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SOUTH

AS A STATE OF MIND

spring/summer 2014

fourth issue

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Rashid Johnson, 2011. *The New Black Yoga* (video still). 16 mm film transferred to DVD with sound, 10 min 57 sec duration. © Rashid Johnson, Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

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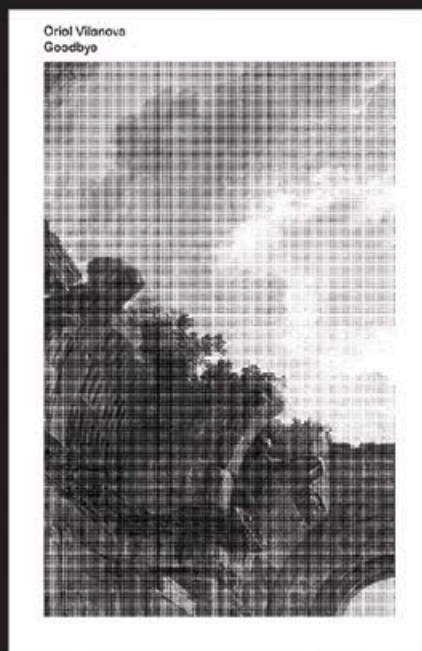


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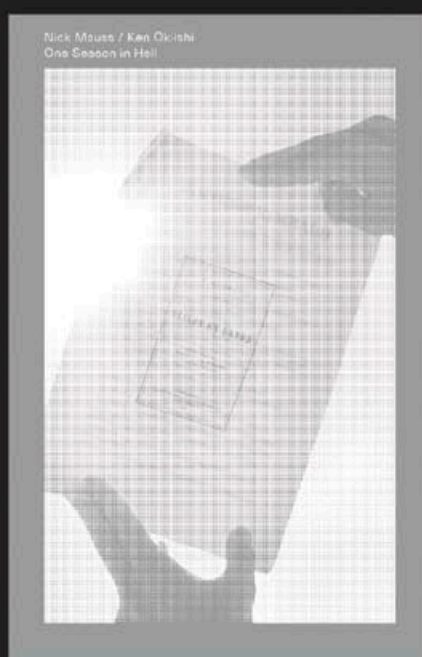
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oriol vilanova goodbye



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nick mauss & ken okiishi one season in hell



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lisa oppenheim works 2003-2013



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0

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contents



Yannis Karlopoulos
News from the Past Series - Hydra
2014, collage, vintage postcard
from Hydra Once Upon a Time
facebook page - photo archive of Hydra

BREAKING NEWS 22-BRAZIL

Celebratory Protest. The Joy in the Irony
Cibelle Cavalli Bastos

Cangaço
Opavivará

26-THAILAND A Report from Thailand **Pier Luigi Tazzi**

30 POLIS (main focus)

32
The Cosmopolis is the Starting Point
Nikos Papastergiadis

34

Citizens of Art
Interview with **Juan A. Gaitán** by **Marina Fokidis**

38

Urban Activism and Playground Ideology
In the Isola Neighbourhood of Milan
Marco Scotini

42

Where the Living Ain't Easy
Interview with **Adriano Costa** by **Kiki Mazzucchelli**

46

Conflicts in the City: Between Hypsipolis and Apolis
Kostis Velonis

50

Hong Kong and Marrakech: Geopolitics in Dialogue
An interview with **Leung Chi Wo** by **Carson Chan**

54

Horizon, Athens, 2014
Georgia Sagri, Photos by Stathis Mamalakis

58

An Evening, Sometime in the Near Future...
Simon Critchley

60

Apt. 302 – Le Corbusier's Cité Radieuse in Marseille
has a New Residency Program
Apt. 302 in collaboration with **HIT-Studio**

64

Buenos Aires: Memory and Future of the Polis
Juan Canela

68

Tollan / Polis: The City, the Country
and the Resurgence of the Disavowed
Walter D. Mignolo

70

An Attempt to Exhaust Public Space
Chris Sharp

72

In Defence of Urban Alienation: Regression,
Localisation and Dreams of Exodus in Greece Today
Kostis Stafylakis

74

FIELDS: An Itinerant Enquiry
across the Kingdom of Cambodia
Erin Gleeson, Vera Mey, Albert Samreth

78

The Keys of the City
Francesco Ragazzi & Francesco Urbano

80

The Joy in the Struggle
Or Claiming Back Urban Catalyst Spaces
Danilo Correale

82

Footnotes on the State of Exception
Claire Fontaine

92-TRADITION

But Reality Went in Another Direction...
Interview with **Adolfo Natalini** by **Michelangelo Corsaro**

How Great Architecture Was in 1966
Adolfo Natalini

98-MYSTICISM

U(You) Turn. From Self-Destruction to Self-Organisation
What is Beyond the Contemporary City
in Accordance with an I-Ching Reading
Lorenzo Romito

100-SHOUT / POLITICS

After Courbet
Tanja Ostojić

102-TRICKSTER

On the Threshold
Interview with **Gabriel Kuri** by **Michelangelo Corsaro**

106-ARCHITECTURE / LANDSCAPE

Radically Open
Interview with **Jürgen Mayer H.**
by **Harris Biskos** and **Eleanna Papathanasiadi**

The City of the Future or Visions For It
Jürgen Mayer H.

Modern Architecture as Anachronism
Tradition and Modernity in the Work of Dimitris Pikionis
Yorgos Tzirtzilakis

118-SAVE THE ROBOTS / INTERNET

Relational Value
Interview with **Oliver Laric** by **Stephanie Bailey**

122-DOMINO

Freud on the Acropolis
Florence Derieux

126-FASHION-ISM

Manifeste Silencieux
Nicholas Georgiou & Nikos Papadopoulos

FLYING RUMOURS 136-VISUAL ARTS

Videobrasil: Connecting Cities – Collecting Experiences
A Different Story of Video from the South
Agustín Pérez Rubio

The Snake and the Snail
Barbara Sirieix

4th Athens Biennale, *AGORA*
From Shares to Sharing
Despina Zeykili

Meanwhile Hydra
Marina Fokidis

152-FILM

A Destination Not a Place
Dimitris Politakis

154-WORD OF MOUTH

An agenda of exhibitions and events not to be missed:
Athens, Barcelona, Beirut, Biel/Bienne, Gwangju, Istanbul,
Jerusalem, Lisbon, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, New York,
Nicosia, Paris, Porto, Qalandiya, Reims, Rome, Samos,
Santa Fe, São Paulo, Sydney, Tel Aviv, Thessaloniki
Klea Charitou, Marina Maniadaki, Eleanna Papathanasiadi,
Angeliki Roussou, Jorgina Stamogianni

160-SHAME

Guest: Panos Papadopoulos

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editor's note

SUNNY-SIDE UP

Another winter is over! Another winter of stress and agony for the future... Would we be able to survive? Pay the bills? Pay for food? Pay tax? And if yes, for how much longer? Every year is one more year of deep misery. The everyday here in Greece is like a leaky vessel. And while the water level is dropping, ideas on how to survive in the post-capitalism desert do not come. The scenario is pretty ruthless.

The other day a friend suggested that soon we will have to sell our kidneys so as to pay our taxes... For the first time this did not sound like the plot of a science fiction film. Solutions seem completely absent from the discussion. And then the Ukrainian turmoil started and the media is totally focused on that. And the EU, Nato, the US, you name it, are looking for possible ways to steady the turbulent situation there and send material and non-material support – just because they are so afraid and so they placate the ghosts of the past... Of course there will not be another Cold War....

And as a Greek you get even more pissed off with this kind of discrimination.

Hey, guys, we are talking about one of the worst financial and humanitarian crises in the past century over here; why do you not report it as such? Suicides increased by 45% in the first five years of the crisis in Greece and the number keeps going up, according to data from the Greek Statistical Authority. And real public healthcare spending has been cut by more than 40%, at a time when people need the public health system more than ever.

At the same time, the IMF is projecting economic growth for 2014, but even if they are right in terms of figures, what will be the human cost? Bad (European) policy could have been avoided as many economists would argue, but this will never be publicly admitted. Yet at this point maybe the solution lies in the European authorities' ability to reverse their policies for the region. Will they?

Polis, both in its Hellenistic and contemporary sense, is the main focus of this issue. Deprived of what a polis-state might provide for its citizens – a protected space for common good – we thought that it would be a good idea to start exploring the idea in our own minds.

We have gathered together a great collection of contributions that reflect on democracy, the architectural public space, the notion of the European Union and the re-visited idea of cosmopolitanism, as well as a set of interviews with important players, artists and curators from different poleis (cities). They might not offer explicit solutions for the common good, but we hope you will like them. We can – only – profusely thank the contributors and readers that keep us mentally alive.

Meanwhile, the summer is almost here and the most effective resistance seems to be to keep hoping against all odds. This genuine joy – for which we pay a high price to those that cannot let go and be happy, even for while – can be found in everyday rituals, even the smallest ones, that can activate a solid power with which to face the horrible facts. This feeling cannot be better depicted than it is in this wonderful picture (on the left page) by Juergen Teller of that most mundane reality: two fried eggs, shot in Hydra for this issue.

Sea, sex and sun

Le soleil au zenith

as Serge Gainsbourg aptly sung it, and here we go again.

Marina Fokidis

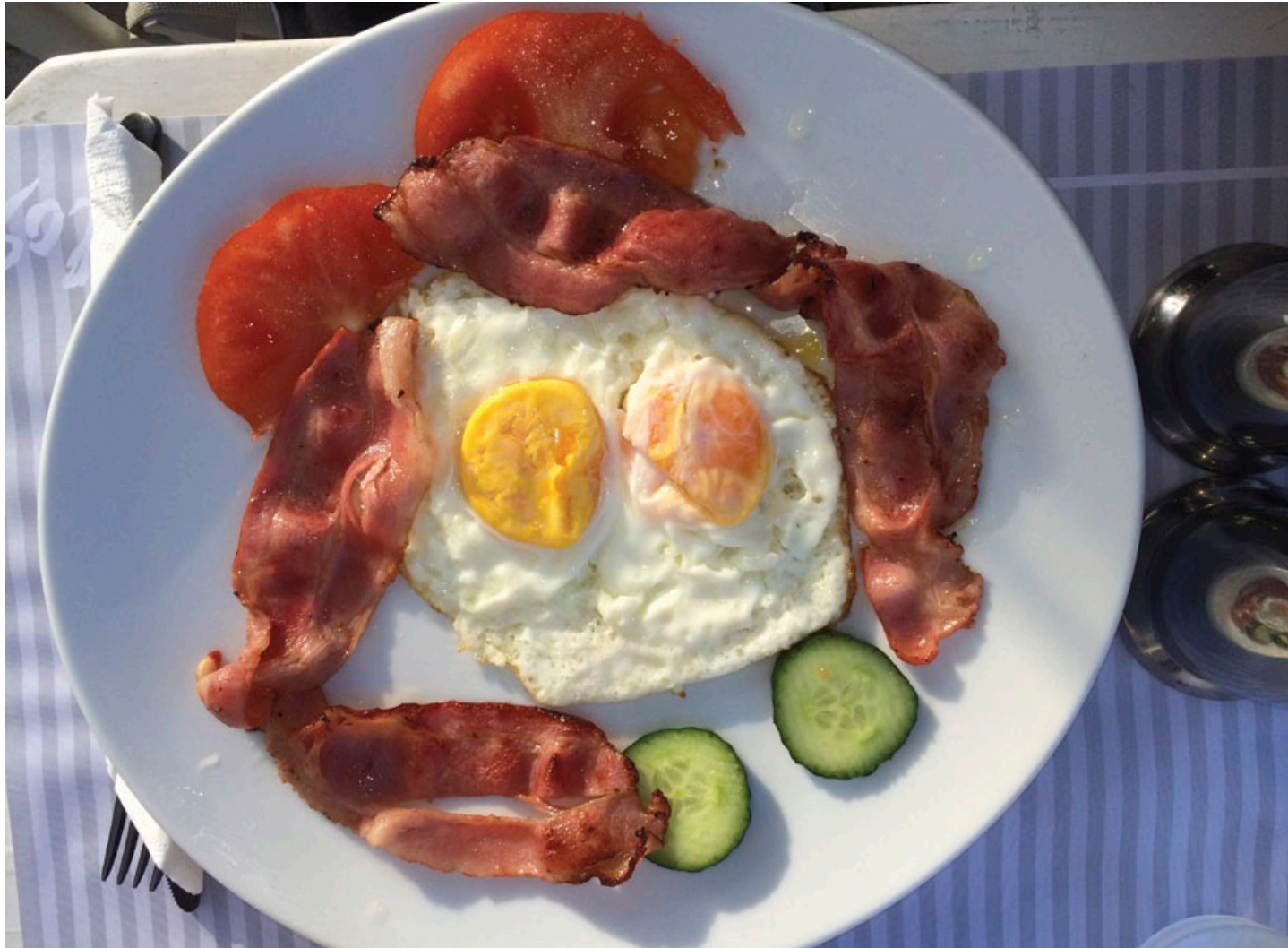


Photo by Juergen Teller, Hydra, December 2013

CELEBRATORY PROTEST THE JOY IN THE IRONY

by Cibelle Cavalli Bastos

Cibelle presents a view of protest in Brazil through the rhythms of poetry

Cibelle in her domicile in London
(headquarters of Brazilian
resistance abroad), 2013

When one has been going through so much
hardship and feels so incredibly impotent
the only thing left to do is laugh.
Samba is not happy, samba is pure melan-
choly;
It's the Brazilian blues.
It's a dance, with a big smile and a teardrop in
the corner of the eye,
a melting heart dripping the sadness through
the sweat as the body moves to forget.
To transform the fatality of destiny into an-
other sort of matter
of aching hearts in hopelessness choosing to
carpe diem -
seize the day.

The protests in Brazil have recently taken a
different turn.
The corrupt government smells of an old dic-
tatorship that still lingers in the veins and the
subconscious of the military police, fed by the
greed of the politicians and the big companies
who can only see green.
Not nature green, not life green, but money:
only money.
We have become commodities.
People are treated like inanimate objects that
can be moved, placed in areas, regardless of
well-being, soul, or history.
The shopping centre is the church, money is
the god
bread and circus.
Here comes the Olympics, the World Cup, the
whatever else that can keep people with their
faces attentively glued to the television while
buying souvenirs, t-shirts, and mementos of a
branded world.

This is an opening.
An unordered text reflective of the chaos that
is everywhere.
Is it the chicken or the egg?
Where did it all begin?

In Brazil, for many years, post the horrors of
dictatorship, people were being educated at
home. They would hear this saying: "politics,
soccer and religion are not supposed to be
discussed".
So eat up this TV, talk about your neighbour,
talk about the soap opera, and who is fucking
who. Talk about who was caught doing what,
by all means, but do not question your own
life, by all means do not be reflective, by all
means, above all, by all means do not question
your conditions of living and the government.

So called democracy. It's a demagogy. Yeah.
Google that.
There was one peaceful protest, in the little
hundreds. Police came. Rubber bullets came.
Tear gas came. Then millions came out onto
the streets.
The news said 150,000, and everyone knows,
yes, it was millions.

