt, are decidedly the exception: for, in general, it may be said that the mass of men, in their daily lives, acknowledge the government of common sense - that is, of the sum of the general laws generally recognised - in an almost absolute fashion.

The great misfortune is that a large number of natural laws, already established as such by science, remain unknown to the masses, thanks to the watchfulness of those tutelary governments that exist, as we know, only for the good of the people. There is another difficulty - namely, that the major portion of the natural laws connected with the development of human society, which are quite as necessary, invariable, fatal, as the laws that govern the physical world, have not been duly established and recognised by science itself.

Once they shall have been recognised by science, and then from science, by means of an extensive system of popular education and instruction, shall have passed into the consciousness of all, the question of liberty will be entirely solved. The most stubborn authorities must admit that then there will be no need either of political organisation or direction or legislation, three things which, whether they emanate from the will of the sovereign or from the vote of a parliament elected by universal suffrage, and even should they conform to the system of natural laws - which has never been the case and never will be the case - are always equally fatal and hostile to the liberty of the masses from the very fact that they impose on them a system of external and therefore despotic laws.

The Liberty of man consists solely in this: that he obeys natural laws because he has himself recognised them as such, and not because they have been externally imposed upon him by any extrinsic will whatsoever, divine or human, collective or individual.

Suppose a learned academy, composed of the most illustrious representatives of science; suppose this academy charged with legislation for and the organisation of society, and that, inspired only by the purest love of truth, it frames none but the laws but the laws in absolute harmony with the latest discoveries of science. Well, I maintain, for my part, that such legislation and such organisation would be a monstrosity, and that, and that for two reasons: first, that human science is always and necessarily imperfect, and that, comparing what it has discovered with what remains to be discovered, we may say that it is still in its cradle. So that were we to try to force the practical life of men, collective as well as individual, into strict and exclusive conformity with the latest data of science, we should condemn society as well as individuals to suffer martyrdom on a bed of Procrustes, which would soon end by dislocating and stifling them, life ever remaining an infinitely greater thing than science.

The second reason is this: a society which should obey legislation emanating from a scientific academy, not because it understood itself the rational character of this legislation (in which case the existence of the academy would become useless), but because this legislation, emanating from the academy, was imposed in the name of a science which it venerated without comprehending - such a society would be a society, not of men, but of brutes. It would be a second edition of those missions in Paraguay which submitted so long to the government of the Jesuits. It would surely and rapidly descend to the lowest stage of idiocy.

But there is still a third reason which would render such a government impossible - namely that a scientific academy invested with a sovereignty, so to speak, absolute, even if it were composed of the most illustrious men, would infallibly and soon end in its own moral and intellectual corruption. Even today, with the few privileges allowed them, such is the history of all academies. The greatest scientific genius, from the moment that he becomes an academician, an officially licensed savant, inevitably lapses into sluggishness. He loses his spontaneity, his revolutionary hardihood, and that troublesome and savage energy characteristic of the grandest geniuses, ever called to destroy old tottering worlds and lay the foundations of new. He undoubtedly gains in politeness, in utilitarian and practical wisdom, what he loses in power of thought. In a word, he becomes corrupted.

It is the characteristic of privilege and of every privileged position to kill the mind and heart of men. The privileged man, whether practically or economically, is a man depraved in mind and heart. That is a social law which admits of no exception, and is as applicable to entire nations as to classes, corporations and individuals. It is the law of equality, the supreme condition of liberty and humanity. The principle object of this treatise is precisely to demonstrate this truth in all the manifestations of social life.

A scientific body to which had been confided the government of society would soon end by devoting itself no

longer to science at all, but to quite another affair; and that affair, as in the case of all established powers, would be its own eternal perpetuation by rendering the society confided to its care ever more stupid and consequently more in need of its government and direction.

But that which is true of scientific academies is also true of all constituent and legislative assemblies, even those chosen by universal suffrage. In the latter case they may renew their composition, it is true, but this does not prevent the formation in a few years' time of a body of politicians, privileged in fact though not in law, who, devoting themselves exclusively to the direction of the public affairs of a country, finally form a sort of political aristocracy or oligarchy. Witness the United States of America and Switzerland.

Consequently, no external legislation and no authority - one, for that matter, being inseparable from the other, and both tending to the servitude of society and the degradation of the legislators themselves.

DOES IT FOLLOW THAT I REJECT ALL AUTHORITY? Far from me such a thought. In the matter of boots, I refer to the authority of the shoemaker; concerning houses, canals, or railroads, I consult that of the architect or the engineer. For such or such special knowledge I apply to such or such a savant. But I allow neither the shoemaker nor the architect nor savant to impose his authority upon me. I listen to them freely and with all the respect merited by their intelligence, their character, their knowledge, reserving always my incontestable right of criticism and censure. I do not content myself with consulting a single authority in any special branch; I consult several; I compare their opinions, and choose that which seems to me the soundest. But I recognise no infallible authority, even in special questions; consequently, whatever respect I may have for the honesty and the sincerity of such or such individual, I have no absolute faith in any person. Such a faith would be fatal to my reason, to my liberty, and even to the success of my undertakings; it would immediately transform me into a stupid slave, an instrument of the will and interests of others.

If I bow before the authority of the specialists and avow my readiness to follow, to a certain extent and as long as may seem to me necessary, their indications and even their directions, it is because their authority is imposed on me by no one, neither by men nor by God. Otherwise I would repel them with horror, and bid the devil take their counsels, their directions, and their services, certain that they would make me pay, by the loss of my liberty and self-respect, for such scraps of truth, wrapped in a multitude of lies, as they might give me.

I bow before the authority of special men because it is imposed on me by my own reason. I am conscious of my own inability to grasp, in all its detail, and positive development, any very large portion of human knowledge. The greatest intelligence would not be equal to a comprehension

of the whole. Thence results, for science as well as for industry, the necessity of the division and association of labour. I receive and I give - such is human life. Each directs and is directed in his turn. Therefore there is no fixed and constant authority, but a continual exchange of mutual, temporary, and, above all, voluntary authority and subordination.

This same reason forbids me, then, to recognise a fixed, constant and universal authority, because there is no universal man, no man capable of grasping in all that wealth of detail, without which the application of science to life is impossible, all the sciences, all the branches of social life. And if such universality could ever be realised in a single man, and if he wished to take advantage thereof to impose his authority upon us, it would be necessary to drive this man out of society, because his authority would inevitably reduce all the others to slavery and imbecility. I do not think that society ought to maltreat men of genius as it has done hitherto: but neither do I think it should indulge them too far, still less accord them any privileges or exclusive rights whatsoever; and that for three reasons: first, because it would often mistake a charlatan for a man of genius; second, because, through such a system of privileges, it might transform into a charlatan even a real man of genius, demoralise him, and degrade him; and, finally, because it would establish a master over itself.

TO SUM UP. We recognize, then, the absolute authority of science, because the sole object of science is the mental reproduction, as well-considered and systematic as possible, of the natural laws inherent in the material, intellectual, and moral life of both the physical and the social worlds, these two worlds constituting, in fact, but one and the same natural world. Outside of this only legitimate authority, legitimate because rational and in harmony with human liberty, we declare all other authorities false, arbitrary and fatal.

We recognize the absolute authority of science, but we reject the infallibility and universality of the representatives of science. In our church - if I may be permitted to use for a moment an expression which I so detest: Church and State are my two *bêtes noires* - in our church, as in the Protestant church, we have a chief, an invisible Christ, science; and, like the Protestants, more logical even than the Protestants, we will suffer neither pope, nor council, nor conclaves of infallible cardinals, nor bishops, nor even priests. Our Christ differs from the Protestant and Christian Christ in this - that the latter is a personal being, ours impersonal; the Christian Christ, already completed in an eternal past, presents himself as a perfect being, while the completion and perfection of our Christ, science, are ever in the future: which is equivalent to saying that they will never be realized. Therefore, in recognizing *absolute science* as the only absolute authority, we in no way compromise our liberty.

I mean by the words "absolute science", the truly uni-

versal science which would reproduce ideally, to its fullest extent and in all its infinite detail, the universe, the system or co-ordination of all the natural laws manifested by the incessant development of the world. It is evident that such a science, the sublime object of all the efforts of the human mind, will never be fully and absolutely realized. Our Christ, then, will remain eternally unfinished, which must considerably take down the pride of his licensed representatives among us. Against that God the Son in whose name they assume to impose upon us their insolent and pedantic authority, we appeal to God the Father, who is the real world, real life, of which he (the Son) is only a too imperfect expression, whilst we - real beings, living, working, struggling, loving, aspiring, enjoying, and suffering -, are its immediate representatives.

But, while rejecting the absolute, universal, and infallible authority of men of science, we willingly bow before the respectable, although relative, quite temporary, and very restricted authority of the representatives of special sciences, asking nothing better than to consult them by turns, and very grateful for such precious information as they may extend to us, on condition of their willingness to receive from us on occasions when, and concerning matters about which, we are more learned than they. In general, we ask nothing better than to see men endowed with great knowledge, great experience, great minds, and, above all, great hearts, exercise over us a natural and legitimate influence, freely accepted, and never imposed in the name of any official authority whatsoever, celestial or terrestrial. We accept all natural authorities and all influences of fact, but none of right; for every authority or every influence of right, officially imposed as such, becoming directly an oppression and a falsehood, would inevitably impose upon us, as I believe I have sufficiently shown, slavery and absurdity.

In a word, we reject all legislation, all authority, and all privileged, licensed, official, and legal influence, even though arising from universal suffrage, convinced that it can turn only to the advantage of a dominant minority of exploiters against the interests of the immense majority in subjection to them.

This is the sense in which we are really anarchists.