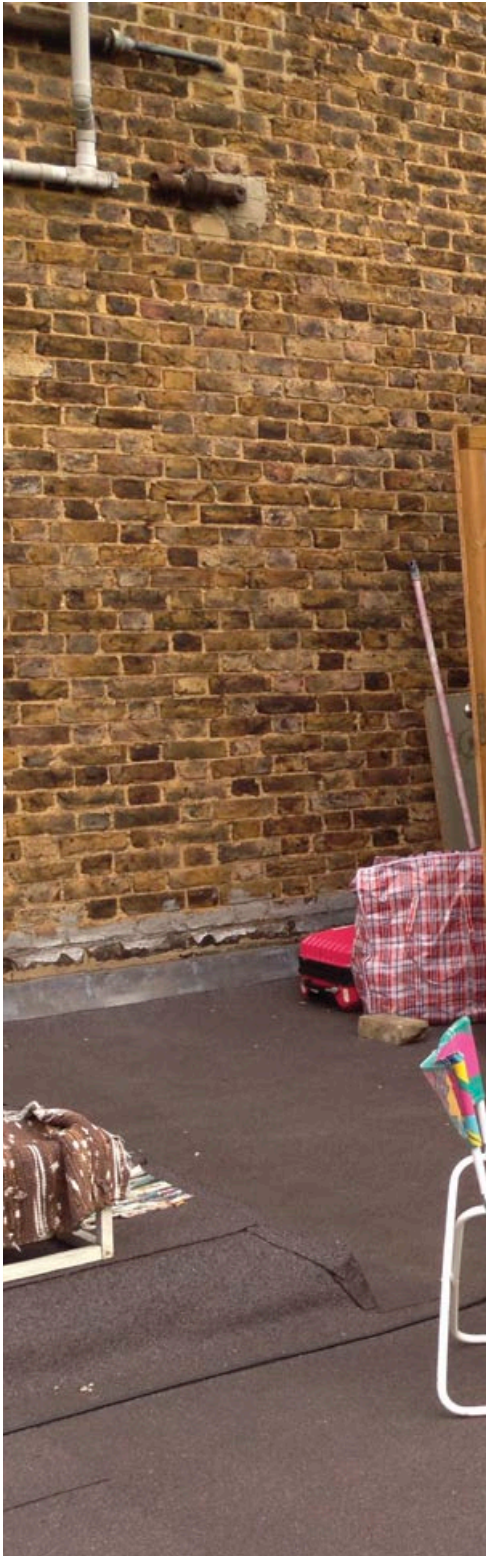
Repression.
Repression, repression.
Media black out,
police violence,
media hijacking of ideologies,
police violence
police violence
police violence
"blame the black bloc," the media said.
"the black bloc protecting the teachers," the
Internet shouted.

Truth is here, floating through wifi if u can see
the patterns.
In the midst of the growing feeling of power-
lessness,
the 'samba' described in the beginning started
to rise up
in the shape of performance.

Now, the protests have these actions popping
up everywhere, in post-anger, into humour,
in the hope that at least this will work, or not
even that aware.
Still we cross our fingers and dance in and
amongst flying bullets in the hope that the
ridiculousness of this government can be seen
through the moments its robotic behaviour is
exposed.

Cops have arrested a cartoon.
Batman has come to save us but can't afford to
do so.
Perhaps a hula hoop dance is more effective
than screaming,
or maybe I can protest in my living room, but
the real one, the LIVING room of the street.
As the sea turns red, we swim in it and lay
our bodies on the words that we hope will
penetrate all.

Pink bloc, black block -
love one another.
Unlock the strength inside and whatever may
be tying you down in your conformity.
We can't be beat.
We've been through so much that even if we



die or get caught
we get caught laughing at this ridiculousness in the hope it gets
exposed,
and millions may become billions.
This is not an exclusive Brazilian problem. Just have a look
around.

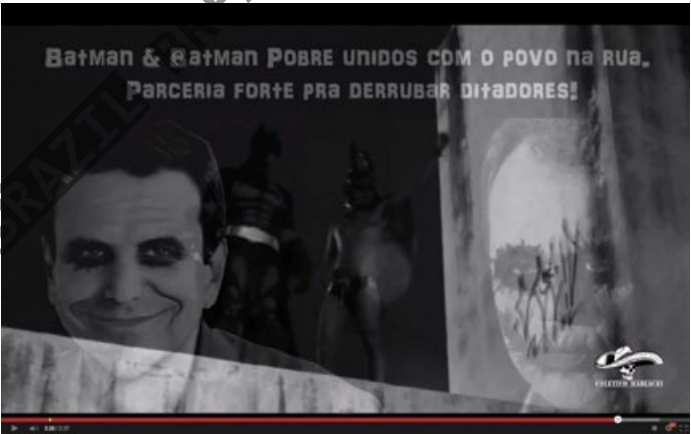
The text and images that follow reflect on the current
turbulent condition and riots in Brazil. This section is cu-
rated by Cibelle.



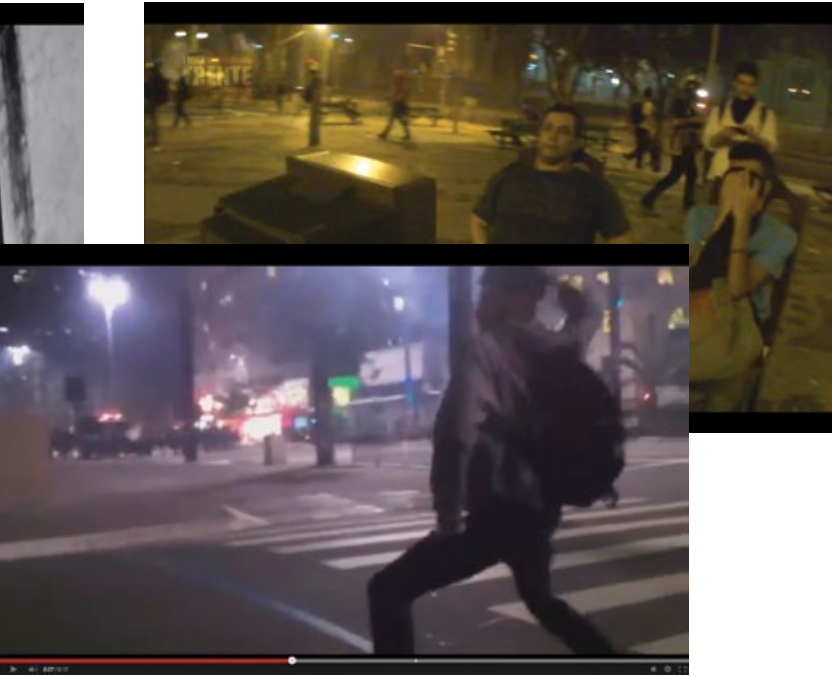
Spiderman vs police



Sala de Estar Manifestando: Cinelândia, Rio de Janeiro, 15 October, 2013



BATMAN & BATMAN POBRE - COLETIVO MARIACHI



STAYING ALIVE - dodging bullets

CANGAÇO

by Opavivará

A beach towel becomes a symbol of protest and a site of agency

Inspired by the demonstrations that took place in Brazil throughout 2013, OPAVIVARÁ! transferred the slogans of protest, and reflections on those protests, onto beach *cangas*, a kind of beach wrap, or towel. The beaches of Brazil are usually places associated with alienation, leisure and rest. However, their power to gather together people from various geographic areas, social classes, religions, genders and race transforms them into agoras made out of sand, salt and sun, capable of hosting meetings and interesting discussions and debates.

Usually, the *cangas* reflect the image of a vibrant and colourful Brazil. In the project, *Cangaço*, OPAVIVARÁ! dislocated the allegorical vibrations of these traditional and popular *cangas* and applied them instead to protest, thus politically activating the space of the beach and generating new relations and reflections through five imprinted phases: ABAIXO AS CALÇAS (Down With the Pants), XÔ CHOQUE (Go Away Elite Troops), SURUBA NÃO É FORMAÇÃO DE QUADRILHA (An Orgy is Not

A Conspiracy), TODO O PODER À PRAIA (All Power to the Beach) and ASSASSINARAM O CAMARÃO (They Murdered the Shrimp).

Each phrase has many meanings, a good dose of humour and acid irony towards the restrictive public politics that followed the street demonstrations. Laid on the beach or around tanned bodies, the *cangas* were meant to be transferred across the city, their messages becoming an invitation towards transformation.

The demonstrations invaded the streets with the transgressive power of carnival energy, their shouted propositional slogans creating an atmosphere that mixed up partying and politics (that survived right up to the violent repression of the protests by police forces). So, too, the printed phases on the *cangas* aimed to reflect generalised discontent in relation to current power abuses, contributing to a fight that is just beginning.

100 colourful *cangas* were produced and distributed for free at Ipanema beach during Alalaô in November 2013.



Go Away Shock Police



They Have Murdered the Shrimp



Rio de Janeiro (Alalaô - Arpoador), 2013



An Orgy is Not Organised Crime

A REPORT FROM THAILAND

by Pier Luigi Tazzi

The political situation in Thailand presented through an urgent mash up of interviews, quotes and letters

On Tuesday January 28, I arrived in Bangkok in the afternoon. Anuwat dropped me at Surasak BTS station. When I got out of the skytrain at the National Stadium, I had to pass through roadblocks guarded by men and women in black shirts, mostly from southern Thailand according to their accent I was told. Tension. Nobody smiling. Tents all over the place, around MBK, around BACC. Propaganda, gadgets, vendors.

Later on, in Silom. Same. Same distress. Same black shirts. At 9pm I was back at Reno's. Insomnia. The sadness of Thailand.

The morning after at breakfast two black shirts, a young man and a middle-aged woman, were sitting separately in the restaurant. Siam Paragon deserted by its usual crowd. BTS from Siam to Ekkamai overcrowded. At Bangkok University everything was as usual. Back to Jim Thompson House and black shirts again at the entrance of the alley.

I decided to leave. The body of the city was attacked by a horrible disease.

Now I am back in Nongprue.

Tomorrow...

February 1, 2014

P.L.T.

THASNAI SETHASEREE

Born 1968, Bangkok. Lives in Chang Mai.

"The relevance of Buddhism and monarchic institutions to Thai society is that they determine the normative hierarchy of cultural prestige within which economical, political, and belief systems are bracketed; they also determine the standardised foundation of value judgments embedded in lifestyle and artistic practices. By this means modern Thai art and its historical development are not a symbol of modernism limited to preconceived Western notion. But modern Thai art has been adapted in style to reinforce a moralistic longing for Thai state control in order to create a sense of belonging, social solidarity, and a homogenous image of the nation. Believing in this conviction causes modern Thai artists to dig deep into the materiality of their medium to find forms combined of matter or signs of solid substance. Accordingly, it becomes a yearning process of heroic aspiration to secure Thai artists' identity, and, somehow, the identity and ethical structure of the nation. Therefore works of art in Thailand have been produced not for the sake of aesthetic pleasure, but for moralistic contemplation within very established institutional domains."

"Overlapping Tactics and Practices at the Interstices of Thai Art," 2010.

What is going on in Thailand these days?

Looking at the political conflict in Thailand since the coup

d'état in 2006, the Bloody May in 2010, and now the resigning of the House of Representatives due to the problematic Amnesty Bill, one can see that ideas of democracy had been centred on people's rights – how they can speak for themselves, and about what they really want. The claim that the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) always makes – that the movement in Bangkok is the first people's revolution in Thailand – is wrong. There have been people protesting, no matter how large or small in number, since 2006. This deep political conflict has occurred because the form of life in rural areas has changed, and people in the suburbs learn about democracy in everyday life, where they discover how they were deceived by the Thai elite and the Thai middle class. The majority of Thai people use democracy to speak up about their lives and to claim social advantages they deserve. Now, a small group of the Thai elite and middle class think that those people need to shut their mouths. Not just shut their right to speak – a right legitimated by the democratic constitution – but also the right to speak about their own desires, morality and value judgements.

What does the term or the concept of democracy mean in these circumstances?

The term 'democracy' is used in two ways. First, it is used to pave the way back to the era of absolute monarchy by the PDRC. The people's rights need to be given to the PDRC, and the PDRC will use these rights in the name of national reform, and 'goodness'. Second, it is used to bring the people's rights back to them-



Henry Tan, Visible Hand, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

selves through the fundamental concept of equality: the majority of people are able to identify what is good for them.

Suthep, the main leader of the protestors, speaks of "the good people". Who are these "good people"?

They themselves are good people, far better than anyone else. If Thailand has failed in this conflict and "the good people", as they claim, rule over the future of the country, the whole value system would collapse, and become even more corrupted. For example, the president of Silpakorn University, along with many more university presidents and many Thai nationalist artists, obviously support the PDRC. They even say that the reason that Thai society are fooled under the Thaksin regime is because people don't know about art. Their statement does not seem to be a problem, but the question is: whose art are they talking about? Essentially, they always make the relationship between art and goodness. If art does not constitute the idea of goodness, then art is not art – it is bad taste. Art and goodness are possible if the idea of "Thai-ness" and its mighty historical past exist. And the whole value system will be destroyed without the nation. So it has become an urgent burden and social duty that Silpakorn people and nationalist artists must protest as gatekeepers of Thai Democracy.

HENRY TAN

Born 1986, Bangkok. Lives and works in Bangkok and Beijing.

3 January, 2014

Pier,

I think my view is not broad or thorough enough to conclude what's going to happen in Thailand, but for now this 'SHUTDOWN BANGKOK' campaign might lead to civil war.

There is news and rumours from many sources about what's going to happen, but what is really going on is a step to the future of political stabilisation at some point.

Just wait for the next chapter.

Best,
Henry

What is going on in Thailand these days?

It is a benefit war, the nature of every war. When a democrat has never won an election they have to find ways to win outside the game.

The biggest fear is the transition between King Rama IX to the next one, which is quite worrying for Thais. Real change in Thailand will likely come along after that transition period.

Another aspect of this political division is that the crack between people runs deep into the root of each Thai family, school, office – it affects everyone’s relationship. Good friends with different views unfriend each other or don’t talk to each other; family members fight. People cannot speak their mind freely: this is the main problem.

The complexities of the problem are a combination of beliefs, faux history taught in schools and unveiled by the Internet era, Buddhism and Brahms, ghosts and karma – all elements of so-called ‘Thai Culture’. And ineffective law.

My friends aged twenty-five and lower are very aware of what is going on; they question everything and have more open minds.

What does the term or the concept of democracy mean in these circumstances?

The concept of democracy is still the same: one person, one vote. But the protesters say everyone doesn’t have an equal voice or right. They claim that rural people are uneducated and are bribed by the Thaksin regime. This is discrimination and an abuse of human rights.

Suthep, the main leader of the protestors, speaks of “the good people”. Who are these ‘good people’?

“Good People” – in the terms of Suthep and the protesters – refer to those who have the good will to get rid of a corrupted government, who are believed to be controlled by Thaksin. These “good people” are the elites of Bangkok, plus middle class highly educated urbanists – those who want to save Thailand from Thaksin, as they have said.

Everyone says they are good people, but there are rules to underline the majority decision. When protesters try to make their own rules, justifying it through the concept of democracy is not possible.

SUTHEP THAUGSUBAN

Born July 7, 1949, Tha Sathon, Phunphin District, Surat Thani Province. Lives in Bangkok.

“I don’t think elections fully represent democracy, and it would be an excuse to have a slave parliament controlled by one individual.

If we take down the Thaksin regime tomorrow, we will set up a people’s council the day after tomorrow. Let the people’s council pick a good man to be the prime minister, good men to be ministers. Make it a dream team: make a cabinet of your dream and the people’s government. ”

Letter translated from Thai:

January 27, 2014
To Suthep Thaugsuban and others
On Curiosity and Worry from a Student

Dear Suthep,

My name is Netiwit Chotepatpaisarn. I am a Grade 11 student who is interested in political news. I am truly worried about the situation since it is violent and there have

been some deaths. As you are part of this crisis, I would like to show you my concern, and also ask you some questions. I am sincerely concerned about our country.

1. I am curious about the objective of your protest. What do you want? I am so curious that I cannot hide it anymore. You protested against the Amnesty Bill. And I agreed that the government was not right about this. But the government already scrapped the bill, so why is the protest still going on, and even getting more violent? You said that it would stop this day, that day, since before New Year. Why you are still there now?

2. As I asked you: “What do you want?” You say you want to reform Thailand to become a “perfect democracy”. However, I am curious if your methods, and your protesters, will really lead Thailand to reform. You proposed that Thailand elects provincial governors, but your council said the governors should be 75% designated and 25% elected. You also proposed that soldiers come out to enact a coup d’état. You also said that you are against the upcoming election. You know this violates people’s rights. They are people, and you are one of them. We must respect each other’s rights, mustn’t we? I am not sure if what you are doing is really called democracy, or that it will lead to a “perfect democracy”.

3. I heard that some academics call you Gandhi, or Martin Luther King Jr. You might be overjoyed by this, but do they really feel that way? Do they just want to flatter you? Gandbi used ahimsa, which was not merely ‘words’. He used love and honesty as ahimsa and it came with Truth Force – the power of truth. He used love to conquer hate, but do you really follow this path?

4. If you follow this path as some academics have praised you, why did you say that, “one thing that I never did as a politician is to be corrupt” since we all know what you did? Why do you have to lie to us and to yourself? In The Story of My Experiments with Truth by Gandbi, he never lied to himself. Please consider this: do you and your protesters embrace truth and love for humans? Why is everyone who disagrees with you called “the slave of Taksinomy” or the “Red Buffalo”? I am often sad that when I hear speeches on your stage by educated people, the words they use are not that educated, and neither do they respect people. There are doctors who say foolish things (“do vaginal repair for the prime minister”) and a university lecturer who used rude words (“fuck for the nation”), for example. It hurt me that youths and other people have to hear these things from those who call themselves educated or moral. It really hurt me too that your protesters prevented those who went to cast their vote at the pre-election.

I hope that you answer this letter. I am writing this with good intentions for you, and for mankind. Even though I disagree with you, I love you and I wish you well, but in a democratic and peaceful way. Everybody should be patient and respect each other.

With Love and Concern,
Netiwit Chotepatpaisarn

KORNKRIT JAINPINIDNAN

Born 1975, Chang Rai. Lives in Bangkok.

What is going on in Thailand these days?



An old country song.

What does the term or the concept of democracy mean in these circumstances?



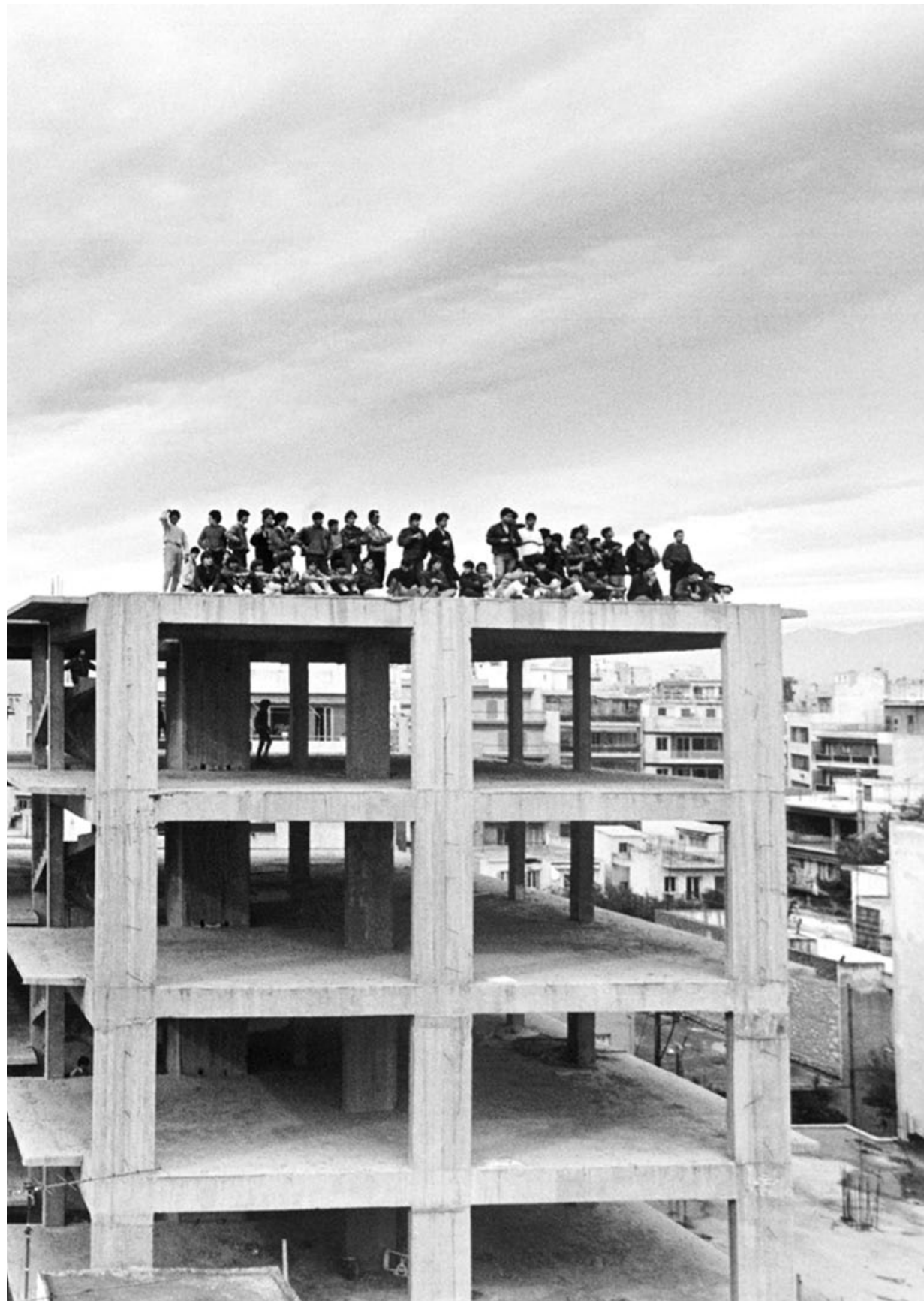
Feelings of guilt suddenly swamped her.

Suthep, the main leader of the protestors, speaks of “the good people”. Who are these “good people”?



Because who is perfect

main focus



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Polis (/ˈpɒlɪs/; πόλις, Ancient Greek: [pólis]), literally means city in Greek.

Manolis Baboussis, *Kalithea*, 1986
silver print, 26 cm x 40 cm
Courtesy of the artist, and Ileana Tounta
Contemporary Art Center, Athens

THE COSMOPOLIS IS THE STARTING POINT

by Nikos Papastergiadis

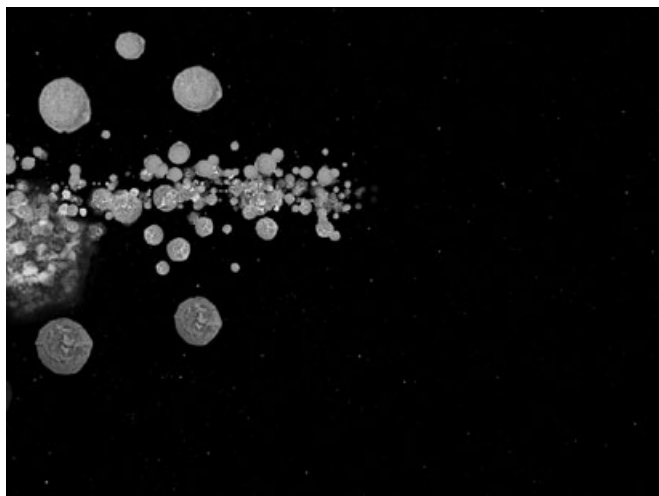
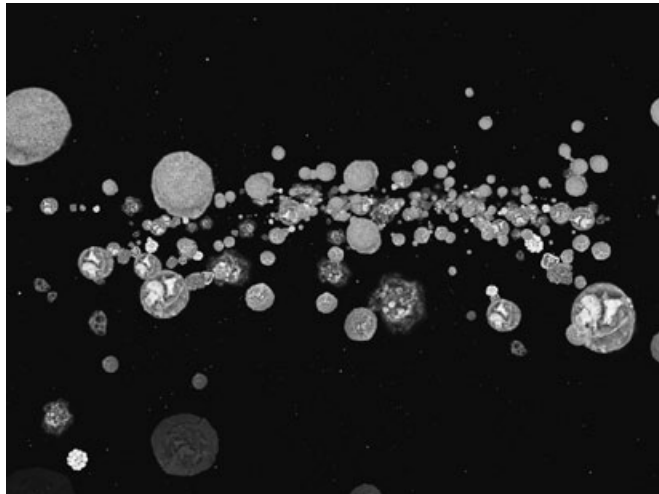
This forensic and circular perspective affirms a new and radical anthropocentric view of the cosmos

It is said that philosophy and art come from the city. But which city? I would suggest Cosmopolis. Even Socrates, a ferocious defender of Athens, called himself a “Cosmian”, in the way that others called themselves a “Corinthian” or a “Rhodian”. In his essay “Of Exile” Plutarch cites Socrates’s claim: “I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world.”¹

The seventeenth-century scientist and philosopher Blaise Pascal observed that whether we are staring out towards the cosmos or examining the realm of microscopic reality, we are “suspended between two infinities”.² The further out we look, the bigger the horizon. The closer we observe something the more complex the detail. In both directions there is the experience of the boundless. We have a word to express this experience of infinity: sublime. The concept of the sublime is the stumbling block of modern philosophy. The experience of the sublime is a recurring starting point in art. These two worlds – of art and philosophy – have never found a neat rendezvous point. Theory and practice are not so much suspended at opposite ends of infinity, but seem to oscillate between these polarities at a slight remove from each other. With this limitation in mind, I would like to respond to the theme of the cosmopolis in Jitish Kallat’s exhibition *Circa*.³

Let us begin with that tantalising sense of beginning a journey. Journeys begin in dreams; however, they also take a sharp twist when you cross a threshold. The thought of a journey leads to ambivalent emotions, because there is the possibility of an unexpected encounter between departure and arrival. There can be sadness in leaving and joy in discovery. Faced with this ambivalence and uncertainty, we would prefer to begin our journey with some kind of assurance: of the solidity of our point of departure. The passageways of the Ian Potter Museum of Art in which *Circa* is installed are framed by what appears at first sight to be the gawky bamboo poles used as scaffolding in Indian construction sites. Upon closer inspection, these poles are revealed to be pigmented cast resin held together with steel and rope. The poles are also inscribed with elaborately sculpted images of various creatures, such as monkeys, snakes and birds. In many instances, these creatures are either violently attacking each other or are in the process of devouring their own tails. They conjure mythological scenes, although they have, in fact, been inspired by the sculpted façade of the entrance to the main terminus of the Mumbai railway station. I wonder how many of the millions of daily commuters notice this allusion to the precarious nature of their journey?

Journeys follow or create lines. These lines are almost never straight. Rivers zigzag between the hard and smooth contours of the land. Roads can turn abruptly and railway tracks swerve along a smooth curve. The uneven line is a motif that recurs in Kallat’s exhibition. This skinny and sprawling line is a distinct feature of the colonial maps of India on display, their faded and crumpled paper revealing the vain pretence of administrative permanence. This jagged line also appears in the drawings on the vitrines that contain ancient Indian sculptures, creating the illusion of the glass having cracked from pressure. Is the object



Jitish Kallat, *Forensic Trail of a Grand Banquet*, 2009
video projection, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist & Arndt Berlin

trying to escape, or is the world shattering from external tremors? Finally, the sprawling line is announced in the subtle cracks that surface tendril-like along the pristine plasterwork of the museum’s entrance. These mysterious new cracks, titled *Footnote (mirror 1)*, are made of acrylic mirrors. They draw us into a sudden and dark void that disturbs the flat and neutral surface of the museum. Catching the sky and artificial light on its reflective surface they also rebound these towards another horizon. The darkness has no bottom, and the light is blindingly open. And of course the footnote is a belated acknowledgement of what you already know. It traces the origin of the journey of discovery that you have just completed.

The exhibition also contains another suite of sculptures that are interspersed across the museum’s polished wooden floorboards, collectively referred to as *Prosody of a Pulse Rate*. These are of sleeping dogs, with sprouts of wheat climbing out of their backs. Again, the object and its location are in stark tension. The dogs are life-size and life-like. They are more familiar to us as companions than as occupants of the contemplative corners of a museum. The sprouting of wheat seeds from within the unfired clay of the sculpture is itself also an uncanny experience. How does wheat live and grow from such dead matter?

However, what is most pertinent about these sculptures is that they are curled in circles in a state of suspension, between exhaustion and rejuvenation. Sleep is a kind of rebirth. The dogs have surrendered to the surface of the earth: we would prefer to imagine that the ground is dusty and warm, rather than shiny and hard. Nevertheless, they surrender their muscular frame to a soft womb-like shape and allow the dynamic tension of the daily trot between hither and thither to realign itself into a rhythmic pattern of in- and exhalation. The image of a sleeping animal curled in a circle, combined with a title that alerts us to the poetic techniques of harmony, exposes us to another mystic sign: the function of breath in the cosmic soul.

Finally, I want to turn my attention to Kallat’s video piece: *Forensic Trail of a Grand Banquet*. Two screens face each other. One contains footage of 700 food items that have been X-rayed; the other plays the footage in reverse. Natalie King has perceptively described the effect of viewing this work as being pulled into a “meteoric vortex”. Kallat has also informed us that:

“...the microscopic organisms, nebulae, or underwater formations that you see flying around you, are actually an X-ray of food items like samosas, kachoris, corn, etc., touching upon the need for sustenance, once again. The concept of the banquet uploaded into the cosmos is quite bizarre in itself. It’s how you choose to look at it.”⁴

This last gesture – in which a viewer is given a choice of perspective – is also a profound expression of conceptual understatement by the artist. I am not suggesting that this gesture is made in the spirit of false modesty or motivated by indecision and insecurity. On the contrary, like all the claims that Kallat makes, this one is consciously deliberate. To not overstate or prescribe the precise perspective is to acknowledge a space that has an autonomy beyond the artist’s reach. To understate the position or extent to which a viewer ‘chooses to look’ is both a necessary precaution and a concession to an experience that exceeds human cognition. It carefully avoids an absurd level of self-confidence. It also acknowledges the incontrovertible freedom of the viewer. But what sort of freedom do we have before this image of the extensive universe and within this video of the minutest form of life? On one level, when we are in the middle of this double infinity, there is no choice. Such a process of decision-making has either already evaporated as it has been assimilated into the cosmic ether, or else the faculty for reasoning has conceded that it has been annihilated in the encounter with the sublime. The vortex sucks in all chunks and disperses the minutest levels of

thought. The microscopic details of food and the most macroecology of the cosmos become indistinguishable. The simulation of one by the other has been a point of fascination for centuries, encompassing the most ancient cosmologies as well as the recent endeavours of physicists like Stephen Hawking. Indeed, the images generated by the ancient philosopher and the visualisations made possible by contemporary scientists are connected not just by the illusionistic distortions that are made possible with the most sophisticated camera lens, but also by a persistent belief that the geometric laws that align the part with the whole are valid principles for understanding the origin of the cosmos and the dynamic tension that sustains life and death.

The combination of a forensic and circular perspective is in my view an affirmation of a new and radical anthropocentric view of the cosmos. This view looks into the subtlest of details regarding everyday things such as the food that generates life and not only finds an image of the cosmos, but also demonstrates a fellowship between humanity and the widest spheres of our environment. It is one thing to try and make sense of the mystery of cosmic infinity by staring into the most microscopic details and finding a form that makes the incomprehensible slightly more comprehensible. However, beyond this neat and comforting illusion is another level of recognition of responsibility: the energy that is out there is also in here. Food, intelligence and the cosmos may all have a common form. Putting two video screens facing each other, with one screen reversing the footage of the other, does more than simply demonstrate the principle of doubling. It also invites the viewer to stand in the middle and bear witness to the circumambient flows.