Michael Buckett, *Mikhail Bakunin*, 2012
pen on paper
Courtesy of the artist

[berlin] [kassel] [genk]

We Might have been Telling Ourselves the Wrong Stories All Along – And the Weather Has Nothing to Do With It

By Ana Teixeira Pinto

Reflecting on last summer's 'big art events' – the Berlin Biennale, documenta 13, Manifesta 9, Taipei Biennial - from the back bench of a political economy art exhibition in Greece

Can one deduce a people's psychology from the climate? I visited Thessaloniki briefly last June. It was hot, but none of the other usual clichés seemed to apply. At the opening of the show "It's the Political Economy, Stupid" at the Contemporary Art Center (CACT), all the artists were introduced to the head of the local Goethe Institute. When he was asked about the crisis I overheard him saying something to the effect: "the crisis is a good thing because finally things get done." German racism in a nutshell, I thought. The recurring idea that southerners need disciplining and that in order to make them more industrious you should use a stick rather than a carrot. For all the buzz the *Bild Zeitung* covers <<which ones?>> elicited they are just the rude version of every diplomat's opinion, by no means the exception to the rule but rather the exception that masks the rule. And for all the rhetorical spin of austerity apologists, their newpeak is but the most recent iteration of a discourse that has been around since the Industrial Revolution, namely that the poor never work quite enough and that if bad fortune befalls them they have only their own ineptitude to blame, while those speaking from a position of privilege – like the Goethe Institute's director, who will never have to struggle to support his family after a 30% salary reduction – never see the essential asymmetry at play.

All creditors represent the crisis as a contract: debts once incurred must be repaid. But what contract theory always conveniently brackets out are the sociological conditions that precede the contractual conditions. Greece didn't suddenly indulge in a spending binge. When the market collapsed the Greek economy contracted, and tax revenues went down while the deficit went up. Greece protected its financial sector and in the same breath had to start repaying the loans it had previously made when the financial sector was in full swing. But the crucial factor lies in the set-up of the euro monetary system, which was designed to limit the capacity of EU governments to borrow and spend. The euro nations are not – unlike the United States and Britain – allowed to finance their own government's debt. The policy currently in place has the ECB lending to

commercial banks at negative interest rate – that is, lower than inflation – so that these banks can lend back to the southern governments at a 7, 8 or even 9% interest rate, skimming off the profit. The so-called crisis is little more than a scheme to refinance the banking sector at the expense of the taxpayers, while exporting wage suppression and the increasingly precarious conditions that German workers face to the European periphery. When it comes to which taxpayers will have to be sacrificed the German political equation is clear – obviously the Greeks do not vote for the Bundestag. And though voting is the only form of political participation tolerated in Western democracies, the electorate is prevented from having a significant impact on policy since the determining issues never find their way into the ballot box. The invisible of free market economy is not its 'hand' however opaque that hand may be, the invisible of free market economy is the extent to which a state sponsored – and violent – process of coercion is recurrently used to keep markets running.

Under dire political circumstances, artworks are met with impatience or impossible demands, as was the case with the seventh Berlin Biennale, which tried to showcase the visuals of uprising – seemingly failing to understand that, though it photographs well, uprising is not essentially visual. Curatorial blunders aside, can art effect political change? Sure it can, but probably not the kind that people seem to expect when they complain that nobody exits a gallery feeling like setting fire to trash cans. To whine that art doesn't compel immediate action is a fundamental misunderstanding of how the aesthetic works. Though we tend to forget it, the democratic privilege of being a speaking subject is concomitant with the modern regime of representation through which the banal, the overlooked or the negligible have found their expression. Jacques Rancière invites us to think of the political as that which effects a distribution of the sensible, instituting a set of relations between the perceptible, the thinkable and the doable. The political defines the way a class of human beings partakes in the common world, while governance implies the selection of a number of concerns which are said to determine our situation and the sense we can make out

A project by Pawel Althamer in collaboration with
NRM, Amaroka and Paprika Korps. Realised by Open
Art Projects as part of the 7th Berlin Biennale
Courtesy of the 7th Berlin Biennale



Igor Grubic, *The Angels with dirty Faces*, 2004-2006
photographs
Courtesy of the artist

of it (see Rancière's *Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France*). In Rancière's view, politics is a stage upon which certain issues or plans can be brought to public scrutiny, while others are suppressed, barred from articulation and thus rendered invisible. The nature of this exclusion becomes clearer once one comes to establish that the motor of history is the struggle for recognition. From this perspective, art and politics are fundamentally contingent notions. Only the reconfiguration of the aesthetic can force open the gap between what *is* and what *can be*, or describe the activity of overcoming the negative – what Hegel called *Aufhebung* (sublation) but which can be also appear as the Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* (estrangement): that which would make the dissonance or flaws in the ideological compact become apparent, thereby making it possible for a discursive change to occur.

No wonder that what we came to call the “political turn” is often associated with a reevaluation of modernism, and no wonder a preoccupation with history presided over the orientation of last summer's biggest exhibitions. But to give credit where credit is due, with the Berlin Biennale of 2010 Kathrin Rhomberg had already sought to rehabilitate realism in order to redefine the genealogy of modernity. Though the show was much maligned it raised a crucial issue, namely how urgent it has become to re-access our recent history, later echoed by documenta 13 and the last Manifesta. Equating industrial economic restructuring with modernist poetic restructuring, Manifesta 9, *The Deep of the Modern*, sits squarely at the crux of the matter. Tim Mitchell's *Carbon Democracy – Political Power in the Age of Oil* details the history of the relationship between carbon-based fueling sources and modern political systems, focusing on how conservative governments understood that as long as their national power grid was dependent

on domestic fuel provided by unionized miners, labour would be able to demand higher wages, social insurance, voting rights, and a share of economic gains. As the book makes manifest, the history of coal mining in Europe is inextricably intertwined with the rise of mass democracy and the shift to oil, concomitant with the rise in imperial strategies, was, in fact, the result of a fight against labour, and a means to reduce democratic pressure. I did not visit *The Deep of the Modern* and I am told the show had manifold shortcomings, but even so the question of how fossil fuels shaped both the horizon of modern democracy and its limits seems fundamental.

On a different note, documenta 13 represented history as a dark and dangerous place in which the laws of cause and effect get distorted, akin to the “Zone” in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979). Similarly to the “Zone”, every time one enters it, one exits at a different place, and though history also can fulfil one's wishes, these are not the consciously expressed ones: Whereas in 1945 Lee Miller bathed in Adolf Hitler's Munich bathtub the same day he committed suicide, the last decades brought all of the late fürher's dreams to fruition – Germany is an undisputed super power, Europe has been voided of Communists and Jews and the South is a vast labour camp.

Perhaps this sad irony came about because, as the 2012 Taipei Biennial suggests, history is a monster who can foresee and thwart human agency. The exhibition evokes the Taowo, an ancient Chinese monster to whom the power to see into both past and future was attributed, and which over the course of centuries came to signify history itself (see David Der Wei Wang's *The Monster That is History*). But it might also be that we have been telling ourselves the wrong stories all along – and the weather has nothing to do with it.

Chiara Fumai, *Shut Up. Actually, Talk (The world will not explode)*, 2012
Group performance on Fridericianum's roof featuring Zalumma Agra and the Stars of the East, 60 min, Courtesy of Chiara Fumai, Commissioned by DOCUMENTA (13) and produced with the support of Fiorucci Art Trust, London
Photo by Henrik Stromberg



[são paulo]

The Imminence of Poetics, 30th Bienal de São Paulo

by Luiza Proença

The Bienal de São Paulo is still the most anticipated art event in Brazil, being responsible, during its 60 years of existence, for presenting foreign contemporary art in a way that no other institution in the country does. And it is what motivates, every two years, the visit of many professionals to the country and, therefore, an intense parallel programme of exhibitions and events in galleries, private collections and cultural institutions. Nevertheless, the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo lives on successive crises and the curatorial project somehow always accompanies its mood.

Running the risk of not taking place – as it recovers from a debt of around 75 million reais [37 million dollars] to the Brazilian government – the 30th Bienal de São Paulo, *The Imminence of Poetics*, unlike previous ones, manifests itself discreetly. While the last three editions – in 2006, 2008 and 2010 – chose to hold a series of seminars and workshops, the current biennial focuses on the production of the exhibition. Moreover, avoiding the construction of an authorial discourse is a stance of the current curatorial team: Tobi Maier (Germany), André Severo (Brazil) and Isabella Villanueva (Venezuela) led by Luis Pérez-Oramas (Venezuela) in an effort to put the artworks in first place, believing in their capability to relate to the world.

This stance includes a declaration that the 30th Bienal does not have a “theme”, but a “motif”: the articulation of ideas of “imminence” and “poetic”. Imminence understood as what is about to happen, is in a state of suspension, on its way to effectively *becoming* poetics, understood as discourse, as what is expressed, is left unsaid, is transformed and takes on communicative power by way of the language of the arts.

In all, there are around 3,000 works by 111 artists gathered together with the aim of focusing “more on the creative process of each artist than on the discursive relationship between them”. The artists and works are articulated by the idea of ‘constellations’: they can freely and arbitrarily establish relationships between them, but are also constellations in themselves, “quasi-retrospective” shows of each artist.

The ambiguity of the curatorial approach sometimes even make it hard to notice the “curatorial zones” that define the choices of artists and works, but these choices aren't made explicit in the exhibition space. In short, these “zones” or concepts are: *survivals* (forms and practices incorporated into everyday life); *alterforms* (the deformations of modernity in Latin America and the questioning of “the state of artistic media”); *drifts* (the derivations of forms, languages and images, both in art and in the spaces created by technology); *voices* (works in which the voice emerges through performance and phonic materials), and finally *reverse*, a series of urban interventions and exhibi-



Waldemar Cordeiro
Clube Esperia, 1965
Courtesy of Cordeiro Family



Daniel Steegmann Magrané,
Lichtzwang (rombo), 2010

tions in other institutions in São Paulo, taking the Bienal out of its main pavilion at the Ibirapuera Park.

The result is a biennial without risk, tensions or contaminations, which we might call “museographic”, with small rooms for each artist – the “quasi-retrospectives”. There is breathing space throughout the exhibition: In a city, or country, where the frailness of the cultural institutions is a given, this could become meaningful. But is this the role expected from a biennial? What then is the purpose of holding a group show?

The imminence of the poetics does not leave aside the educational strand present in the history of São Paulo's biennials, which have brought to the city major exhibitions of figures such as Roberto Filliou (1926 - 1987, France), Robert Smithson (1938 - 1973, USA), Allan Kaprow (1927 - 2006, USA), Bas Jan Ader (1942, Netherlands - 1975, disappeared)

and Gego (1912, Germany - 1994, Venezuela). None of these artists are presented as heroes or stars, or with the complexity that history has cast on them. Even the complete set of works by the Bienal's highlighted figure, Arthur Bispo do Rosario (1909 - 1989, Brazil), is presented mainly through a formal approach to his work when related to the other artists'. Bispo do Rosario was a psychiatric hospital intern who used discarded materials to produce works mapping his belief that he was charged with some sort of divine mission.