It is my general contention that the principle of creativity is intricately interwoven with the affirmative ideas of ‘cosmos’. But how can I ever prove this? Let us start with our primary capacity for seeing, sensing and imagining the world. When we look out at the world there is the horizon. The land bends away because it is part of a sphere and the skies open like a boundless screen. At no stage is anything like the whole ever visible. One part of the surface of the world hides another and at any point the vast bulk is always beyond our range of vision. The world as a whole is always hidden from direct view. Our eyes always look up as much as they look out and across. Looking up we gain a vertical view as the cone of vision extends to the infinite depth of the cosmic screen. This gaze exposes us to far more than we can comprehend. This luminous darkness and sparkling murkiness inspire both dreadful awe and uplifting wonder.

In Kallat’s work we see this anthropocentric act of projection. It begins in the cosmology of small symbols. It conjures the dazzling uncertainty in the line of any journey, finding form in the life-sprouting rhythm of a dog’s sleeping breath. Diogenes the Cynic, who famously rejected Alexander the Great’s offer of wealth and power, and whose name comes from his ambition to live in a state that could match a dog’s cosmic harmony, would be proud to have made such an understatement.

1. Plutarch, *Moralia*, vol vii, Loeb Classical Editions, 1959, pp. 513–57.

2. Quoted in Isabelle Stengers, *Cosmopolitics II*, trans. R Bononno, Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2011, p.12.

3. The exhibition ran at the Ian Potter Gallery, University of Melbourne, from October 2012 to April 2013. An earlier version of this essay was published in the catalogue that accompanied Jitish Kallat’s exhibition *Circa* at the Ian Potter Gallery, University of Melbourne, edited by Natalie King and Bala Starr, Melbourne, 2013, pp. 6–11.

4. Quoted in Natalie King, “Jitish Kallat: An Evolving Narrative in 8 Acts,” *Art Monthly Australia*, no. 256, 2012–13, p.22.

CITIZENS OF ART

Interview with Juan A. Gaitán by Marina Fokidis

The curator of the 8th Berlin Biennale suggests how we can apply our creative impulses to politics and transform the context in which we live, for the better, through critical engagement

Marina Fokidis: What does it mean to stage a biennial exhibition in a specific city and at a specific time?

Juan A. Gaitán: To stage a biennial means to engage with a city in the most actual, present way possible. It means that one must take note of what the city is like today, what are the gaps in its political and cultural discourse, and attempt to address those gaps so as to bring out a new, hopefully positive, but also critical point of view on it.

MF: Where do you see the balance between the global branding and the global art value that a specific biennial produces? This question relates to the contemporary mega exhibitions happening all over the world.

JAG: I think that there is a race between different kinds of institutions to become bigger and more prominent. Perhaps this is something a biennial can take part in, but I think it is also important to withdraw from that urge and try to make something more concrete and coherent, something rigorous. For this 8th Berlin Biennale, the first step was to strip it down to the bare essentials so that we could see which of the expected elements of a contemporary biennial exhibition are necessary and which are not, and start again from there, constructing a project that at every turn seemed to us to be based on what was needed.

MF: Can a biennial be the ‘performative self’ or the ‘performative demonstration’ of an international museum (cultural institution) that changes shows every two years?

JAG: I think a biennial is, in many ways, a proposition. It should remain at this propositional level and not aspire to become the norm or the standard. In this sense, it is also experimental, which is why as a format biennials like the Berlin Biennale are always playing a bit with the format. That being said, playing with formats shouldn’t be the sole purpose or the main purpose of a biennial exhibition.

MF: From your point of view, is the Berlin Biennale a different kind of visual platform than that of a museum?

JAG: Absolutely! It is a very generous platform when it comes to curatorial work and the artistic process. In terms of content, there is basically no limitation or control from the outside: one is left to do as one wants, of course within the limits imposed by budgets and logistics. I doubt this is the case with most museums and other institutions.

MF: Can a biennial become a creative and active space (as opposed to the static space of the museum) that is essential in terms of producing countermelodies to power systems?

JAG: This question has two sides. On the one hand, it can be an active creative space, and in fact it is, in spite of its size and the many elements that it includes. On the other hand, it is always difficult to say what power system one is attempting to counter, and in this respect I think I have a more reserved view on the potential

of contemporary art to counter power. Art indicates power structures, it critiques and criticises them, it produces discourses on them, but it doesn’t change them alone, without the help of other areas of culture and political activity.

MF: How can a biennial become a space for cultural dialogue and exchange as well as a platform for the representation of political and social contexts, rather than simply a feeding mechanism for the art and cultural market?

JAG: I think there is the primary space, which is the biennial itself, in which the works and programmes prompt certain discussions. Then there are the other outlets, news and reports and hearsay, where hopefully the biennial is able to generate discourse as well, not necessarily linked to what the works are, but nonetheless productive in ways one cannot anticipate. This happens as long as the critics are willing to think along with the biennial and not just react against it.

MF: Where does one start? In a city like Berlin, you have this historically charged and dense political space. Specifically, there has been the division of East and West, the collapse of this division together with the end of the Cold War, the atrocities of World War II, not to mention the current political situation in Germany...

JAG: One starts with the unexpected, with those aspects that don’t conform to the established discourse on the city. In our case, we started with the museums in Dahlem and with Haus am Waldsee, two bastions of old West Berlin, located in areas of the city where one can see a continuum that runs through from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, and where the narrative of divided cities and reconstruction doesn’t quite apply. One starts by asking for a more complex way of looking at the place.

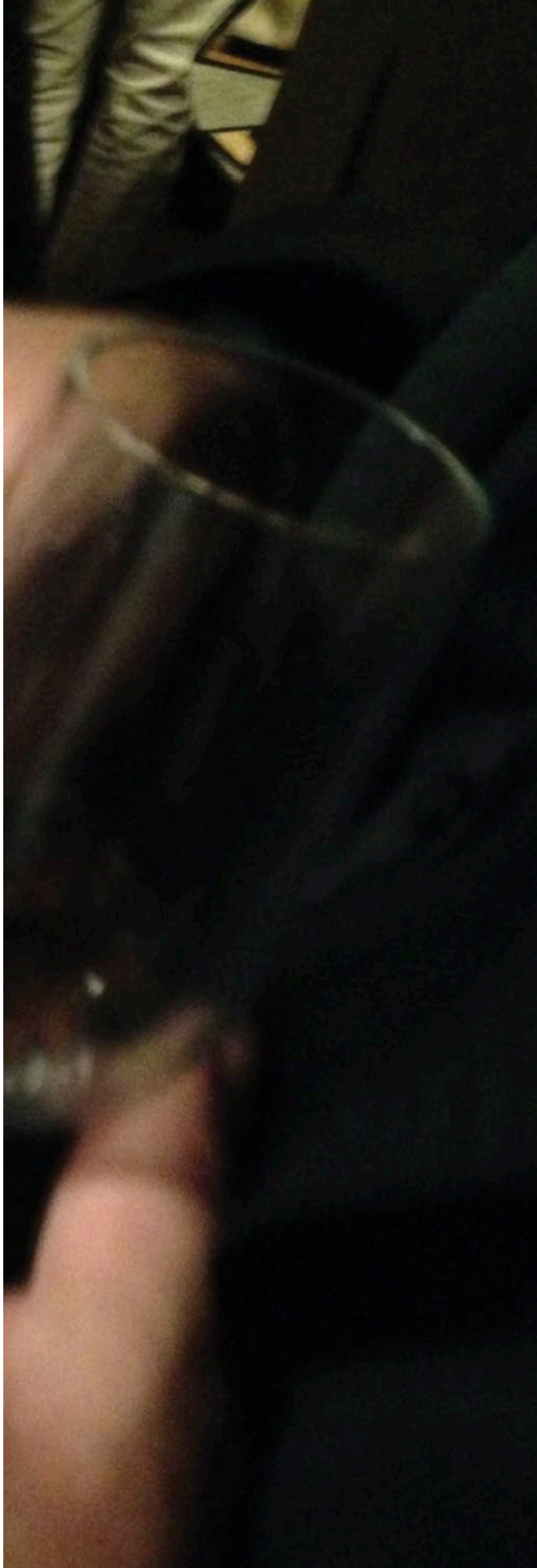
MF: We have seen, in previous editions of the Berlin Biennale, some recurring themes: for example, the ghosts of the past, the collapse of the western and eastern reality and the contemporary city’s gentrification. In what sense does the eighth edition complement or differ from previous Berlin Biennales?

JAG: In our case, we are talking not so much about the ghosts but about the presences, the narratives that are established through architecture, and what histories those ignore. For instance, we discuss the reconstruction of Prussian architecture in Mitte, and how it establishes an artificial continuity between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, ignoring the twentieth (the difficult one). There is the Crash Pad, which discusses a similar question in Modern Greek historiography: the Ottoman Empire as the great negative in the narrative that goes from Antiquity to the present. In bringing the iconography of Ottoman Greece into focus, Angelidakis asks whether it is still sustainable to imagine a Greece that has existed unaltered since Antiquity up to now, or whether it should be important to investigate other pasts.

MF: From a certain point of view, and among specific circles,

Model of the proposed facade
of the Stadtschloss, Berlin, July 2012
Picture selected by Juan A. Gaitán
from Wikimedia





Berlin seems to have become – to some extent – an unworried cosmopolitan paradise for ‘contemporary culture residents’ and art tourists who seem to move or travel there in order to live a comfortable and family-friendly bohemian lifestyle, full of art-thinking and art activities. In this context, topics like immigrant working class communities or the rise of neo-Nazism seem to escape the conversation. It seems almost like the art circle in Berlin wants to keep its eyes wide shut towards any contemporary inefficiencies. Is this something that concerns you?

JAG: It does concern me, but I don’t approach it head on. I want to talk about larger impulses that don’t leave anyone a chance to situate themselves on the ‘good’ side and others on the ‘bad’ side. It is an impulse that involves everyone, all of us. This impulse is, for me, exemplified in the reconstruction of Mitte, which is more like a face-lift, and in the ignoring of parts of the city that don’t match a certain discourse, like the area Dahlem-Dorf and the area around Haus am Waldsee and so on, where people go as if to a non-political land, when it isn’t so.

MF: You mention that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Berlin are among your historical standpoints. Berlin was, back then, the headquarters of labour organisations and the labour debate. Then, conflicts with the reformists’ leaders set in. In what sense does this relate to the current situation?

JAG: I think all I suggest is that we approach art as citizens, and citizenship as artists. That we apply our creative impulses to politics and to transforming the context in which we live, for the better, through critical engagement; that we look at art with a curiosity to find what it can provide by way of ideas and new routes to shift our point of view on our everyday lives and surroundings.

MF: Can manual and intellectual labourers maintain a common context? A common life? I am thinking about division as articulated by Negri.

JAG: I wonder if the factual (or natural) distinction between manual and immaterial labour generates the conceptual distinction between theory and practice or if it’s the other way around: that the ‘conceptual’ distinction between theory and practice makes us imagine that immaterial and manual labor are two different things. What is a fact, however, is that immaterial labour – or, let’s say, abstraction – is better remunerated than physical or manual labor and, if we want to go down the most basic Marxist route, also needs it. Who would be able to write an 800-page novel or philosophical treatise without someone else bringing some coffee and cookies once in a while? But this is also a serious question, of course, and I’d say that there is a geopolitical separation between manual and intellectual labour. Emphasising this separation is the fact that the image of labour – factory work, for instance – is now largely absent from our image-world, while immaterial labor is extremely – I’d say excessively – present in our image-world.

Juan A. Gaitán holding
champagne flutes
Berlin, 2014

URBAN ACTIVISM AND PLAYGROUND IDEOLOGY

IN THE ISOLA NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MILAN

by Marco Scotini

There is a directly proportional relationship between development of the contemporary art system and an increase in economic disparities on a social level.

Our future is at stake, argues Marco Scotini



Maria Papadimitriou, Hotel Isola, 2006, installation view of the exhibition The People's Choice

MILAN, APRIL 2007 – Milanese law enforcement agencies (police and special operations), on the morning of April 17, raided the former industrial complex on Via Confalonieri: an occupied ruin that has contained self-organised groups like the Stecca degli Artigiani and Isola Art Center for many years. Demolition of the structure began immediately, although it wouldn't be completed until the start of October. While claiming to “restore security to a piece of the city”, the government was simply moving forwards with an old plan of real estate speculation in collaboration with the Texas-based multinational developer Hines. Some years previously, Hines had decided to revise the skyline of Milan to the tune of about two billion euros of investment in the Garibaldi-Repubblica district. However, this gigantic building project could not begin until the complex on Via Confalonieri was destroyed.

NEW YORK, MAY 2007 – Major economic imbalances started to shake up the financial market. The Wall Street banking giant Bear Stearns was forced to close its two most ‘dynamic’ funds that specialised in the subprime mortgage sector. At the start of 2007, shares in the well-known investment bank had been at an all time high. But in the months to follow, the unexpected plunge on the stock market wipes out the fame and profits of Bear Stearns, as real estate prices crashed. The extension of easy credit to subjects at risk suddenly became a boomerang, causing an avalanche of losses for banks that had subprime mortgages on their books. Bear Stearns was one of the first victims of the credit crunch, and its collapse was also the first and most important sign of the catastrophe to come, which in a few months would sweep through stock exchanges around the globe, changing the face of



I progetti della gente, civic programme of Fondazione Catella, 2010

international finance. In 2008, Bear Stearns was forced to submit to a takeover by the financial firm J.P. Morgan, for a mere pittance. This was the only way for it to avoid imminent bankruptcy.

This effect of the rupture of the systematic exploitation and production of culture was immediately evident, on a micro-physical level, in the Garibaldi-Repubblica area of Milan, following the destruction of the Stecca degli Artigiani and the Isola Art Center. Here the new antagonistic capital/labour relationship encountered its own phenomenology: that of expropriation. Expropriation of social labour that is channelled to the private space of appropriation. With the growth of the massive Porta Nuova building site on the ‘ground zero’ where the Stecca had once stood, people decided to use that borderland – that public/private diaphragm with its hoardings and security barriers – as an open-air muse-

um. Semiotic productions were fundamental in this scenario: the concealment of the building site (by the hoardings) was inversely proportional to the process of display they initiated. We might say that the urban as a commodity revealed its mystery here: the capacity to conceal capital through its public display.

At the start of 2009, a seemingly-infinite sequence of drawings by children appeared on the PVC fence around the building site in Milan. In a paratactic manner, urban vegetable gardens, soccer fields, circus tents, amusement parks, bicycle parks, running tracks, parks and fountains appeared on the hoardings that bordered the areas between Via de Castilia and Via Confalonieri, Via Sassetti and Via Melchiorre Gioia. Hopes of transformation, social desires and subjective projections lined the edges of the building site: their viewpoint was infantile, non-specialised and from the

bottom up. The childish imagery was able to promote the rhetoric of human growth as urban growth, and perhaps more than that. The child, not yet shut up in a specific tradition, can challenge the limits of behavioural codes, expectations and pre-set repertoires. In spite of the skill in disguising the forms of territorial marketing deployed by the promoter of the project, the level of subjugation given form by this strategy is clear. This type of capitalist exploitation (of the urban and other things) permits the participation of forms of expression and creation as long as they remain excluded (on the outside) of property (off limits). In a paradoxical way, the true promoter of the civic project perfectly exemplifies that dual, ambiguous character, which is a typical feature of post-Fordist production and exploitation. On the one hand, we are looking at a social agency with the mission of promoting civic and environmental initiatives, while on the other we run up against the cynicism of a powerful real estate developer (also with ties to J.P. Morgan) whose goal is to exploit and capitalise on what it says it wants to safeguard.