Among the “historical artists” is also Waldemar Cordeiro (1925, Italy - 1973, Brazil), who participated intensely in the first biennials and was the founder of the concrete movement in Brazil. His production in the 50s sought to give visibility to rational principles or ideas. He invented abstract works, guided by the rationality of mathematics, which were not representative of reality. Later, he pioneered the use of computers as a medium for artistic experimentation. Cordeiro is an important figure for a number of contemporary artists who revisit Latin American geometric abstraction or who are interested in technology. The 30th Bienal also presents a full-size replica of the playground made by him in São Paulo in 1961 at the Esperia sport club, thereby introducing a viewer to his little known but significant work as a landscape designer. Historic photographs of the original construction are also exhibited between some paintings and objects made by the artist, showing a dynamic and colourful playground in a ‘collective’ space. However, the resulting replica is merely an illustration: curiously it doesn't occupy the public space of Ibirapuera Park in which the Bienal is located; instead it lies in an open air area of the building (which seems to have been used as a smoking area), preventing what could have been its playful potential.

Even though there are many different strands, generations of artists, languages and nationalities (although the Bienal has very few Asian participants), many artists attract attention. This is the case with Ilene Segalove (1950, USA) who portrays American culture and family with critical humour in *The Mom Tapes*, where she takes her relationship with her own mother as the subject. Among the youngest artists, Daniel Steegmann (1977, Spain) presents a series of watercolours on graph paper and the film *16mm*, which makes us feel as if we are entering a tropical forest. Fernanda Gomes (1960, Brazil) is also one of the participating Brazilian contemporary artists who stand out. Through the rearrangement of collected residues in the Bienal building she references the architecture, evoking white and luminous spaces.

Therefore, despite presenting works that each evoke a curiosity, which could mobilize the construction of thought and creativity, the 30th Bienal de São Paulo seeks not to be assertive. As a result, it doesn't seem to advance any tangible hypotheses. Even if this is clearly the desire of the curators – as explicitly mentioned in the curatorial texts – only time will tell what will emerge from the supposedly direct experience with the artistic practices being exhibited, and here the idea of imminence indeed becomes critical.



Eduardo Gil
A Brief History of the End of the War (detail)
2010-2012



Alexandre da Cunha, Fair Trade XIV, 2011
in collaboration with Luisa Strina
33,50 x 50 cm
Courtesy of Galeria Luisa Strina

[são paulo]

SESC (SOCIAL SERVICE OF COMMERCE) PIRACICABA

Bienal Naïfs *do Brasil* 2012 - Beyond the Avant-Garde

by Fernando Oliva

Brazilian society has a difficult and ambiguous relationship with its roots and everything that is culturally concerned with the popular or primitive. The reasons for this are complex and old, dating back to the sixteenth century and referring – not surprisingly – to the type of colonisation which the country was subjected to, followed by centuries of totalitarian governments, including a violent dictatorship in the twentieth century encompassing three decades (1964-1985) and perpetuated by class division (despite being rich, Brazil – the sixth global economy – is still one of the most unequal countries in the world). It was only ten years ago, in 2002, that a non-elite president came to power with the election of Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva.

Certainly, a “typically Brazilian aesthetics” – if it exists – would not be immune to this rugged trajectory, whose main negative aspect is a brutal distance between, on the one side, the elites’ economic interests, where historically public and private spheres are entangled, and, on the other side, the needs of the population, including cultural needs (despite the current era of growth and optimism, the Ministry of Culture’s budget is less than 1% of the total

revenue raised by the State). In other words, in Brazil the distance between that which is called “popular” and that which is considered “erudite” have traumatic social connotations.

It is in this context that we should approach any initiative promoting friction and displacement between the spheres of cultural and artistic production and reception that traditionally have been divided, which is exactly the case with *Bienal Naïfs do Brasil* 2012 - Beyond the Avant-Garde. The exhibition fostered a powerful sense of change, placing side-by-side works by naïf and contemporary artists for the first time in twenty years.

The *Bienal Naïfs do Brasil* is a long-established event in Brazilian terms: its origins date back to 1986. The curator of the 11th edition is Kiki Mazzucchelli, a Brazilian researcher and curator who was based in London for fifteen years and whose research interests include the thought and work of Lina Bo Bardi¹, the Italo-Brazilian architect who incor-

¹ Modernist artist born in Italy who moved to Brazil in 1946 and found in the country the best expression for her projects. She is the creator of MASP (São Paulo Art Museum) and SESC Pompéia, two buildings that are symbols of São Paulo — the sixth largest city in the world with 20 million inhabitants.



Rodrigo Matheus, Interior / Exterior, 2012
200 x 140 cm, Courtesy of Galeria Fortes Vilaça
Photograph taken by SESC staff

porated Brazilian popular language into her projects and research.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, the *Bienal Naïfs do Brasil* has presented, in parallel with the artworks selected by the jury, the so-called “Special Rooms”, which were themed exhibitions on a smaller scale bringing together artworks selected by a contemporary art curator appointed by SESC. When Kiki Mazzucchelli was invited, her first curatorial move was to abolish the physical separation between the works in the salon and in the “Special Room”. The curator explains that her aim is to break the artificial stiffness of the categories that circumscribe both artistic genres by assuming that their coexistence in the same environment will contribute towards a freer experience of the artworks by the public and an existence less prescribed by curatorial approaches that prioritise the traditional methods of art categorisation.

Therefore, we have typically naïf artworks – generally paintings and drawings by artists such as Deraldo, Evandro Soares and Jefer – side-by-side with contemporary artists Rodrigo Matheus, Alexandre da Cunha, Tonico Lemos Auad, Pablo Lobato, Carla Zaccagnini, Thiago Rocha Pitta and Daniel Steegmann Mangrané, amongst others. This coexistence leads to tense, strange and uncomfortable encounters but also, or exactly because of it, something new, encouraging and vigorous.

One of the most challenging and also critical artworks in relation to the division in the exhibition itself is presented by Rodrigo Matheus, a Brazilian artist currently living in London. Based on his study of documents and commercial paperwork from the beginning of the twentieth century concerning import/export transactions between Brazil and England, bought recently from antique dealers in Portobello Road, the artist built wall pieces that set in motion Brazilian past and future history, that is, the colonial Brazil, dependent on Europe, and the contemporary Brazil, a country that has just overtaken Britain in terms of GDP. Ironically, amongst the wrapping paper used to export oranges to Britain, the artist includes a company logo in the shape of a Nazi swastika cast in blue over the word “BRAZIL”.

Alexandre da Cunha, in the series of embroideries included in the exhibition, appropriates popular practice/knowledge and commonplace materials, as he did in earlier works, making use of their symbolic values. Here he associates the quality of embroidery fabric with the large burlap bags used in coffee exporting, which serve as a raw material for these works. It should be noted that when he exhibits the artworks of this series in the context of this exhibition, in the interior of São Paulo state — whose development in the nineteenth century was driven by the coffee industry — he lends them a new meaning by activating their relations with history.

The work by the Minas Gerais artist Pablo Lobato presents a recurrent and highly symbolic image in the world of popular art: the church bell. In the history of the *Bienal Naïfs do Brasil*, there have been countless artworks in which church bells figure in scenes of public squares or festivities, always perched at the top of the bell towers

of small churches in small cities and towns. It is precisely in Minas Gerais, Lobato’s state of birth, where some of the most precious churches of the baroque period are found. It was there that the artist carried out research into the bells of different cities, many of them not in use today, an investigation that resulted in a series of works that includes *Bronze Revirado* [Overturned Bronze], a video installation that integrates the exhibition.

The operations in Tonico Lemos Auad’s works invariably involve a specific handicraft skill that is characteristic of certain regions or cultures and associated with traditional materials and techniques passed from one generation to the next down through the centuries. In their obsolescence in relation to the society of mass production, many of these techniques are currently nearly extinct, thus also turning Auad’s work into an extensive research and negotiation with each artisan involved. Here the artist presents a set of five objects that are part of his Sleepwalkers series, carefully produced using lace from different places, which the artist acquires already made, but which are then transformed into three-dimensional elements in the form of fruits or vegetables.

After seeing the whole exhibition, in another warm afternoon in Piracicaba, we left with the strange impression that perhaps these artists and their works are not so distant after all. On the opening night, naïf and contemporary crowds reached out to each other. And more than once I heard “you, as a contemporary artist... what do you think of this or that artwork?” The next day, Brazilian anthropologist Laymert Garcia dos Santos – invited by the curator - gave a lecture about the “magical thought” of Amazon Forest shamans - the subject of his research - and whose drawings are now part of the exhibition *Histoires de Voir* (Show and Tell) at the Fondation Cartier pour L’art Contemporain. In the end I came back to São Paulo, its galleries and museums, with the weird impression that I had experienced something new, daring and unexpected, whose outcome we are still not able to evaluate, but which we’ll hear of in the near future, similar to a low frequency earthquake at high sea, that reverberates for a long time and runs long distances until it reaches the continent.

[athens]

CAMP (CONTEMPORARY ART MEETING POINT)

Athens Underground: The Promise of the 'Anti' Spirit

by Angeliki Roussou



A visual network that unravels and reproduces the multiple connections between socio-political realities, works of art and cultural documents of a specific time and place is what the exhibition *Athens Underground 1964-1983* (curated by Thanos Moutsopoulos at CAMP) has constructed. It is the first extensive attempt to assemble the existing archive and display it in conjunction with works of Greek contemporary art in order to complete and to reinvent the underground puzzle in today's terms. Exploring the peripheral and marginal status of this visual counterculture in relation to the art world, the city and mainstream institutional mechanisms, the exhibition is asking what this network of a recent, turbulent past might tell us now, at a time of (slightly) different social and cultural crisis.

The exhibition includes scrap-paper notes, photographs, paintings, illustrations, magazine and music album covers, comic books and films that all offer a broad insight into the visual culture of politically unstable periods like the Greek junta (1968-1973) as well as the more prolific years of the late 70s. However, the aim is not to exhibit history and its chronology. The visitor engages in a processional unfolding of the particular characteristics of the Athens underground – an entity that during its time was elusive enough to have to claim for itself the characterisation 'scene'.

In fact, as Michail Mitras suggests, this scene differs from other equivalent scenes in that it is not so systematic and obvious, and it doesn't proclaim a clear agenda of demands or oppositions.