Were we to attempt to identify the parameters involved in the institution of an art and community centre, like Isola Art Center was, in a neighbourhood of Milan, we might find in them something absolutely original and particular.

This something would generate innovation through the form and matter of the urban: a molecular, conflicted, mutant, insurgent urban in a state of becoming. It would be in crisis, that is, with respect to its consolidated collective uses and functional hierarchies. The forms of production the centre has activated, like the distribution channels it has generated, cannot be separated from alternative economic networks, systems of interaction and the mobilisation of collective energies, and the potential wealth of embryonic micro-

communities, which are poor in contractual power but filled with a desire for transformation. In this sense, the questions that have most directly engaged with artistic practices are as follows: how is a certain representation of the people in a neighbourhood, as well as their mutable relations with the space, to be achieved? How is an arena or a context determined in which people can define, debate and challenge the identities attributed to them, producing and reproducing their own circumstances of life, their own values and their own social order? How are affirmative forms of struggle imagined that do not call for the conservation of the integrity of a community that does not exist, but instead call for the right of the city to a radical democracy, in which groups and individuals control and actively design their life? Illegal actions of appropriation of space, design counter-proposals, ongoing assemblies, cycles of seminars on the philosophy of the urban and protest marches have formed the everyday fabric of the art centre. From the outset, such an empirical but theoretical program was organised around four points, with which the centre has kept faith: no budget, no show, no island hopping and no art ghetto. These points express the refusal of art to participate in market economics, to display itself, to close itself off inside the limits of the art system, as well as the desire to give roots to artistic practices.



So, what does the local and marginal character of the eviction of an occupied space in Milan have to do with the major chapter of the global crisis of financial capitalism? Why try to arrange them together in a single chain of events if they are simply a matter of pure chronological coincidence? Is there a limit or an interaction between micro- and macro-politics, between the direct experience of a social work space and the less visible, less material experience of the hoarding of savings in stocks and shares? What is the relationship between these two orders of magnitude, between the molecular dimension (as field of ruptures, discontinuities, subjectivities, desires, conflicts, aspirations) and the molar dimension (already given declarative areas, majority determinations, institutional representations)? The neoliberal market policies against which, at the start of the 2000s, a collective, alternative and constituent mode like Isola Art Center emerged, have now developed to such an extent that nothing is left to chance or without control. Neoliberalism has spread its influence over everything: it has produced an unprecedented centralisation in which only authoritarianism (now with nothing liberal about it) can guarantee the reproduction of the present conditions of repression and capitalist exploitation.

The extent to which this parasitical system lives at the expense of another has become clear by now, thanks to the precise geopolitics of the new processes of exploitation: there is a directly proportional relationship between development of the contemporary art system and an increase in economic disparities on a social level. Art is promoted today to the status of a paradoxical new control device. In the same way in which it emphasises the promise of social, creative and emancipative redistribution, it encourages and creates consensus with respect to a private and competitive channelling of resources towards business and the holdings of the upper classes. The union between so-called social art and real estate speculation is a useful tool in the transformation of communities into audiences to be governed, in the transformation of the latter into customers to be exploited, and in the change from the process of renewal to that of gentrification.

A playground ideology is governing new forms of project planning, both in art and on the urban scene. Separated and protected from the dangers of the street, the playground is one of those limited spaces of tolerated and controlled freedom that has the same configuration in any part of the world. The form of contemporary urban socialising has its own area for free play, where what is at stake, I would say, is our future.

ABOVE:
Tomas Saraceno, *Museo Aero Solar*, 2001

RIGHT PAGE:
Bert Theis, *Untitled*, 2001



WHERE THE LIVING AIN'T EASY

Interview with Adriano Costa by Kiki Mazzucchelli

The physical harshness of São Paulo's urban fabric forms the basis of an investigation into materiality and its conditions



Tapetes series, 2009/2012
sewing, fabric, acrylic and silkscreen on cloth
165 cm x 130 cm



ALL IMAGES:
Copyright the artist Adriano Costa,
Courtesy of Sadie Coles HQ, London

Kiki Mazzucchelli: Let's start by talking about the relationship of your work with the city of São Paulo.

Adriano Costa: Living in São Paulo is not easy. There are lots of advantages, but it is very hard to get around. It is a very tense, chaotic city, and my work often reflects that. Even when I use light materials, such as textiles, there is a sense of violence: they are worn out. I work with fabrics that have been used for cleaning, such as bath towels, which also have a direct relationship to the body. And this has to do with the city.

KM: How?

AC: I believe there is always a dichotomy, not only in the city of São Paulo, but also in Brazil as a whole. On the surface, there is an image of euphoria and happiness, but people suffer all kinds of violence here. São Paulo, in particular, is quite cosmopolitan. There is a lot of communication between this city and 'great centres' of the world (although the idea of 'centre' is questionable), such as New York, London and Berlin. But at the same time, we are very distant. In São Paulo you have this paradoxical feeling of being far and close at the same time.

KM: When your work started to be shown here, the kind of art presented at galleries and museums was largely very 'clean' and well finished. You brought a certain 'dirty' aesthetic from the São Paulo streets into the gallery space. This is also present in the work of other Brazilian artists, from different generations, such as Ivens Machado.

AC: Sure, I recently saw a group show at Pinacoteca that included some of his works. He is a great artist, but not easily commercialised, not so celebrated, and maybe this is why. It seems that in Brazil there is a need to identify artworks with well-made products, which is something I am not very interested in. Maybe it is because our art system is fairly new.

KM: But there are some recent examples of a more welcoming attitude towards this type of practice, for instance the 'rediscovery' of Lina Bo Bardi's work in the past few years. Her projects, particularly after her experience in the northeast of Brazil, were very different from the sensual, beautiful architectures produced by other Brazilian practitioners at the time, and she often referred to her projects as 'ugly'.

AC: And she also emphasised the human side of architecture: how people actually use buildings. Projects like SESC Pompeia or MASP truly integrate with their surroundings. It is quite interesting to think about that in a city like São Paulo, where there are very few places designed to bring people together in a harmonious manner. At the University of São Paulo (USP), for instance, the college buildings are located very far from each other. I've been told that the campus was designed this way because the university started to grow during the dictatorship, so it was an attempt to keep people apart. And São Paulo is still very much like that. The communication between the centre, where we are now, and the periphery, where I was born, is very difficult. This is somehow present in my work. I've always felt the need to move from one place to the other; I grew up realising that it's not easy.

KM: Is this something you incorporate deliberately in your work or is it more intuitive?

AC: I think it has always been a necessity. It is not something I chose. When I did my BA at USP I spent two-and-a-half hours every day on public transport to get there in time for classes. I had to cross the whole city, and this sort of experience stays with you. I never work with a predetermined project. Rather, it is a certain material or colour that determines my direction, and when other elements are incorporated, one thing starts to relate to another, some problems emerge, and I try to solve them. Sometimes, there is no solution, so I have to deal with that too. This procedure has a lot to do with being in São Paulo: there is a feeling of impotence from being in this place and my work reflects that. The reason behind that is not so important – the physical impossibility of crossing the city

or whatever – but this impossibility appears in the work and it is often not solved. This is something I have to make very clear. For instance, when I show my fabric works, it is always an issue: will the public destroy them? Am I going to do something about this? In fact, I prefer to let it happen, and often they are destroyed. When I presented this work at the Astrup Fearnley Museum exhibition (*Imagine Brazil*, 2013), the curators asked me if we should isolate the area and I said no. I told them: the work will be destroyed anyway, and one of them replied: “not in this country”. So two hours into the opening, the work was completely different. I wouldn’t even say ‘destroyed’, but it was different. It was transformed by the actions of the public. Instead of thinking about ways to stop this, I’d rather think about how people receive my work, and what happens in their interactions with it. This is more interesting than trying to control a situation. São Paulo is an uncontrollable city. If you look around, you see that all the buildings are different. There is a chaos, a lack of unity, which feeds my work instead of making me anxious.

KM: During a group show in Paris your fabric piece ended up in the bin...

AC: This makes me think about some things that interest me. I like art. I really think art is very important, and I maintain a position of reverence towards artworks. But I’m interested in thinking about the extent to which art is something that needs to be revered. Or, on the contrary, how art can be left within the reach of the public to see how they deal with it – whether they will maintain this reverence. Maybe this is why most of my works are on the floor. If you go to a museum or a gallery, it is obvious that the works are often placed at eye level or above. By putting them on the floor, you can ask why they are presented in this manner.

KM: São Paulo is home to a large community of artists. You studied at ECA, you are from my generation, a generation formed in the 1990s when the art system started to consolidate. Do you take part in a dialogue with other generations?

AC: There is a dialogue with artists and with the art circuit, but the artwork should not stay only in this ghetto. When we think about dialogue, we should ask: what is the percentage of the population that comes into a gallery or a museum? It is a very small percentage, so there is no real dialogue with the collective body. São Paulo imposes very strong social divisions. I guess it has to do with the way the city has grown, as if the physical barriers we have created have led to other types of barriers and certain types of behaviours.



Keep in mind it's just an easy game, 2013, bronze, Alpaca Andina, 10 x 70 x 66 cm

KM: Going back to your work, this kind of ‘dirty’ aesthetic, to use a very generic term, is something that has only been accepted or incorporated into the local art circuit very recently. There are some parallels between your work and that of someone like Fernanda Gomes, for instance, who is from the previous generation and who has only gained more exposure recently, for her improvised, performative approach towards the occupation of space.

AC: Yes, she is a very clear example of this. My work is very physical, so is hers, and in both there is a clear sense of the action of the artist making something, even though the work doesn’t include our physical presence in the space. I think we share the concern that the work in the space is undoubtedly important, but sometimes the space between the works is even more important.

KM: In relation to the materials you use, sometimes you have things made for you.

AC: I quite like both heavy materials, such as concrete, bronze or metal, as well as soft materials. By working with heavy materials you rely on machines or specialised labour, so you have to look for people who can actually make these things. With soft materials or drawings, I can find these in my own environment, so they are very close to me. I like mixing the two: it’s like building a bridge between the world and myself.

KM: What has changed in São Paulo since last year’s protests began? It seems the period of euphoria about Brazil is slowing down.

AC: Apparently the protests will feature a lot in the next São Paulo Biennial, and this can be complicated. I am from São Paulo, and I went to lots of demonstrations. Then I had lots of arguments with people I know and respect, because at some point the whole thing became incomprehensible to me. I think the protests started in one way and then there was a kind of hysteria to go against everything without any kind of critical analysis. And perhaps we go back to the question we mentioned earlier: that Brazilians have been conditioned to be unable to live together as a group. This may have to do with the legacy of the dictatorship or colonisation: when a foreign element comes into your territory and destroys any sense of community so it becomes easier to control.

KM: Now that the country’s art system is expanding, what does this mean?

AC: We don’t have a common voice, and perhaps we don’t need to find one. However, it would be good to make a joint effort to create a more inclusive and developed art system. To date, we still cannot deal with each other.



Tête de Femme, 2013, crowbar, hatchet and concrete, 128 x 20 x 10 cm

CONFLICTS IN THE CITY: BETWEEN HYPSPOLIS AND APOLIS

by Kostis Velonis

Under what conditions can the *hypspolis* – he who was once honoured in his city – be transformed into *apolis*: he who wanders beyond the city’s boundaries and lapses from virtue?



In the artistic avant-garde movements of the twentieth century there were few influences opposed to the traditions of metropolitan modernism. The idea of seeking an environment in which the language of architecture was not recognised seemed futile. Throughout the period of ‘-isms’ trailblazers advocated the idea of the *hypspolis* (one who is honoured in one’s city), not so much in the sense of acceptance of principles, and the need to actively preserve them, but mainly to defend new ideas and attitudes. Although in some cases these differed from the status quo, they were still proposed as a way of ‘upgrading’ the state. The Aristotelian definition of man reveals the necessity of identifying every human activity with the principles of an organised community.¹ During the nineteenth century, radical ideas were consciously dedicated to the *koina*, or common concerns, in order

to renew and modernise society more rapidly. Even the issue of ‘revolution’ became directly related to the social groupings created in urban centres, and it was because of these that conflicts arose.

In the nineteenth century, the labels of ‘Beast’ or ‘God’ for those unable to live in a society was supplemented, and partially negated, by a third: that of the solitary walker who seeks the truth and the meaning of life in communion with the natural environment.² The modern age, having chosen an exploitative relationship with unsullied nature, resisted the ‘exiled poet’. As a former inhabitant of the city, he was called upon to remake his primeval nostalgia by comparing it to the sinful image of his metropolitan starting point.

Under what conditions can the *hypspolis* – he who was once

Simos the Existentialist
Simos bids farewell to Greece, September 1956



honoured in his city – be transformed into *apolis*, city-less, who wanders beyond its boundaries and lapses from virtue?

Certainly, the person who is city-less or stateless these days is not only he who by nature rejects society; even more so he is one who, due to circumstances, is forced to abandon his own community. This choice can be explained in terms that relate to immigration and expatriation.³ After a century of commitment to the tenets of modernism, what kind of strange ‘escapist’ neo-modernism would reject the city? And if in the past the city provided energy and inspiration for the avant-garde who, today, would want to praise it?

Athens, as an architectural dystopia that has suffered unbridled development, offers much material for questioning. It can be perceived as an anti-model city, where all architectural testi-

mony is unpleasant and oppressive. The belying of the expectations of the international style of architecture, and especially the Greek model of multi-storied buildings, prompts us to question the need for the city, as well as the ways in which it preserves its supremacy.⁴ However, what I would like to address is the ‘place’ of that person who disowns the city, or at least ceases to seek it. But how necessary is it for us to speak exclusively in geographical terms? Within the flow of events in a city, the citizen’s experience of being city-less is a phenomenon that remains unnoticed. It is perhaps more a psychic process than an expression of the general tendency towards the poetics of transfer. It is an internal journey that remains uncovered and replaces the ‘object’ of architecture with the ‘airy materialism’ of the ephemeral, which leaves no history, no trace, no evidence.⁵ If, despite all this, there

were some reason to justify wandering under any conditions, perhaps it would be the quest for a destiny that sought infinite freedom far from the city, its troubles and its people. How much solitude fits in to this confrontation?

Perhaps Timon of Athens, a contemporary of Pericles, is one of the most useful historical examples of someone without a city, who consciously chooses to live beyond the city borders. Timon, a wealthy and popular citizen, promotes misanthropy as the only wise philosophical attitude. His attitude is prompted by the moral decadence of his social environment. From this philosophical perspective, society consists of people as individual units who, in the best-case scenario, neglect (if not quarrel with) each other. Timon proves to be a self-contained subject who, having lost his faith in humanity, condemns everything in that most historical metropolis, Athens. The Shakespearean Timon not only curses the people but the entity of the city itself.

However, misanthropy is no longer the most appropriate way to describe the rejection of contact with the urban civilisation and whatever this comprises. Instead, the attitude of ‘someone without a city’ towards what he is trying to avoid helps us to understand how we can move from the idea of hating people to regarding the city itself as a problem that we should consider in philosophical terms.

This text is based on an older version written for the curated exhibition Apolis at the Hellenic American Union, Athens, 2006.