However, it comes with particularities that make it all the more intriguing for both Greek and international audiences. For instance, as Moutsopoulos suggests, there are several works, like that of Panos Koutrouboussis, where beatnik elements converge with a cosmic, planetary and psychedelic surrealism, despite (or possibly because of) surrealism's relatively limited representation by Greek modernism. This pioneering combination results in a vast work of paintings and comic-book illustrations, such as *No Not Magdalo* and *Nuclear Donald*, which are still artistically important. The beatnik mentality, along with loose takes on existentialism, led to the formation of Simos's shack of existentialism – a shack in the centre of Athens that from the early 50s promoted the circulation of new ideas, rock'n'roll parties and excursions into the city. Fragments of this little Athenian world come back to life in the form of note scraps and old photographs of its members.

Along the path, one can find constellations of greater density, like the assembly of Simos's shack and its products or the magazine *Pali* (published by Leonidas Christakis) that brought together (often from abroad) some key figures of the scene, such as Nanos Valaoritis, Yorgos Makris and Panos Koutrouboussis. In fact, after *Pali* numerous underground magazines published by Leonidas Christakis follow, such as *Kouros*, *Panderma* and *Ideodromio*. As Moutsopoulos observes, these publications were perhaps the only significant platform that made room for this creative abundance, which was unsuitable for the galleries and the mainstream art institutions of the time.

On the other hand, artists who were not under the

umbrella of an underground publication still played a vital role in the scene as a whole. Invigorating artistic proposals full of energy can be found, for example, in Kostis Triadafilou and Minos Argirakis's works promoting sexual liberation. Spyros Delialis's introduction of an earthly psychedelia and Steve Giannakos's injections of pop cartoon figures diversify even further the Athens' underground scene. Yannis Arkoudis Christodoulou adds a punk mentality, full of rage and rejection – more nihilistic than the earlier atmosphere of liberation.

Another key figure of the exhibition and the underground scene is Alexis Akritchakis – and not just because of his work's undisputed significance in terms of Greek contemporary art. His micro-structures of psychedelic patterns manage to unfold in an entirely new and contemporary way a certain type of Greek identity that the previous generation of Greek modernism proclaimed and, that as Aimilios Kyparissos claims, institutional Greek postmodernism fiercely rejected.

Despite all this, one might suggest that even though the exhibition attempts to establish relations with today's reality, as a unit it doesn't really respond to the relevant twenty-first century debates, first of all because all the works are barricaded, in a way, into a very specific past. The line between the cool show that digs out hidden archives of underground anarchists, just for the sake of it, and the valid show that actually has something new to put forward can be very thin.

However, this exhibition does not fall into those traps after all as it sheds light on something remarkable

about the 1964-1983 scene. Because there was not a gigantic industrialised institutional regime to reject and oppose like in other western countries, the Greek underground of this period evolved as vastly heterotopic and multiple, but also, at the same time, as fleeting and impalpable. It drew its significance, as it were, from the 'anti' spirit in itself, rather than from the object it opposed, which was, anyhow, unstable and relatively undefined. This is precisely the underground's potential promise that can be applied to today, and the show grasps and cheers for it: to maintain an open and fluid counter-production that nevertheless resists the eternal, all-encompassing and flattening out movement of the mainstream.

LEFT: Cover of *Ideodromio* publication, 1978
Courtesy of Nektarios Papadimitriou collection

LEFT: Cover of *Panderma* publication, 1972
Courtesy of Nektarios Papadimitriou collection

ABOVE: Panos Koutrouboussis
No! Not Magdalo!!, 1966
Courtesy of Private Collection
Exhibited for the first time in *Anathena* exhibition
(DESTE foundation)
and was part of the 3rd Thessaloniki Biennial





[**lysarraia, arcadia**]
**Flashes of Black Dreams
in Arcadia**

by **Constantinos Hadzinikolaou**

Every four years, cine-pilgrims and followers of unique events, spend a summer weekend at Temenos, a field near the village of Lyssaraia, Arcadia, near the birthplace of late, legendary avant-garde filmmaker Gregory J. Markopoulos, to watch another segment of his poetic, fragmented opus *Eniaios*



We can see *Eniaios*, the final work of Gregory J. Markopoulos, completed shortly before his death, as a series of black pieces which are suddenly illuminated by images that hit our gaze and then immediately vanish into dark areas or white areas – which is almost the same thing – only to fill with light again: a column of tesserae like the mosaic columns in Uruk, Mesopotamia, but elongated by thousand of kilometers (of film) and spooled in reels.

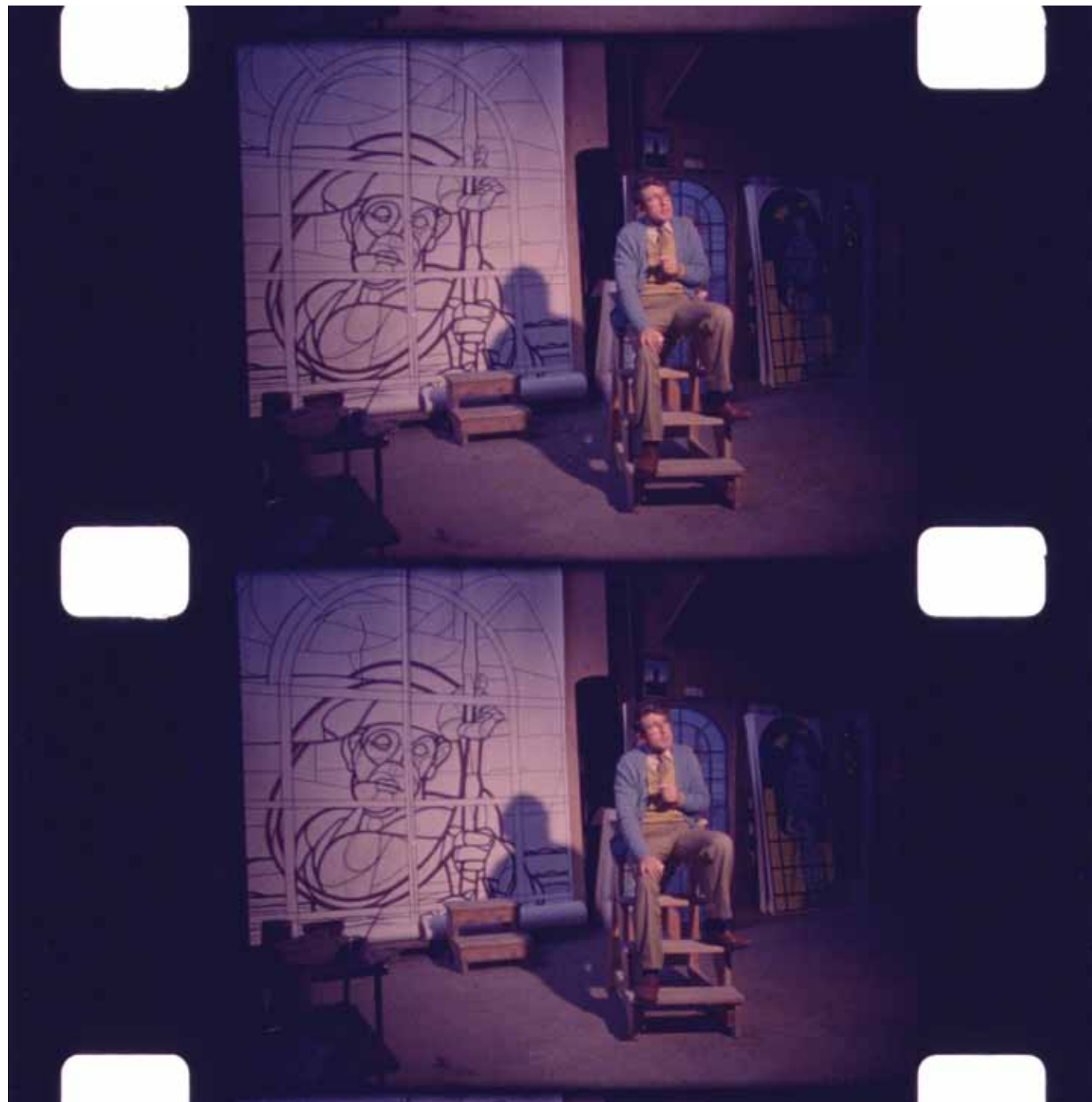
This *sui generis* filmmaker/mosaic maker shot some structurally groundbreaking films based on ancient Greek myths (*Twice a Man* in 1963, *The Illiac Passion* in 1964-67), some wonderfully lit films shot in interiors – *Ming Green* (1966), *Bliss* (1967), *Sorrows* (1969) – and dozens of portraits in *Galaxie* (1966) and *Political Portraits* (1969). He worked alone using minimal equipment, only what was strictly necessary, refusing to have any producer above him in what is always a problematic relationship. However, he did accept the help of patrons (his adherence to the upper middle class was as typical as that of Rilke), editing his films on hotel tables where he lived for long periods of time or in apartments that looked like hotel rooms. In the last decade of his life he worked on a filmic mosaic of 80 hours, divided into 22 cycles, using tesserae/frames from his earlier films (starting with *Du sang, de la volupté*

et de la mort of 1947-48), cutting up the original copies and combining them with previously unseen material – *Cimabue! Cimabue!*, a second version of *Hagiographia*, – and new sequences shot as late as 1990 – persons, ruins, stones – for a final result he never saw.

The truth is that no one had seen *Eniaios* until 2004, when the first hours of the film, restored and printed, began to be projected at the place which Markopoulos himself had selected for the exclusive showing of his work. This was Temenos, a field near the village of Lyssaraia, Arcadia, the birthplace of the filmmaker's father.

Of course, this gathering in the field, held every four years in late June to present one more large chunk of *Eniaios* (2004: Orders I and II, 2008: Orders III-V, 2012: Orders VI-VIII), is probably not quite what Markopoulos had envisaged in his writings: an isolated place of reverence, healing and concentration, which would bar all distractions. It is more a mixture of get-together, cine-tourism and pilgrimage (although there is no sign of scuffed knees) attracting a swarm of filmmakers, students, curious bystanders and art professionals, as well as people with a genuine interest in his work. Their mood constantly fluctuates between euphoria, when the cinematic rhythm turns into pulse, slow or rapid, pumping blood into the film, and

Temenos 2012, Screenings of ENIAIOS's orders VI, VII and VIII
by Gregory J. Markopoulos, Lyssaraia – Arcadia, June 29 – July 1, 2012
Photos by Kamilo Nollas



Gregory J. Markopoulos, ENIAIOS VI-VIII
film stills
Courtesy of the Temenos

drowsiness, when the passage from images to empty frames has been made in a slipshod, boring way without tension and sharpness.