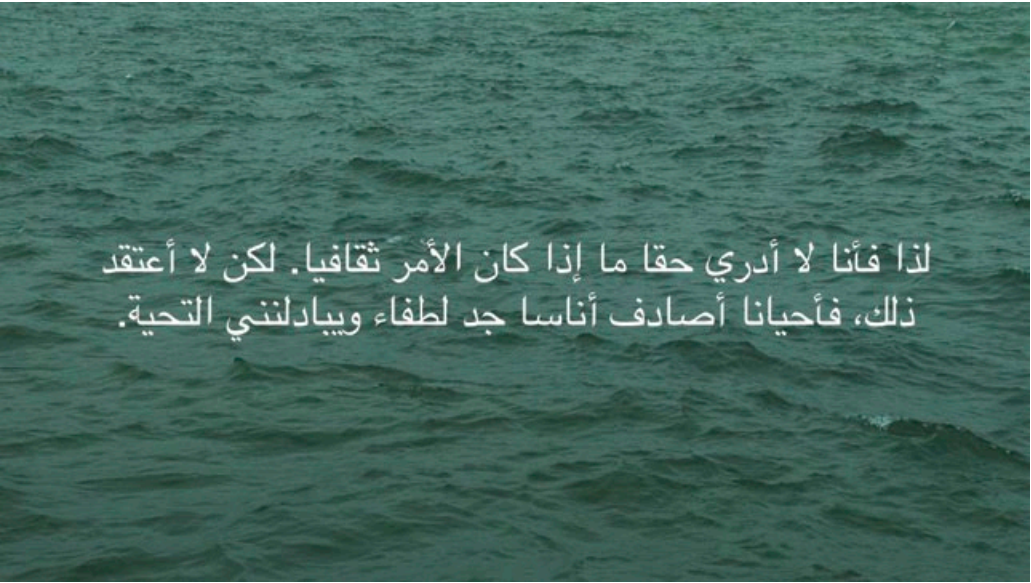
1. “From these things therefore it is clear that the city-state is a natural growth, and that man is by nature a political animal, and a man that is by nature and not merely by fortune city-less is either low in the scale of humanity or above it.” Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 1.7-9, Harvard University Press, 2005, p.9.
2. “While a man who is incapable of entering into partnership, or who is so self-sufficing that he has no need to do so, is no part of a state, so that he must be either a lower animal or a god.” Aristotle *Politics*, I, 1.7-9, Harvard University Press, 2005, p.13.
3. In the same text, Aristotle uses three adjectives used by Homer to describe Nestor, the man who was in favour of civil war (Iliad, I, 63): “clanless, lawless, hearthless”, that is, the person who is without family, laws and a home, truly a supporter of domestic turbulence today?
4. It would be interesting to look at a story of passing into the city, and out of it, literally, at the gates. The comment of the Roman orator Pomponius is useful to distinguish the legal framework of the Roman empire with regard to violating city walls:
“Si quis violaverit muros, capite punitur: sicuti si quis transcedet scalis admotis, vel alia qualibet ratione : nam cives romanos alia, quam per portas, egredi non licet: cum illud hostile et abominandum sit : nam et romuli frater remus occisus traditur ob id, quod murum transcendere voluerit.”
[Whoever desecrates the city walls is punished by death: for example, anyone who climbs over the walls, using ladders or by any other means; indeed, Roman citizens must leave the city only through its gates. To do otherwise is to commit a hostile and abominable action, for Remus, brother of Romulus, was killed, history tells us, only for wanting to climb over the city walls.]
5. However, a survey of the collective fantasies of the youth culture of the 1950s would help us comprehend the spirit of escape in trips to the country, where the shell of a house was replaced by the shell of the car, offering millions of teenagers a pleasant way to escape from the restrictive environment of the city.



Jimmi Efthimiou
Against the Gravity of Myself, 2006
Courtesy of the artist

HONG KONG AND MARRAKECH: GEOPOLITICS IN DIALOGUE

Interview with Leung Chi Wo by Carson Chan



TRANSLATION: So I don't really know sometimes if it's because of culture. But sometimes I don't think so because some other people do. And they're very nice.

In the past fifty years or so, the concept of 'otherness' has been thoroughly discussed as a way of understanding how the Global North perceives the South. Much less attention has been given to how those in the South perceive each other. For the 4th Marrakech Biennale, which took place in 2012 during the so-called Arab Spring, Hong Kong artist Leung Chi Wo was invited to ruminate on both Hong Kong and Morocco's shared postcolonial heritage. The resulting video installation pairs the narrated personal histories of Moroccans living in Hong Kong with footage of nature. Marrakech Biennale co-curator Carson Chan unpacks the work's geopolitical layers with the artist.

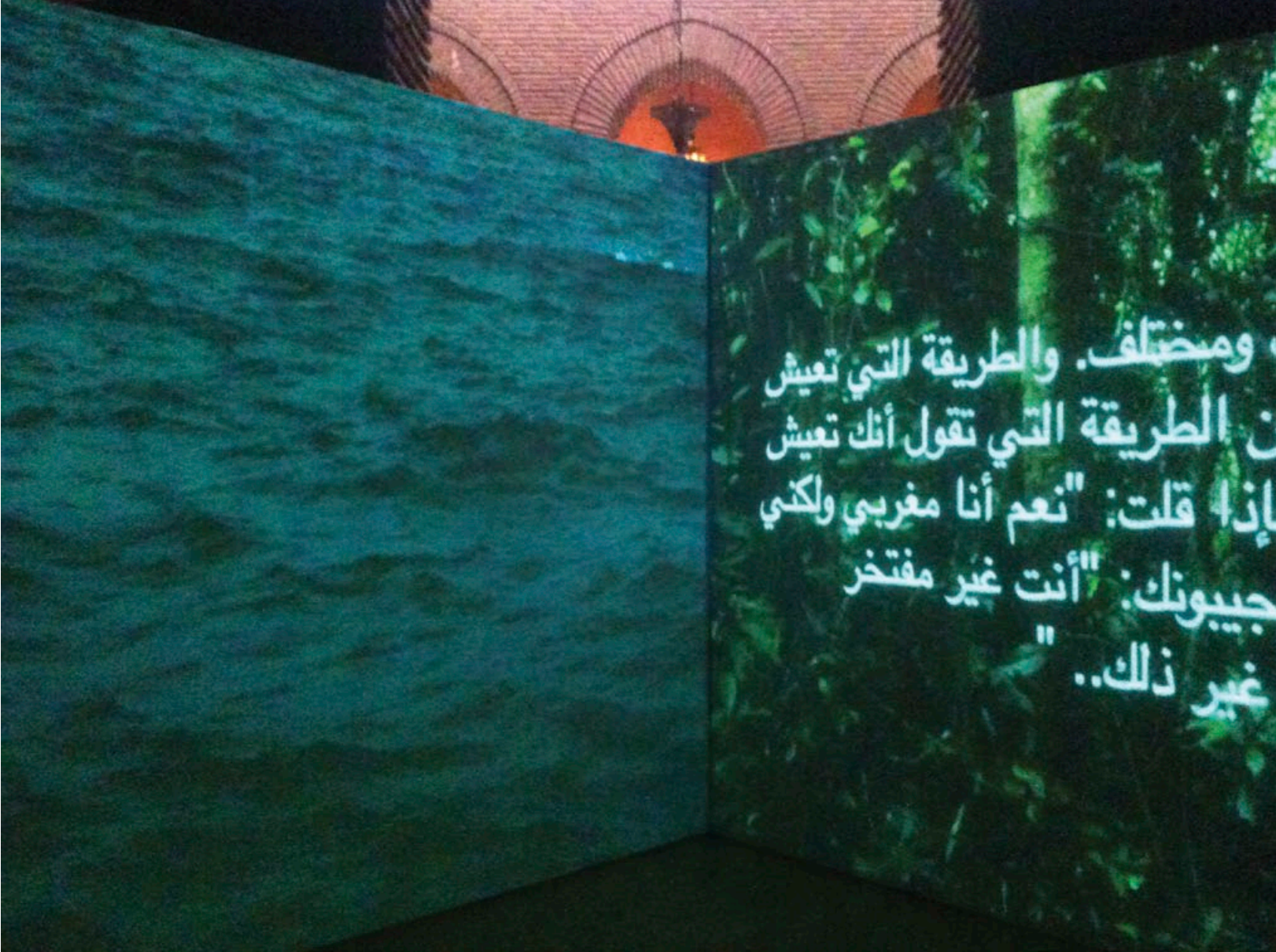
Carson Chan: Before we talk about your work dealing with the Global South, specifically between Hong Kong and Marrakech, I'd like to talk about how you see the relationship between the individual and social, national and international systems. This is a theme that has been consistently articulated in your work. How did this come about as a thematic device for you?

Leung Chi Wo: I reflected on this a little when I lived in New York for a year and a half, starting in 1999. I had always thought of Hong Kong as an international city, a place not burdened by China's presence as it was for Hong Kong artists of the 1960s and 1970s. My education was very Euro-American centric. Postwar Chinese art history was not really taught when I did my MFA at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in the mid-1990s; contemporary art was simply understood as an import from the West. At the same time, I'm from a generation that is very much defined by Hong Kong's transition from being British to Chinese. I went to university in the late 1980s when all that was discussed was the 1997 Handover. In the mid-1990s, when I was finishing my MFA and had started Para/Site with some friends, all we talked about was the Handover, and discussions around the world about Hong Kong centred on it as well. My artistic career, the 'personal' as you

say, is intimately tied to large social phenomena, like the history of Hong Kong's transition.

CC: Particularly after the Handover in 1997, when Mainland Chinese immigrants began arriving in the territory en masse, Hong Kong's identity – however precariously defined between British and Chinese ideals – became something that was to be protected. The difference between 'local' and 'foreign' became marked and politicised. From your perspective, how did this change the status of contemporary art, itself on some level a foreign import?

LCW: My artistic voice and identity is something that has developed around my immediate context. Rather than looking into historical conditions, I've always found relying on first-hand observations to be a good strategy. Between 1993 and 1997, I made a photo series capturing Hong Kong architecture that appeared foreign to me. The series is untitled, but I often call it the *Travellers Series*, because the photos were made using a heavy, handmade, 16 x 16-inch wooden pinhole camera not unlike those that were used by nineteenth-century photographers. Looking at Hong Kong became an exercise in finding exotic moments in the familiar. Even though I was born in Hong Kong, I began to explore the city to find new places, such as colonial buildings hidden in the forests



So I Don't Really Know Sometimes if it's Because of Culture
two synchronised video projections and two single-channel videos on monitors, dimensions variable
Installation at the Marrakech Biennale, 2012
All images courtesy of the artist and ArtAsiaPacific

and forgotten historic structures hidden in plain sight. I should mention that I took some courses in tourism during my MFA. I was very inspired by this class and learned how one could see the world differently by positioning oneself as a tourist. It allowed me to use my personal experiences as tools for tackling the question of foreignness from within my established contexts.

CC: I like the idea that the artist's point of view physically, intellectually and aesthetically produces discourse. Had you been to Morocco or Africa before we worked together on the 4th Marrakech Biennale in 2012?

LCW: No, that was the first time. I remember the heat and dryness the most. Marrakech was not on my radar before I was invited to participate in the exhibition, and on the first four-day research trip you sent me on, I felt that the visual stereotypes I had of the country were actually reinforced. The medina and souks in the centre of the city confirmed the pre-modern image of Marrakech I knew from popular images. It wasn't until I returned to Marrakech some weeks before the opening to install the work that I got a chance to visit Guéliz, the modern area of the city.

CC: Though post-regime rhetoric was something we very much wanted to avoid as a theme for the biennale, you and Alek-

sandra Domanovic were specifically invited as participating artists because you both grew up in places that no longer exist – you in British Hong Kong and Aleksandra in Yugoslavia. Even after half a century of independence, Morocco is still very much defined by its former status as a French protectorate. With the political past and present of both Hong Kong and Marrakech in mind, *So I Don't Really Know Sometimes if it's Because of Culture* (2012), became an extremely complex logical matrix. It centred on narratives from two Moroccan women currently living in Hong Kong, whose words are narrated in English by two male French artists also based in the city-state; and it's subtitled in Arabic on two separate but conjoined walls, upon which are projected videos of open water and dense foliage respectively. On separate monitors mounted behind these walls, we see the Frenchmen talking about their own lives in Hong Kong. In the best sense of the word, it's a rather confused presentation of identity politics and its relation to geographic displacement. How did this come about?

LCW: The work started with conversations I had separately with the two Moroccan women, whose names are Assia and Saloua. One was trained as an interior designer and came to Hong Kong with her husband, who is an investment banker. She's now



Kaustby-Knoppe-Bladet-Jonathan, 2013
single-channel audio track, speaker,
ArtAsiaPacific magazine, IKEA furnishings

Bright Light Has Much
the Same Effect as
Ice
(detail), 2012
Hong Kong's 20-cent
silver coin from 1893

Post-Ikea Display, 2005
ready-made objects
MDF with high-gloss
white foil finish



a housewife. The other is an architect. One is French-born and the other is Moroccan-born. I asked both women the same questions, so mirroring emerged as a formal structure. I then realised that, of the two male French artists, Cédric Maridet and Laurent Gutierrez, one is French-born and the other is Moroccan-born. At this point, I was producing a system of oppositions: women and men, 'colonisers' and the 'colonised', French and Moroccan. These oppositional forces are presented through conversations that are about the most banal of topics, set against footage of water and trees from Hong Kong.

But apart from this structure, the work becomes reflexive when the two women start to discuss how they feel about living in Hong Kong. The details of their individual experiences peel back the core assumption of colonialism – the notion of the civilised explorer versus the uneducated native. Assia talks about how she could appreciate and understand people in Hong Kong even though they can be rude. She likes them for their frankness, but also for how they accept her as a foreigner, as opposed to the frustration she feels in her native Morocco, as a westernised Moroccan. In this way, she likes the diversity in Hong Kong. Saloua, on the other hand, expected the local people of Hong Kong to be more European, British perhaps. She thought they would be more polite and greet each other like people often do in Europe, and she found the rudeness difficult to cope with.

CC: I've learned that it is still not possible to really discuss the cultural life of Morocco without talking about colonialism. *So I Don't Really Know* is essentially about the post-colonial individual and how this identity could be located. Do you think it's possible to develop an intellectual or artistic discourse about Hong Kong without recourse to post-colonialism?

LCW: Well, I would say that it's possible, but I cannot identify any concrete way to do it. In *So I Don't Really Know*, the personal accounts were there to counter a collective understanding of these post-colonial places. Perhaps something deeply personal could bypass these larger social readings? Post-colonialism is just a convenient way to look at the past, and, really, it's about finding a different perspective, such as a personal one. But even then, the issue may not be resolved. I guess I can't give you an easy answer.

CC: Maybe it's not necessary to find an easy answer. In any case, post-colonialism is so ingrained in the Hong Kong identity that it would be rather artificial to try to extract it from cultural practice. Context produces its own readings and in turn produces new fictions. Thinking about this, the unreliability or mutability of history and memory seems to be a theme in your work. For one untitled project from 2012, you went through random exhibition catalogues from libraries and archives in Hong Kong to pick out forgotten or inactive artists, who you then 'reincarnated' in three new works, for example. Is history always something we try to wrestle truth out of?

LCW: History is more about power struggles than it is about objective, truthful presentation of facts. It's about who has the ability to write it. It was frustrating researching all the forgotten artists of Hong Kong. When I asked colleagues about some of the artists, who were once famous and active and whom I had admired as a student, no one seemed to remember them. How does memory turn into history?

A version of this conversation will be published in a monograph of Leung Chi Wo's work by AsiaArtPacific books in 2014.