Watching *Eniaios*, you will often think that what you are (not) seeing is indifferent and conceited, that you are witnessing a mere explosion of scattered tesserae which come off various mosaics and are randomly reset on a slice of wall; but there are also times when you are convinced that something major and mystical is happening, and the feeling is like looking at a church dome destroyed by lightning. Even then, however, you cannot help wondering what led Markopoulos to butcher the corpus of his filmography, to expand it in the extreme so that the film appears impenetrable and paradoxically dense in its fragmentation (*Eniaios* is not like a multi-volume novel, but more like a long poem made of fragments); wondering why he treated his films so cruelly, triggering a mechanism of deprivation that gives you the image and immediately takes it away; and when the slightest movement does finally appear (a leaning head, a raised arm), it seems so exotic – as if you had never seen a recorded motion before – that it sometimes becomes vulnerable and comical.

To finalise your work means to stop all leaks, to agonise over its conservation over time. Yet the most vital things – violent, calm, generous – are always shaped after uncontrolled mixtures, attacks, counterattacks and losses in which the elements are mutually neutralised, melted and poured into a totally new (old) container. Markopoulos designed *Eniaios* for the specific site, becoming not only a filmmaker but also an architect and an archivist who files away his boxes so that nothing may leak outwards and no paper has gone without checking and approval. He invites us to go to Temenos as we might visit Rodin's Museum to see his sculptures, or drive to Bassae, south of Lyssaraia, to visit the temple of Apollo Epicurius under a protective balloon, empty of faithful pilgrims.

However, Markopoulos dreamed the impossible: a film projection without projector and a screen jutting from the soil like a luminous monolith, incessantly spewing images like an independent insect in the middle of the mountain which an unsuspecting passer-by might encounter by accident. His surprise then might be like that of a latecomer to Temenos who is walking along the dirt track and suddenly sees from above the projection: the distant screen full of pulsating colour, while the audience and the projectionist are hidden in the darkness and the hum of the generator is completely inaudible.

A photograph from the early 1990s shows him standing over pieces of film, dressed in a suit and gloves like a count, a tailor or a goldsmith who teaches us that each reel of film is pure gold, while trying to convince us that even if he filled it with black and white strips it would retain its value – something that we continue to dispute.

We can look upon *Eniaios*, the unified version of Markopoulos's films, as black dreams with repeated flashes from lightning which are absorbed by the screen and returned to us in rectangular form. The film has no sound (thud), and the voices we hear as we are leaving the field in the dark are not those of animals.



Temenos 2012, Robert Beavers (centre)
Photo by Yannis Karlopoulos



Photo by Natasha Papadopoulou



Nikos Panayotopoulos
The Idlers of the Fertile Valley, 1978
 film still

[athens]
 The Lethargic Decline of
 the Bourgeoisie
 by Venia Vergou

Revisiting *The Idlers of the Fertile Valley*,
 a film by Nikos Panayotopoulos (1978)

Emerging in the early 70s as a young filmmaker in his thirties who had studied cinema in Athens and Paris, Nikos Panayotopoulos has turned out to be one of the most prolific directors of modern Greek cinema. A restless, persistent and versatile filmmaker, he repeatedly denounces the importance of the plot in a film and celebrates the significance of its ‘atmosphere’. Panayotopoulos not only managed to be selected for the competition of the Locarno Film Festival with only his second feature film, *The Idlers of the Fertile Valley*, but also to return home with the Golden Leopard. This emblematic Greek film of the 70s was destined to be compared to such acclaimed films as *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, directed by the father of cinematic surrealism, Luis Bunuel, in 1972.

“A filmmaker is not a sociologist nor a politician...I make films knowing that no film has any political impact. I just believe that, from time to time, we must raise our voices in order to go against the monopoly of the technocrats.” These were Panayotopoulos’s thoughts published in an interview with the newspaper *Eleftherotypia* in 1978. Almost thirty years later his beliefs were just as adamant in an interview he gave me about his twelfth film (*Dying in Athens*, 2006):

I detest films with social sensitivities. The biggest monsters are those who show injustice in their films. What does anyone expect from a film? A story, emotions, ideas? For me, a film is above all atmosphere. A mysterious light that urges me to accept, or not, a story. It is the style. I am willing to be moved by the aesthetics and not by the sentiment caused by a mother mourning her child or by the misbehaviour of an employer to his underpaid workers...To me, art is the reign of ambiguity and doubt.

Panayotopoulos’s obsession with an aesthetic strategy that would allow him to compose a specific atmosphere is clearly visible in *The Idlers of the Fertile Valley*. From the extraordinary location of the remote villa where the story is set to the eerie blue-tinted walls inside the villa, Panayotopoulos has done his best to create a solid cinematic universe that brilliantly conveys his theme. The conscious retreat of a family (consisting of a father, his three adult sons and a beautiful chambermaid) to a remote villa, which they have just inherited from their deceased uncle, has not, indeed, a complex plot. Based on the novel *Les fainéants de la vallée fertile* by Albert Cossery (regarded in France as the ‘Voltaire of the Nile’), Nikos Panayotopoulos used this material to visualise a rather straightforward allegory. Determined to spend their lives in the restricted environment of the villa and its natural surroundings, the father has convinced his sons to underestimate the

necessity of people working, falling in love and being distracted, either by humans or by nature. Secluded within this imposing but claustrophobic villa, the four men slowly withdraw into themselves. Even the daily ritual of sharing their meals at the family table fades away. The more that nature awakens as the seasons pass, the more they sink into an endless sleep that deprives them of any awareness of time passing. “Does anyone know what month we are in?” the father asks at some point, content with the fact that the family has lost track of time. With the impressive contribution of his cinematographer (Andreas Bellis), Panayotopoulos offers a series of amazing long sequences that sweep up and down the two floors of the villa, where the gradual death of the bourgeoisie is rendered through the excruciating passage of time.

The highest point of absurdity is that while each of the four men isolate themselves in their bedrooms, where they eventually spend their entire days and nights and satisfy all their needs: food, sleep, sex (with the maid), the family ties do not deteriorate. On the contrary, their solidarity against anything to do with the outside world strengthens as their decadence grows. Every time Yannis (Yorgos Dialegmennos), one of the three sons, expresses his wish to leave the house, go to university and perhaps get a job, he sounds like an unwanted cacophony. “What’s the use of going to the University?” his father replies. “You have a home that feeds you and you want to go to work? This idea is nightmarish.” Later on, the dialogue escalates. The father says: “You make us all unhappy,” to which the son counters: “I don’t want to make you unhappy, I just want to work.” The father replies emphatically: “You want to humiliate us.” In a film that aims to visualise our fixation with the corporeal world (rather than the spiritual one), these fragments of dialogue reveal the ideology behind the film.

As we reach the end – and the marching melody of the first symphony by Gustav Mulher sets the tone of the son’s doomed attempt to escape – Panayotopoulos makes his point very clear: because of the sheer inertia of the system within this male-dominated society, many badly needed reforms are never introduced. The more we surrender to a deep sleep, the more infected and disfigured the phallus will get. The more we surrender to fear and brainwashing, the less we’ll be able to resist. If people do not WAKE UP, their feet will freeze so they are unable to take a step. This is similar to the point made by Paul Lafargue in his book *The Right to be Lazy*, nearly one hundred years earlier, in 1883:

In order for the bourgeois to respond to his double social role, that of the non-producer and of the consumer, he should not only transcend his conservative taste, free himself from the habit of labour which he acquired in the last two centuries and to plunge into an unrestrained luxury with gastronomy and orgies; but he should also, to detach from the chain of production a massive number of people in order to find assistants.

[anafi]
Music to Save Europe
by Augustin Maurs

Five hundred meters above the Aegean Sea at sunset

There is nothing like an absolute present. No more than an absolute orange or absolute love. But we European geniuses can be rewarded for having edified what resembles the cult of the metronome. And although nothing legible fits into a single, dividable timeframe anymore, we maintain our devotion to a unique and inalterable continuity, in which events obey the predefined rules of synchronised representation.

In order to check out of the hysteria of synchronisation, we can imagine a music that deals with different flows and situations, we can move into a 'relative music' that requires other kinds of junctions, intervals and behaviours. A music that is not coordinated by given subdivisions inside one flow, but by *collisions* emerging out of different continuities. These collisions can no longer be seen as divergences, but as an unlimited variety of impulses that we can interpret, replicate or transform.

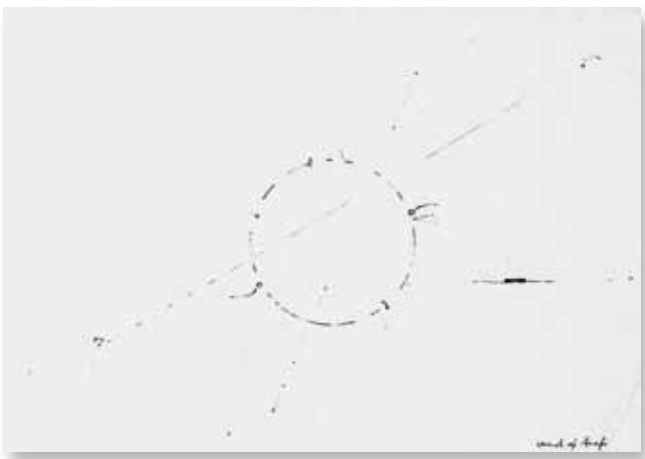
As a process in time, music is able to comprehend the complexity of a high register of events. Music that evolves outside of the spectre of a single synchronisation is necessarily spatial. It doesn't need a stage. It is an economy. An economy of impulses. Impulses as units that can be wide, loud, translatable, platonic, narrow, red. Impulses as units that lead to other impulses. But most importantly, impulses as units that can die. An economy of units that can die, that is – music, an economy which indifferently embraces transcendence and transience.

There is nothing like composers, singers, cheese makers and politicians. We all are dealers of impulses, operating as well as imitators or producers; taking part in the same economy as a child blowing in a scuba on a beach or two birds colliding over the Mount Kalamos, 500 meters above the Aegean Sea at sunset – holy cheesiness, which constrains the big metronome, when birds fall and children are bragging...

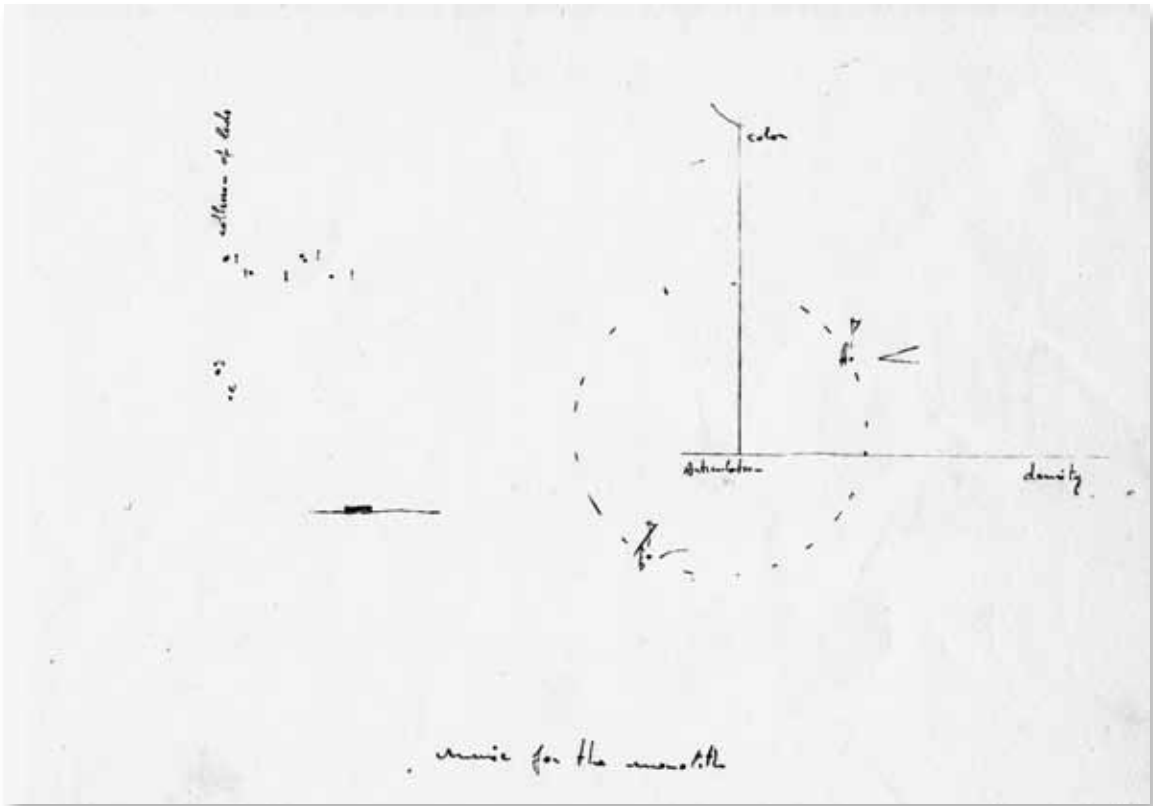
Anafi, summer 2012



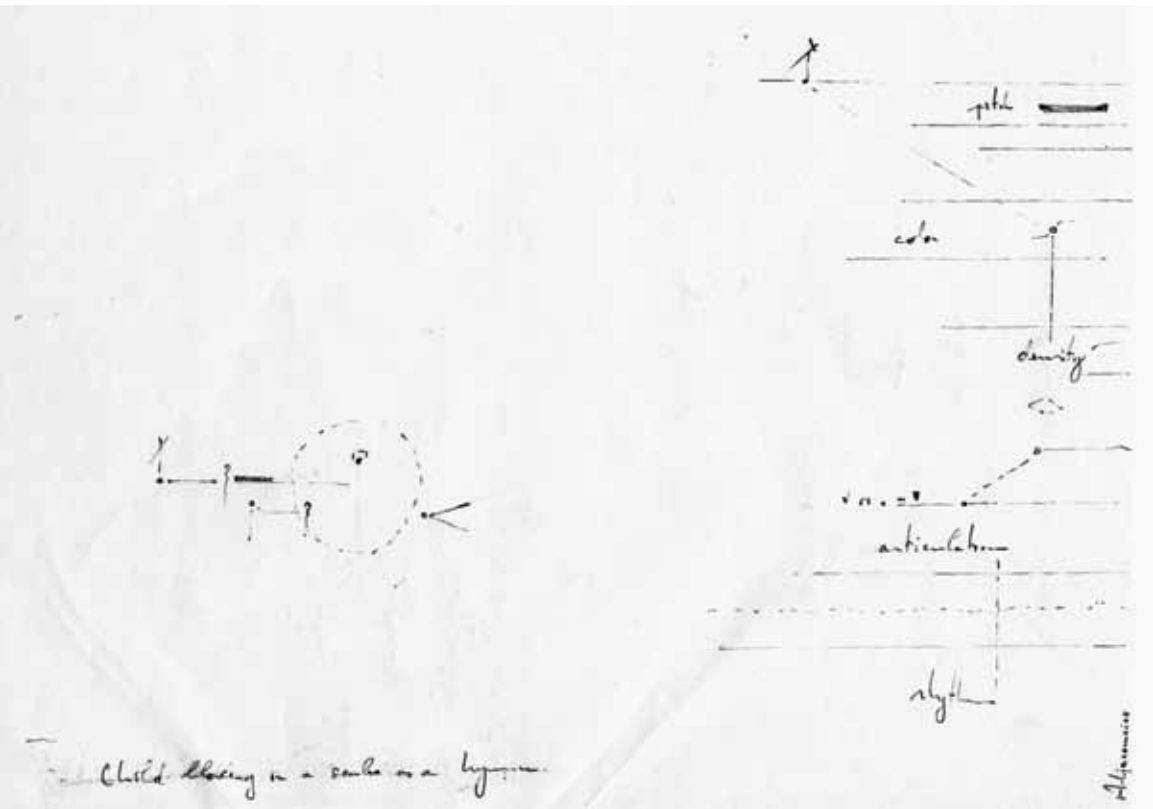
Augustin Maurs
Spectral Resistance, 2012
Courtesy of the artist



Augustin Maurs
Wind of Anafi, 2012
Courtesy of the artist



Augustin Maurs
Music of the Monolith, 2012
Courtesy of the artist



Augustin Maurs
Child Blowing in a Scuba as a Hymn, 2012
Courtesy of the artist

flying rumours
MUSIC

1 2 3 4 5

Asymmetrical waves

base studies dark out

spectral resistance

multi-represented interval

octave ambiguity

practise

amplitude

course alteration

collisions of levels

deliberate playing with section

collisions of wave or

polyrhythms

www.schott-music.com - SKK 46

Augustin Maurs
Draft 1, 2012
Courtesy of the artist

flying rumours
MUSIC

multi-represented interval

density

articulation

rhythm

www.schott-music.com - SKK 46

Augustin Maurs
Draft 2, 2012
Courtesy of the artist

word of mouth

WINTER/SPRING 2013

by Eleanna Papathanasiadi, Maria Passarivaki, Angeliki Roussou, Christina Stamou

[argentina]

Buenos Aires

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Buenos Aires (MACBA) [1]

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Buenos Aires is now a reality. Located adjacent to the Museum of Modern Art (MAMBA) and its extensions, MACBA opened at the beginning of September 2012. Specially designed for the exhibition of an already consolidated collection, MACBA houses artworks from the mid-twentieth century to the present. Its collection includes both works that reflect the museum's interest in geometric abstraction, focusing on artists who represent the vanguard of this movement, especially in Latin America, and works from contemporary artists who revisit these expressions and bring new languages to their visualisation. Visit MACBA to see works by artists such as Julio Le Parc, Víctor Vasarely, Roberto Aizenberg, Alejandro Puente, Raúl Lozza, Manuel Álvarez and César Pater-nosto, among others. (www.macba.com.ar) EP



ny founded in Paraguay by Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, sister of the German philosopher Nietzsche, are just some of the works' themes in the group exhibition *Hombres entre Las Ruinas*, curated by Inti Guerrero. TEOR/ÉTica amazes us by bringing together important Latin American, Asian and European artists in a show that explores the issues of nationalism, colonialism and racism without the urge to dictate or suggest but to interrogate and re-imagine. Through various media geopolitical relations are teased: Nazi eagles meet exotic lands, psychoanalysis tells us a story of desire and despotic models. This curatorial effort and methodological endeavour is definitely worth a visit. (www.teoretica.org) AR

[cyprus]

Nicosia

TERRA MEDITERRANEA –

IN CRISIS [5]

Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre, EthnoLogical Museum – House of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios

July 7 – December 30, 2012



Terra Mediterranea – In Crisis contemporary art programme, organised by the Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre and the Pierides Foundation, includes two contemporary art shows. *Terra Mediterranea – In Crisis* group exhibition features works by forty-one artists from Cyprus, the surrounding area and beyond (Greece, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, Bulgaria, Great Britain, United States) at the Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre. The artists comment on the current economic, political and social turbulence, as viewed through their “Mediterranean” eyes, from

both a political and a poetic stance. [at Maroudia's] exhibition at the Ethno-logical Museum deals with the unwritten feminine histories of Cyprus and their private and public structure, and presents twenty-eight artists' reflections on social, educational and ethical concerns about sexuality, gender issues and conflicts. (www.nimac.org.cy) EP



[france]

Paris

IMAGINE THE IMAGINARY [6]

Palais de Tokyo

September 28, 2012 – February 11, 2013



tion Adrift, a variety of solo exhibitions by artists from different generations such as Fabrice Hyber (with a show called *Raw Materials*), Neil Beloufa, Damir Ocko, Marcus Schinwald and Helen Marten, and installations from Ryan Gander, Bernand Aubertin, John Giorno and Takahiro Iwasaki promise to bring us closer than ever to the creative process and the invention of an artwork. (www.palaisdetokyo.com) CS

word of mouth

WINTER/SPRING 2013

BOHEMIAS [7]