HORIZON, ATHENS, 2014

by Georgia Sagri

A performance on the theme of polis, commissioned by *South as a State of Mind*

“I don’t want to mind the gap; I don’t want to be told what to do through loudspeakers. I am not asking for protection. I have nothing and I want nothing. This is not for me, it is not for you; it is becoming. I am not asking for your acceptance. I don’t want you to notice me. I am not looking at you but beyond you. The issue, the political, economic, social issue, does not worry me; what worries me is that we will not meet and that worries me a lot. I don’t want to mind the gap; I don’t want to be told what to do through loudspeakers. I am going on because I’ve found a horizon.”

Photos by Stathis Mamalakis





Photos by Stathis Mamalakis



AN EVENING, SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE...

by Simon Critchley

KADASHEVSKAYA HOTEL
26 Kadashevskaya nab. 115035 Moscow

January 1, 2019

I guess we could all have seen it coming a few years back. Things really started to get worse around the end of 2013 and then dragged on into the long, cold winter months. That whole business with that guy, what was his name? Mountain in Wales. Snowden. That's it. He went underground for a while and then emerged as the CEO of *Bozhe Moi!* (My God!): the amazing Russian search engine that overtook Google early in 2017. Totally wiped them out. I find it reassuringly old world and Le Carré-like to have the FSB watching all of us rather than the NSA.

Shortly after the President's death, events moved fast. Well, suspicions were raised when they declared it accidental. Everyone knew it was suicide. He lost face (and faith) after that awful video circulated. You all know the one I mean. That was just after the attempted toppling of 1WTC. Why did they build that thing? It looked like a huge robot schlong. It was lucky that only a couple of hundred people died in the rogue drone strike, but the building's been empty – cursed – since then, apart from a shelter for the homeless on the ground floor. The city began to go bankrupt after whatshisname, Di Blasio, was unable to raise taxes to pay for all the damage from the great storm of summer 2016. That was when the BBB movement (Bring Back Bloomberg) really got momentum. It turned out that people missed his bad Spanish at those press conferences. He's been in power for a year now, even bringing back everyone's pal, Ray Kelly. It's just like old times.

Biden governed heroically, if ineffectively, until they called an early election due to the state of emergency. But he was never going to beat Chris Christie, particularly after Hilary had to pull out of the primaries because of that scandal with Anthony Weiner's ex-wife. God that guy really embraced new technology. I think he's still serving time. Chris Christie was a surprisingly popular president. It was like being governed by Tony Soprano. People love a benevolent despot. But I guess we weren't surprised when the heart attack happened. He was inspecting the Acela line to Boston after it had been destroyed by floodwaters.

President Rubio has been in power for over a year now. He looks the very picture of health, glowing like the self-satisfied Miami sun when he speaks. Obamacare has been fully repealed, the rather minimal tax increases on the rich have been reversed, the federal budget has been slashed (his 'War on Debt' campaign), and Rubio plans to implement the NRA's proposal to arm all school kids. That's equality. Everyone gets a gun. People seem to feel safer that way. Or they just stopped caring after that horrific school shooting in Greenport: the sixth one last year. I mean, who's counting, right?

The truth is that national politics no longer seems to matter. Neither does the state. Cosmos is the new 1% international political force, set up by Jamie Dimon and other senior business figures from across the world. Its radical plan is to abandon all states and national borders and establish an independent league of megacities (initially New York, Shanghai, London, Tokyo, Mumbai,

Moscow, but many others want to join) with its own police force and border agents. They've already begun to issue passports. It comes free when you sign up for their premium credit card. I have one here in my wallet. It has their catchy motto engraved on the titanium: "The world is ours. Make it yours". They were initially called The League of Rootless Cosmopolitans. But they shortened their name: like the magazine, like the drink. The only political imperative was how to preserve the patina of liberalism while maintaining existing levels of inequality. Unsurprisingly, this is not that hard. It turns out that this is what we had anyway. A large proportion of the funding base for the Democratic Party has evaporated. *Bozhe Moi!* is also a big funder of the Cosmos party. Secession from their various states is expected to begin this year.

After the whole Google Glasses debacle and the copycat suicides where people filmed their own deaths while wearing them, huge amounts of money were spent on lawsuits and the program was abandoned. Capital was poured into the development of what was called 'inner space research'. There were various plans to insert probes under the skin at the wrist in order to internalise search functions with fingertip control. They also tried to develop an ultra-gossamer type mask where computer and skin surface would meet and merge. They called it '2 Skin'. It also failed. As did the plan to insert implants in the retina. The stroke of genius at *Bozhe Moi!* was realising that the search engine and the whole apparatus could be run from a customised pair of headphones. People really like headphones. It turns out that there is still a huge difference between what you are prepared to stick in your eyes and your ears. I'm wearing mine right now to talk to you. The translate function means that everyone can speak any language they wish which is what I do here in Moscow. Rosetta Stone is already a distant memory.

Of course, we knew that the rise of *Bozhe Moi!* was a soft authoritarian takeover. Old-fashioned leftists would proclaim that the promised means of our emancipation (the Internet circa 1996. Remember that?) had merely shackled us more tightly in virtual servitude. Boring! I mean we read Foucault too when it still mattered. But the truth was that people didn't really care about their privacy. Not really. Not even the Germans.

Wars came and went in the Middle East, huge populations were displaced and innocent civilians were killed. Business as usual. The pieces moved slightly on the global chessboard and then moved again. We stopped caring, particularly after the big broadcast networks began to fold – CNN was first. We knew less and less about the world, particularly after all those attacks on BBC journalists. But life was just fine here. There is still no two-state or one-state solution in Israel and settlements are still being built. After the attacks on Iran following their nuclear tests, the Ayatollahs even took out a new fatwa on Salman Rushdie and one on Bono too, after he was involved in that hit musical about the Iranian Revolution. But I think they both still go to parties.

I guess the weirdest changes have been around sex. The omnipresence of the highest quality 3D pornography, combined with 'sensorium' patches that went on sale in 2015, effectively killed it off. Together with the first cases of a fatal testicular cancer caused by a variant of the HPV virus that was said to be in



Basim Magdy, *The Last Day of Written History*, 2011
acrylic and spray paint on paper, 35 cm x 50 cm
Courtesy of the artist

90% of the sexually active young male population. That got their attention.

This led to two trends. A sudden vogue, that summer, for reckless, public sex: in buses, parks, sidewalks, subways, everywhere. It became a kind of display of political indifference or even resistance among the poor, but it was picked up and imitated by a lot of college kids. They call themselves the League of Lovers or LOL as way of mocking the Cosmos. There continue to be many arrests and an African-American couple was shot last weekend for refusing to stop making love in Prospect Park. Not so much 'Stop and Frisk' as 'Stopping Friskiness'.

The other trend – less numerous, but much more influential – was the Cenobite movement, where people would pay significant amounts of money to live together but in such a way that they could remain apart and not constitute any kind of threat to each other. The first one was founded outside Warren, Vermont a few years back. But they have spread all across Vermont, New Hampshire and Upstate New York. After electing to withdraw from the world – what they call *anachoreisis* – each Cenobite is given an 'anchorhold' where they can stay safe and warm with their devices and sleep. Any participation in public events is optional, but with the right use of a wonderful new anxiety medication called Atarax, Cenobites are able to be together socially and even maintain eye contact without looking at their devices for up to two minutes.

For fear of contagion, celibacy is the rule in all Cenobite groups. This did not extend to masturbation, of course. That would have taken things too far.

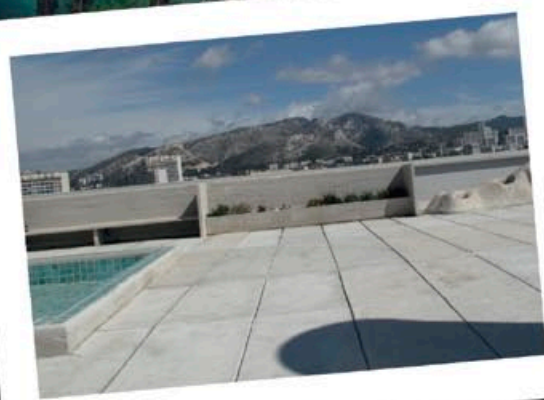
People incapable of even this degree of social activity or who could not bear to be disconnected from their devices began to gather outside the Cenobite communities in more extreme groups. They began to be called 'Hamlet camps' or the 'Inkies' after their customised black clothing, that was something between sports clothing and a Benedictine habit. The sign-up fee is prohibitively high in order to pay for the private police force and guarantee exclusivity. But I hear that some of the 'Inkies' are beginning to produce some really high-level electronic music.

New York City began to feel too much like Alexandria in the late fourth century and I decided to get out when the right job offer came through. I've been living in this hotel in Moscow for the last 6 months working for a contemporary art space funded by one of the oligarchs behind Cosmos. It's all right. The Russians make a generic version of Atarax and I have a bodyguard and a driver. But I stay in the hotel most of the time, as it's too dangerous to go out. Oh, Happy New Year.

This text was originally published on December 27, 2013 at COMMUNISTS IN SITU, <http://cominsitu.wordpress.com/2013/12/27/moscow-january-1st-2019>

APT. 302

Le Corbusier's Cité Radieuse in Marseille has a new residency program

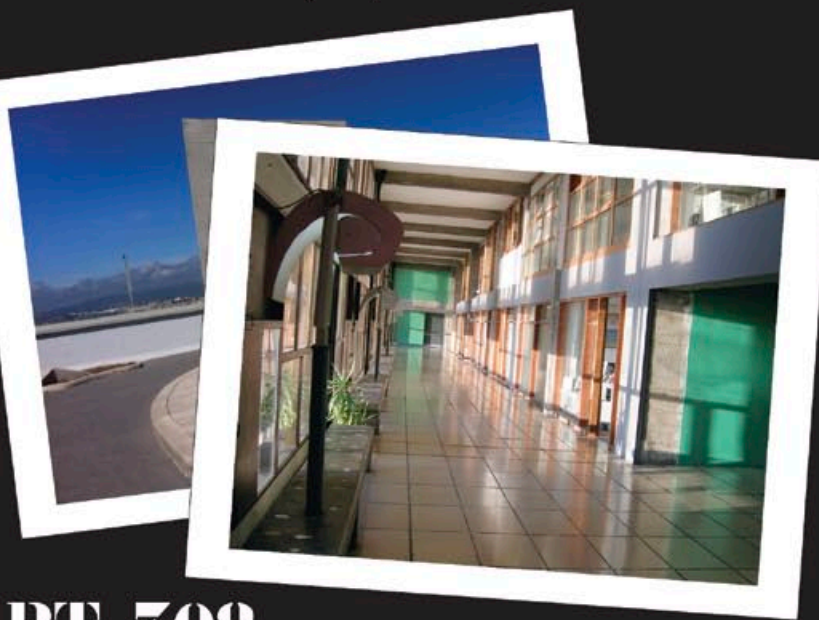


Informally known as *La Maison du Fada*, the Cité Radieuse in Marseille was constructed between 1947 and 1952, opened in 1952, and is the first of the aforementioned buildings. As one of Le Corbusier's most famous and infamous works, it influenced the utopian designs and fantasies of other architects and is often cited as the founding moment of the Brutalist architectural style.

Inside the building, corridors run along its main axis, with apartments stretching from one side of the building to the other. The Cité Radieuse hosts the architectural bookshop *imbernon*, the *Hôtel Le Corbusier*, the restaurant *Le Ventre de l'Architecte* and a cinema. These days, the Unité is mainly occupied by upper middle-class professionals. However, it is also open to visitors who come to enjoy the dazzling view from one of the most famous rooftops of the twentieth century.

In 2013 Marseille, the "secret capital of France" (T Magazine, NY Times), was the European Capital of Culture. From January to December, a year-long program titled *Le partage des midis* (Sharing the South) saw numerous highlights and events: the opening of new museums (e.g. MuCEM), the International Festival of Arab Cinema, streets spruced up for tourists, and a year-long arts festival.

Aside from that, Marseille, next to the Côte d'Azur, has a strong and diverse cultural tradition. It is home to Swiss architect Le Corbusier's monument of high modernism, the Cité Radieuse, located in the south of the city and surrounded by green trees and squawking parrots. From the altogether five Cités, four of which are located in France (Marseille, Rezé, Briey, and Firminy) and one in Germany (Berlin), the building in Firminy is likely to be the best known one in the art world. 20 years ago, Yves Aupetitallot conceived and organised the *Projet Unité* in Firminy (1993–94), an exhibition which had considerable impact on the international contemporary art scene.



APT. 302

MARSEILLE

The *Apt. 302 Edition Portfolio* aims to raise enough funds to cover the rent and maintenance of *Apt. 302* for the next two years, allowing a minimum of 20 residents to make use of the apartment during that period. All proceeds will exclusively support the *Apt. 302* residency program. The artists who contribute to the *Apt. 302 Edition Portfolio*, together with the initiators of the project, will be involved in the residents' selection process.

Edition of 50 + 5 APs

Price: €1,000
41–50: €1,250 (special edition including a wedding invitation by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster & Tristan Bera)

info@apt302.org

The portfolio will be on view at the New York Art Fair *Independent*, March 6–9, 2014



Tobias Kaspar
Grand Hotel Europa Palace, Sorrento May 30th – June 1st, 2012, Be Aware of the Wholy Hore (1971), Location Check, 2013

C-print on glossy paper
11.8 x 15.7 in. // 30 x 40 cm
Each edition with a unique selection of images
Signed & Numbered



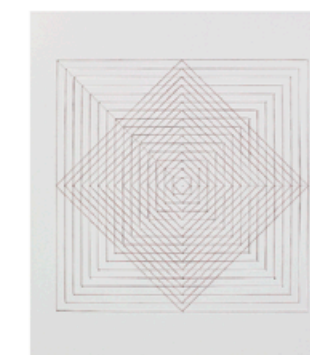
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster & Tristan Bera
Fétiche Blason, 2013

C-print, glassine paper, paper
11.7 x 8.3 in / 5.5 x 9.8 in // 29,7 x 21 cm / 14 x 25 cm
(// 6 x 8 in / 15 x 20 cm)
Notes by a psychoanalyst and a series of c-prints from *Belle comme le jour* (2012), consisting of the 5 photographs *Lacanian Knot*, *Gratiosa Feet*, *Narcissus Blonde*, *Fantasy Red* and *Vertigo Neck*
Signed & Numbered certificate



Stewart Uoo
Untitled (June 2010, Page 70), 2013

Offset print on paper
24 x 31.5 in. // 61 x 80 cm
Signed & Numbered



Carol Bove
Red Mandala, 2013

Nails and thread, template and instructions for assembly
31 x 31 in. // 78,7 x 78,7 cm
Signed & Numbered certificate