Grand Palais, Les Galeries nationales

September 26, 2012 – January 14, 2013

There's no doubt that *Bohemias* embraces a heavily emotional topic. Believe us, we were taken by it. An enchanting exhibition, it showcases almost 200 paintings, music, photography and film masterpieces, emerging as an unusual representation of bohemians in art. Bohemian figures originated as true vagabond spirits, including social outcasts and indigents, in the seventeenth century in the works of Georges de La Tour and Simon Vouet. The term ‘bohemian’, however, was to become very important to the Romantics in the nineteenth century (such as Manet, Courbet and Baudelaire). Also noteworthy is the light this exhibition sheds on the gypsies who settled in European populations. By unearthing typically bohemian practices in various disciplines, *Bohemias* makes new discoveries. Spanning centuries and a number of themes, it brings together a history of art and society from Leonardo da Vinci to Picasso through to today. The myth of Bohemia turns out to be emblematic of the complex history of the relationship between Europeans – especially the Nazi regime – the Romany people and modern artists. Visitors step into artists' worlds throughout the centuries, and can emerge in a real Montmartre café. (www.rmn.fr) MP

[greece]

Athens

PARTY'S OVER – STARTS OVER / LYDIA

DAMBASSINA [8]

Museum Alex Mylona, Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art

October 3, 2012 – January 27, 2013

Greek artist Lydia Dambassina presents her latest project, *Party's over – Starts over*, at Museum Alex Mylona, in Athens. Dambassina started the project when the economic crisis erupted in 2008 and named it *Party's over*. Three years later, in 2011, the work was completed under the title *Starts over*. The exhibition *Party's over – Starts over* consists of a series of staged, large-scale photographs, shot with conventional film and accompanied by short texts – primarily excerpts taken from the daily press – three sculptures and one video. It attempts to comment on the economic, cultural and moral crisis in Greece and beyond. Dambassina's interdisciplinary approach, the size and rigorousness of the pictures, the selection of themes, as well as the association of text and image are major defining characteristics of her work. The works form their own narratives and are open to multiple readings. The exhibition was hosted at the Contemporary Art Center of Thessaloniki (SMCA) from January until March 2012. Athens visitors have no excuse to miss the show. (www.mmca-mam.gr / mouseioalexmylona.blogspot.com) EP

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE – REFUSE THE HOUR [10]

Onassis Cultural Centre

November 22 – 25, 2012

William Kentridge, probably one of the most significant artists of our time, presents his latest work, *Refuse the Hour*, which is an onstage search for lost time, at the Onassis Cultural

Centre. A “chamber opera” combining performance, theatrical rendition, opera, contemporary dance, visual installations and video projections, *Refuse the Hour* is a theatrical version of the large-scale installation project, *The Refusal of Time*, with which Kentridge took part in documenta 13 at Kassel. Making his first appearance in Greece, the leading South



African visual artist and director takes the starring role himself, playing a contemporary storyteller who begins his narrative with the myth of Perseus and ends with Einstein, space-time and black holes. On his journey to the limits of science, ontology and cosmology, he is accompanied by thirteen dancers, musicians, performers and singers, thus creating a Dadaist atmosphere of sounds and images. Kentridge has won accolades for his Apartheid-era installations, his ‘primitive’ animations and his multimedia performances. Who can refuse an

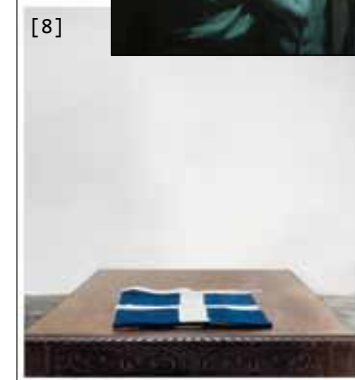
invitation to *Refuse the Hour*? (www.sgt.gr) EP

DILEK WINCHESTER [9]

EMST (National Museum of Contemporary Art)

October 31, 2012 – January 13, 2013

EMST presents a solo exhibition with works by Turkish artist Dilek Winchester. Mistranslation, transliteration, literature, idiomatic expressions, narration, language pollution and emotional expressions are among the themes of her works. Winchester's late work takes its point of departure from the first three Turkish novels published during the late Ottoman Empire. Even though the books were written in Ottoman Turkish, they were printed in the Greek, Arabic and Armenian alphabets, respectively. Taking this practice as her point of reference, Winchester transcribes short paragraphs in Turkish, but they are transliterated into the Greek, Arabic and Armenian alphabets and inscribed on blackboards. Her work evokes the iconic photograph that depicts Kemal Atatürk introducing the Latin alphabet on a portable blackboard to a newly established Republic of Turkey, aiming to underscore the complicity of the Republic in the traumatic violence and genocidal manifestations of late Ottoman demographic policies. (From the perspective of the official discourse, this iconic image has served to mark the Republican break from the Ottoman past.) (www.emst.gr) EP



Thessaloniki

THE MUSEUM IN THE MUSEUM [11]

State Museum of Contemporary Art, Moni Lazariston (1st and 2nd floor)

October 12, 2012 – January 27, 2013

The State Museum of Contemporary Art hosts *The Museum In the Museum*, with works by Italian artist Mimmo Jodice and French artist Jean Christophe Ballot, as part of the series *Art Works from the Collections of the Louvre Museum*.

Jodice's photographic series *Les Yeux du Louvre* was presented in 2011 for the first time at the Louvre, while *Le Louvre en Métamorphose* and *Le Louvre Transfiguré*, series of photographs by Ballot, were featured for the first time in the Louvre in 2003. Jodice, a Neapolitan photographer and a major contributor to the international photography scene, juxtaposes photographs of famous painted portraits in the Louvre – from different periods – with portraits of Louvre employees, aiming

[costa rica]

San José

HOMBRES ENTRE LAS RUINAS [4]

TEOR/ÉTica

October 4, 2012 – January 16, 2013

World War II remnants on South Pacific beaches and the colo-

to abolish time and eliminate the difference between painting and photography. Ballot has been interested in the Louvre for 20 years. From 1992 to 1994, the architect, filmmaker and photographer visited the Louvre while the palace and the museum were mutating. His photographs depict the radical transformation of cultural monuments during the presidential term of François Mitterrand. (www.greekstatemuseum.com) EP

[italy]

Modena

CHANGING DIFFERENCE. QUEER POLITICS AND SHIFTING IDENTITIES - PETER HUJAR, MARK MORRISROE, JACK SMITH [13]
Galleria Civica di Modena, Palazzo Santa Margherita
October 20, 2012 - January 27, 2013

Through a visual itinerary consisting of three concurrent solo shows by Peter Hujar, Mark Morrisroe and Jack Smith, this exhibition (curated by Lorenzo Fusi) reflects on difference, gender, sexual orientation, the performative queer and the social parameters of AIDS through the personal and artistic. A web of interrelations between the three artists is revealed, in terms of both their art and their common fate, through a focus on the nuances of their individual works, which range from photography to film and performance. We look forward to an intense journey. (www.comune.modena.it) AR

Venice

55TH VENICE BIENNALE: THE ENCYCLOPEDIA PALACE [12]
The Giardini, the Arsenale and in the city of Venice
June 1 - November 24, 2013

The 55th edition of this international art exhibition is taking place next summer (preview: May 29th, 30th, 31st). An event of established significance and a landmark of international contemporary art, the Venice Biennale is bound to have a fresh touch this year due to its new visual arts director and curator Massimiliano Gioni. The exhibition will reflect on the role of images in the organisation of knowledge and on how their overabundance can sabotage internal imagination. Some of the artists that will represent National Pavilions are Jeremy Deller (UK), Anri Sala (France), Ai Weiwei among a team of four (Germany), Sarah Sze (USA), Akram Zaatari (Lebanon) and Ali Kazma (Turkey). (www.la-biennale.org) AR

[lebanon]

Beirut

EXPOSURE 2012 [14]
Beirut Art Center
November 16, 2012 - January 12, 2013

The fourth edition of the group exhibition *Exposure* at the Beirut Art Center is finally a fact. New artworks that have not been shown before by Lebanese and non-Lebanese artists living in Lebanon, are displayed in an attempt to create a platform for emerging contemporary artists in Lebanon. This year, Caline Aoun, George Awde, Chafa Ghaddar, Mohammad Hafeda, Kinda Hassan, Joumana Anjali Itani, Ilaria Lupo,

Hayat Najm and Graziella Rizkallah Toufic have been selected. (www.beirutartcenter.org) CS

[mexico]

Mexico City



TERESA MARGOLLES:

LA PROMESA [15]
Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC)
October 6, 2012 - January 6, 2013

For this winter, MUAC sets the spotlight on fragments of Mexico's recent history and introduces us to the latest work of Teresa Margolles, *La Promesa* (The Promise). For this project Margolles took an abandoned low-income house in Ciudad Juárez and dismantled it as an indirect reference to the story of maquiladoras. Margolles, who has always been intrigued by the social and political context of Mexico and the way it defines individuals, questions the possibility of rootedness in a border city that has been transformed from a place of transit into a place of opportunity and makes us wonder about a dream that failed to fulfil its promise. (www.muac.unam.mx) CS

[new zealand]

Auckland

NIKI HASTINGS-MCFALL [16]
Whitespace Contemporary Art
December 4 - December 23, 2012

Niki Hastings-McFall's practice addresses issues of cultural identity in a complex way. She has Palagi and Samoan heritages, but was not brought up in a Samoan family, yet she deals with colonial legacies of the Pacific in a manner that might seem experiential. Her works' thick webs of layers and meanings tend to break from the linear Freudian course and relate heritage to art practice. This exhibition will certainly be intriguing. (www.whitespace.co.nz) AR

[palestine]

Bethlehem

CAMPUS IN CAMPS [17]
Phoenix Center

The Phoenix Center is a social and cultural center built on a site that was intended to hold a prison. Today, the center is hosting the *Campus in Camps* educational program as well as myriad other activities. The name of the center derives from the legendary bird reborn from the ashes in the same way the refugee community seeks to rebuild their culture on the ashes of destroyed villages.

Campus in Camps is an experimental educational program which brings together fifteen young participants from the West Bank's refugee camps in an attempt to provide them with the necessary infrastructure to mount community-driven projects. This cultural-social lab of contemporary thinking in Palestine is definitely worthy of our attention! (www.campusincamps.ps) CS

[portugal]

Lisbon

SANCHO SILVA: EFFIGIAE [18]
KunsthalLe Lissabon
September 22 - December 15, 2012

KunsthalLe Lissabon presents Sancho Silva's solo exhibition under the title *Effigiae*. Using the dry skin of a common gecko, the rotating chitin shell of a bee and a suspended plaster model of a fish, the Portuguese artist creates a staging of Lucretius' materialist theory of images through shadows and projections. It's the first time the artist has had a solo show in Lisbon. If you are there, please don't miss this wonderful opportunity. (kunsthal-lelissabon.org) EP

Porto

JULIÃO SARMENTO, WHITE NIGHTS [19]
Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art
November 24, 2012 - February 24, 2013

The world's largest-ever retrospective exhibition of the work of Julião Sarmento is presented in the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art. Over the last four decades, Sarmento's work has achieved widespread international circulation, making him one of Portugal's best-known contemporary artists. Using different techniques, such as painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, film, photography and performance, his work explores themes of eroticism and sexuality, and questions concepts such as desire, absence, time and language. As an inaugural session for this new exhibition, the artist will present a series of performances that have been specifically designed for the occasion and will be performed by leading figures from the worlds of dance, fashion and other performing arts. (www.serralves.pt) EP

[republic of malta]

Valletta

PARALLEL BORDERS / 1 / CAPITALZEOLOTISM / MONUMENTS & SHRINES TO CAPITALISM (2012) [20]
Malta Contemporary Art
October 31, 2012 - ongoing

Parallel Borders, a research laboratory formed by Mark Mangion and Malta Contemporary Art, has initiated a series of projects called Capitalzeolotism / Monuments & Shrines to Capitalism. This series is an ambitious methodological attempt to explore in-depth cross-field practices in visual culture. The first part of the series consists of seven consecutive artist-led site-specific projects in seven European cities starting from Athens, passing through Rome, Zurich, Frankfurt, Brussels, Paris and finishing in London. A political mapping is thus created, experimenting with forms of protest in relation to urban landscapes and temporarily shaking up the norms of legitimate performative action in public space. Stay tuned as further Parallel Borders projects will follow in post-war Iraq, Nigeria and the Amazon. (www.maltacontemporaryart.com) AR

[south africa]

Johannesburg

VALERIO BERRUTI,

RODAN KANE HART [21]

Nirox Foundation
November, 2012 - April, 2013

Over the autumn and winter, Nirox Foundation will expand its permanent collection of site specific works located in nature. In November a massive land drawing by Italian artist Valerio Berruti entitled *Over the Rainbow* will be unveiled over the lakes of Nirox's famous sculpture park. Simultaneously, Berruti's animation film *Udaka*, introducing more than 300 drawings of a young South African girl from a rural school, will be screened

for the first time. And there are more surprises. In January South African sculptor Rodan Kane Hart will try to elicit our awareness of the space that we live in with a mirrored experiential pavilion. It sounds like a great opportunity to see the natural landscape reinvented through art. (www.niroxarts.com) CS

[spain]

Barcelona

UTOPIA IS POSSIBLE. ICSID. EIVISSA, 1971 [22]

MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona)
June 21, 2012 - January 20, 2013

The ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design) Congress that took place in Eivissa in 1971 was a fairly unconventional meeting without a rigid structure and program where diverging tendencies came together and participants could be heard on an informal basis.

The structure of this meeting emerged through the process itself. Experimenting and spontaneity gave birth to creative, smart design and architectural projects that made new and interactive forms of participation and use possible, such as the *Instant City* made out of inflatable plastic to host students following the Congress as well as smaller scale constructions with which everyone could interact in new and creative ways. The exhibition *Utopia Is Possible*, curated by Daniel Giralt-Miracle and Teresa Grandas, attempts to reactivate this event through archival material exploring how this past utopic instance can speak to the present. (www.macba.cat) AR

Madrid

LOSING THE HUMAN FORM. A SEISMIC IMAGE OF THE 1980S IN LATIN AMERICA [23]

Museo Reina Sofia, Sabatini Building, third floor
October 25, 2012 - March 11, 2013

This exhibition attempts a reappropriation of political resistance in Latin America during the 1980s through proposing an alternative visual culture. Curated by Red Conceptualismos del Sur (Southern Conceptualisms Network), which comprises researchers, critics and curators,

the show wishes to reactivate instances of political, social and urban criticality, such as space occupations and new types of protests, while linking them to potential networks and poetic narratives outside the sphere of existing institutional structures. It will surely be of interest to see how the visual will meet the political in this timely curatorial effort at Reina Sofía. (www.museoreinasofia.es) AR

[turkey]
Istanbul

MODERN TIMES [24]
Istanbul Eindhoven-SaltVanAbbe
September 21 – December 30, 2012

The collaboration between SALT and Van Abbemuseum, Istanbul Eindhoven-SaltVanAbbe, has proceeded cautiously over the course of three exhibitions. Visitors to both SALT venues are likely to stop at the sight of the final exhibition series, *Modern Times*, which presents a selected collection of artworks – courtesy of the Van Abbemuseum – from the beginning of the twentieth century to the 1960s in dialogue with works from the same period in Turkey. This exhibition, drawn from half a century of modernist art practices, explores the various ways in which artists interpreted political and cultural modernisation, suggesting a formation of a new order. The exhibition presents the competing aesthetics, forms, contradictions and localities from centres and peripheries. The works and documentary archive material on view represent a broad array of artists including Pablo Picasso, Pierre Alechinsky, Hakki Anli, Fikret Mualla, Ossip Zadkine and Serge Poliakoff. (www.saltonline.org) MP

[uruguay]
Montevideo

1ST MONTEVIDEO BIENNIAL:
EL GRAN SUR [25]
Great Hall, Main House, Banco República del Uruguay, Annex Building, Banco República del Uruguay, Atarazana Building, Church San Francisco de Asís
November 23, 2012 – March 30, 2013

Uruguay's first biennial, titled *El Gran Sur* (*The Great South*), is taking place in Montevideo, during the Biennial of São Paulo, Brazil (September 7 – December 9, 2012). As the title reveals, the participating artists are invited to explore the concept of the "South" and its relationship to the rest of the world. Its curators comment that this first edition of the Montevideo Biennial "will seek to determine the existence of a distinctive aesthetic dimension under the Southern Cross". Lida Abdul, Mark Dion, Dias & Riedweg, Angelica Mesiti, Gunda Förster, Navin Rawanchaikul, Humberto Vélez and Yorgos Sapountzis are among the participating artists. Parallel events will take place in other venues throughout the city, such as museums, cultural centres, art galleries, the airport, the port, and even in the street. (www.bienal-de-montevideo.com) EP



[23]
Carlos Gatica
Beso Negro
Santiago de Chile
Fanzine



[24]



[25]



[26]



[27]

lus, the exhibition focuses on an alternative view of the migrant as a role model and how this impacts on contemporary aesthetic expressions. *Where Do We Migrate To?* is a touring exhibition that investigates how these subjects have been addressed by artists in recent years. In other words, *Where Do We Migrate To?* is an exhibition to be experienced. (www.cacno.org) MP

[usa]

Marfa, Texas
CARBON 13 [26]
Ballroom Marfa
August 31, 2012 – January 20, 2013

Carbon 13 introduces newly commissioned works by eight international artists who dare to point their lenses at the harsh reality of climate change (including Ackroyd & Harvey Cynthia Hopkins, and Sunand Prasad). These artists, venturing around the world's climate change tipping points, have documented major environmental disasters, witnessed sinking and melting countries, investigated relationships between human and earth systems and reassembled the dark sides of energy production in installations. Their images speak louder than any scientific data to capture the public's attention. In association with the *Marfa Dialogues*, Ballroom Marfa's exhibition proposes that art as a transforming media is capable of addressing the most pressing issues of our time. David Buckland is curating *Carbon 13* and Cape Farewell is part-organising it. The urgency of global climate change, which is the heart of the exhibition's thesis, is commuted to a human scale. (www.ballroom-marfa.org) MP

New Orleans, Louisiana

WHERE DO WE MIGRATE TO? [27]
Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans - Second Floor (Lupin Foundation) Gallery
October 6, 2012 – January 20, 2013

Xaviera Simmons's *Superunknown* (*Alive In The*), a wall-sized grid of over forty found photographs, stands out in this exhibition that brings together artworks depicting migrants in the globalised age. Through works by nineteen artists and artist collectives, the exhibition presents an abundance of nomadic encounters, tackling political asylum, economic survival, and deep personal bonds, and exploring ideas of belonging, eccentric stories of migration and experiences of exile. In these times, overcrowded with refugees, the migrant is unsurprisingly marked due to the so-called breach of his or her national boundaries. With this idea as the main stimulus,

H I G H L I G H T S



[28]

[france]

Paris
MANUEL ÁLVAREZ BRAVO. A PHOTOGRAPHER ON THE WATCH (1902-2002) [28]
Jeu de Paume
October 16, 2012 – January 20, 2013

The autumn-winter season at Jeu de Paume seems to be dedicated to Southern artists and the Mexican photographer Manuel Álvarez Bravo (Mexico City, 1902-2002). Getting away from the stereotypes about exotic surrealism and the Mexican folkloric vision, the exhibition seeks the cinematic intention behind Bravo's poetic images by juxtaposing some of his famous pictures with short experimental films made in 1960s and a selection of colour prints and Polaroids. Prepare for a 'cinematic' experience through Bravo's photographs. (www.jeudepaume.org) CS



[29]

[italy]

Bologna
BAS JAN ADER - TRA DUE MONDI [29]
MAMbo, Museo d'arte Moderna di Bologna, Villa delle Rose
January 24 – March 17, 2013

Another retrospective of Bas Jan Ader's work seems to affirm the impression that he continues to practice, even though he mysteriously disappeared at sea in 1975. Hopefully, the upcoming recontextualisation of Bas Jan Ader's films and documented performances at the Museum of Modern Art of Bologna (curated by Javier Hontoria) will unravel new and perhaps timely aspects of his work. (www.mambo-bologna.org) AR

shame

GUEST: PAOLO COLOMBO



Paolo Colombo
Central Crete, South of Heraklion, Greece
Three in the afternoon, August 20, 2008

This is an image of an intersection of two alleys in a village in Crete named after the two members of the Papandreou dynasty, Andreas and Georgios. The grandfather, Georgios, the father, Andreas, and the son, Georgios, all served as prime ministers of Greece within a 70-year period. Many of Greece's problems seem to derive from this succession. Andreas's lavish policies in the 1980s resulted in the significant increase to the country's public debt and, of course, during Georgios's recent government Greece entered the financial support mechanism by requesting a loan from the IMF. This ironic image suggests that Greece has been stuck in this small corner or intersection for too many years.

A nice cup of coffee.

A friendly smile.

A taste of Greek cuisine.

A warm welcome.

A great film.

A comfortable seat.

A pillow to lean on.

A glass of good wine.

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