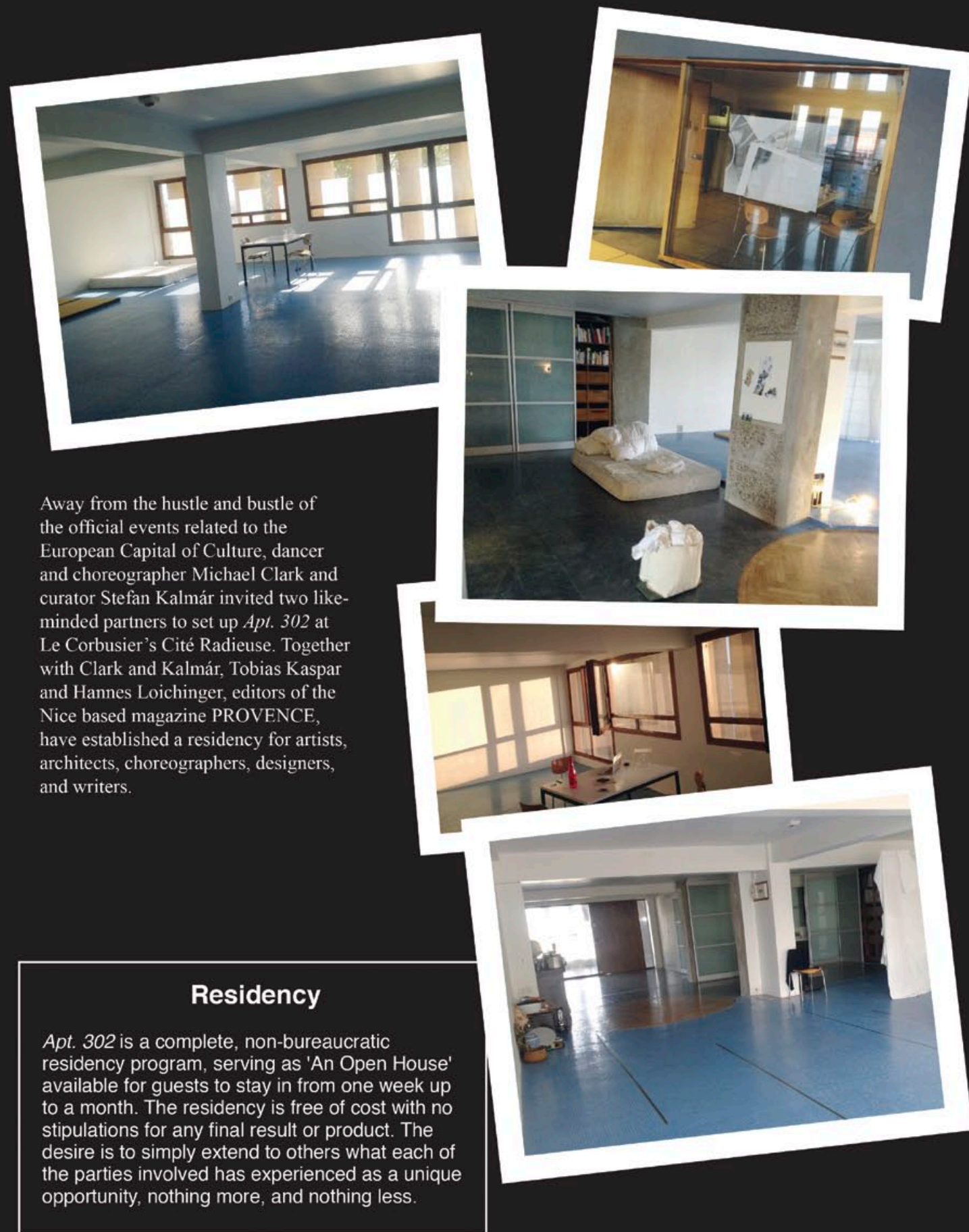


Liam Gillick
Clarity, 2013

Black vinyl sticker
23.4 x 16.5 in. // 59,4 x 42,0 cm
Signed & Numbered

APT. 302 PORTFOLIO EDITION

CAROL BOVE LIAM GILICK DOMINIQUE GONZALEZ-FOERSTER & TRISTAN BERA TOBIAS KASPAR STEWART UOO



Away from the hustle and bustle of the official events related to the European Capital of Culture, dancer and choreographer Michael Clark and curator Stefan Kalmár invited two like-minded partners to set up *Apt. 302* at Le Corbusier's Cité Radieuse. Together with Clark and Kalmár, Tobias Kaspar and Hannes Loichinger, editors of the Nice based magazine *PROVENCE*, have established a residency for artists, architects, choreographers, designers, and writers.

Residency

Apt. 302 is a complete, non-bureaucratic residency program, serving as 'An Open House' available for guests to stay in from one week up to a month. The residency is free of cost with no stipulations for any final result or product. The desire is to simply extend to others what each of the parties involved has experienced as a unique opportunity, nothing more, and nothing less.

APT. 302 RESIDENCY

MARSEILLE

"Why work for the bling, when you can just take it?" asks journalist Tricia Romano in an article describing a group of fame-obsessed teenagers who met at Indian Hills High School in Los Angeles. In 2009, *The Bling Ring* (L.A. Times) used the Internet to track A-list Hollywood celebrities' whereabouts and rob their homes while they were away. Sofia Coppola recently adapted the story for *The Bling Ring* (2013), which premiered in Cannes in May 2013. In March 2013, the homonymous project by Tobias Kaspar premiered at *Apt. 302* whose front window proofed to be an excellent show case for projects.

Tobias Kaspar
The Bling Ring
8 - 9pm
March 30, 2013

Apt. 302 / 3ème rue
Unité d'Habitation
280 blv. Michelet
13008 Marseille
France

For Immediate Release



APT. 302

MARSEILLE

Installation views from Tobias Kaspar *The Bling Ring*,
Apt. 302, Marseille, 2013, realised in cooperation with
Egija Inzule, Hannes Loichinger and Axel J. Wieder

BUENOS AIRES: MEMORY AND FUTURE OF THE POLIS

by Juan Canela

A journey around different exhibitions and art projects in Buenos Aires illuminates memory’s crucial role in the articulation of the polis and underscores the necessity for recollection in the production of new scenarios for the future

My 2014 starts in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the second largest city in the southern hemisphere with twelve million inhabitants, where I’ve been living for a couple of months doing a curatorial research residency. I’m writing this text fighting with high temperatures and electricity blackouts, enjoying my first summer Christmas. While touring the city streets on the zappy *colectivos*, I’ve met art practitioners and artists, and visited exhibitions and project spaces. During this time, I’ve been looking for a suitable project to write about for this issue of *South as a State of Mind*, which is dedicated to the polis. The connection came naturally when I acknowledged something often in the air in cities like Buenos Aires. On the one hand there is the will to reflect and re-think the memory of the polis; on the other, an attempt to imagine and build new possibilities for the future.

Memory was a crucial element in the ancient Greek notion of the polis. Mnemosyne was known as the muse who had the capacity to remember, so she hoarded up all the memories of the group and kept them so as to preserve their identity. In that sense, memory overflows from the individual and becomes an inherent quality of the human community. It functions as a cohesive force within society. Therefore, memory has always had a political character, because the organisation of a society’s memory is established through its living conditions. It is not surprising then, that memory plays a major role in contemporary political scenarios.

Argentina has a tumultuous history, as is the case with other Latin American countries. There was a period of political turmoil and military dictatorship that lasted until 1983. A concern for memory has arisen in recent years, as has an insistence on not forgetting and being aware of victims. Of course, it is not easy to deal with these memories, and political parties use them in one way or another. But still, this is a praiseworthy process, which I miss, for example, in Spain.

In 2007 the Memorial Park and Memorial Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism was opened in Buenos Aires. It is a large public space located close to Río de la Plata. There is a huge structure dedicated to victims of state terrorism, as well as other sculptures and an exhibition space. When I visited, I saw an exhibition curated by Inés Kazenstein and Javier Villa called: *Aquella mañana fue como si recuperara si no la felicidad, si la energía, una energía que se parecía mucho al humor, un humor que se parecía mucho a la memoria (That morning was as if I recovered if not the happiness, but the energy, an energy which seems a lot to humour, a humour which seems a lot to memory)*. The exhibition displayed works by artists born in the 1970s and 1980s, who experimented with ways of relating to history so as to escape both the expressionism and po-

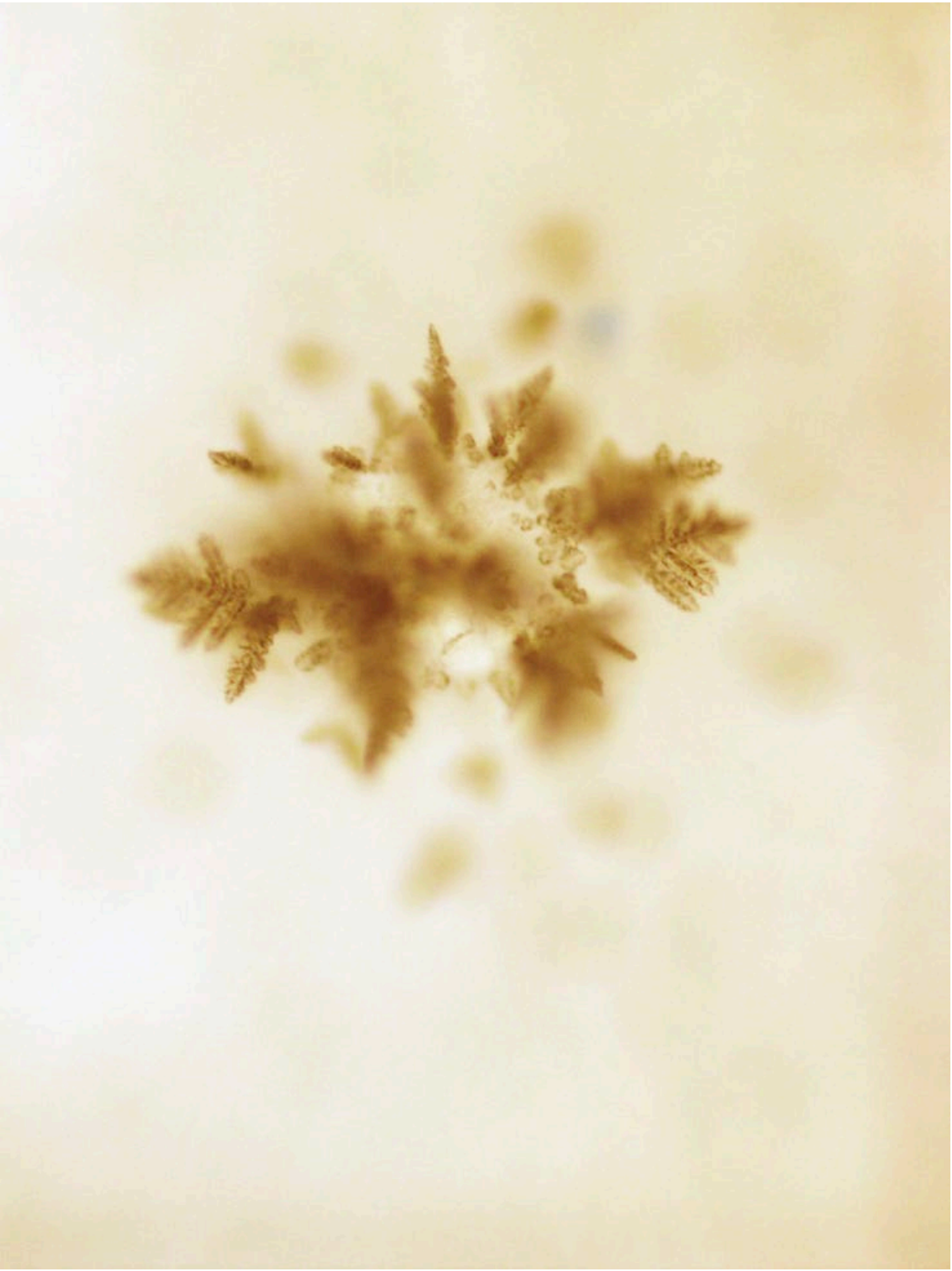
litical conceptualism that had dominated the aesthetic discourses on state terrorism. Taking its title from a Roberto Bolaño tale and the context of the monument as a departure point, the exhibition conceived memory as a vital energy that, like neuronal synapses, is in constant motion. It is an energy that exceeds the past, but also projects itself into the future.

For example, Osias Yanov’s work *I<>I<* consisted of an iron structure that functioned as a bar from which a dancer worked. The dancer exemplified form and emptiness, lines and volume. The project – half-sculpture, half-performance – suggested that the monument could be conceived as an active scaffolding that entered into dialogue with an alert body, which was in turn challenged by that body.

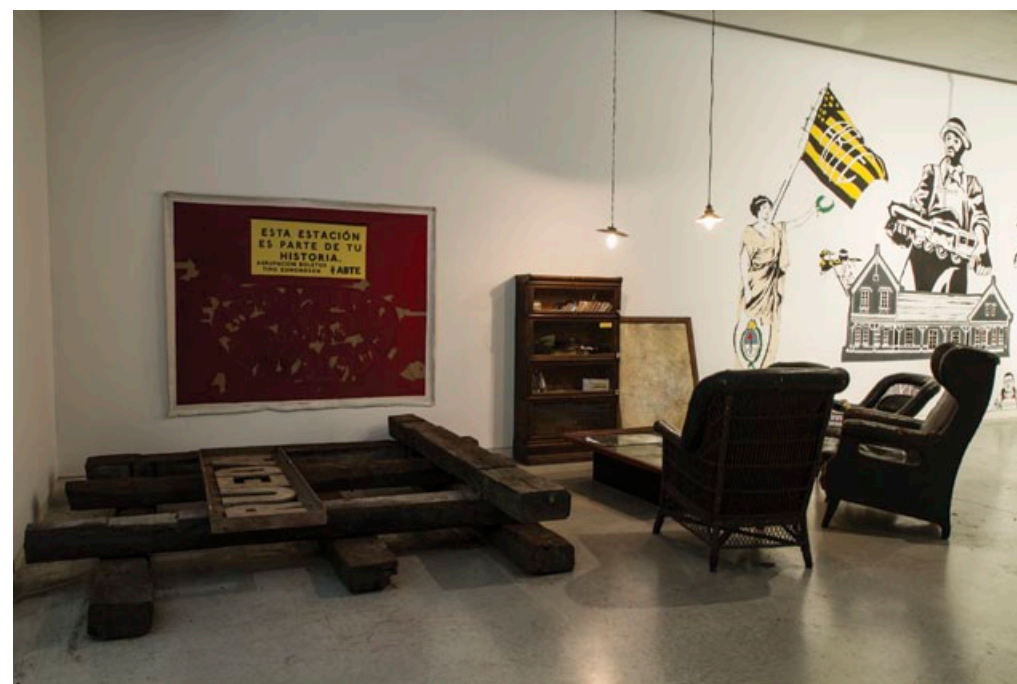
Outside the exhibiton space, besides the river, I found a strange artefact. It was a part of *Tratamiento homeopático del Río de la Plata* (Homeopathic Treatment of Río de la Plata), a work by Eduardo Navarro. On the premise that the heavily contaminated river is a sensible organism, he proposed a homeopathic treatment for it based on the power of intention. After all, if there is no certainty that homeopathy may affect such a large volume of water, the possibility of healing it remains in the hopefulness of the act. Perhaps people, when they see the process, could reinterpret how they related to the river.

The exhibition also displayed works by Luis Garay, Carlos Huffmann, Irina Kirchuk, Martín Legón, Lux Lindner, Belén Romero Gunset, Axel Straschnoy, Marcela Sinclair, Cecilia Szalkowicz, and Gastón Pérsico and Santiago Villanueva.

Downtown, near the emblematic Plaza de Mayo, where mothers of the past dictatorship’s missing people have been protesting for over thirty-six years, Pablo Bronstein and Amalia Pica presented works at the Ignacio Liprandi Gallery. These established a dialogue between two different ways of addressing memory and history. Pica’s $A \cap B \cap C$, a performative manifestation of *Venn Diagrams (Under the Spotlight)* first presented in 2011 at the Venice Biennale, investigated censorship. Models such as Venn diagrams were banned during the Argentinian dictatorship. Pica speculates that this was because they enabled the representation of cooperation as a concept. The set of sculptures that the artist showed at the Ignacio Liprandi Gallery were based on the black and white documentary photographs of a previous action, where a group of performers picked up geometric perspex shapes and made them into a composition in front of an audience. Being an exercise in subjectivity – since Pica had to imagine the colours of the shapes banned during the dictatorship – the work told stories of rising and falling utopias. These were memorials to ephemeral mo-



Eduardo Navarro - Microfotografía de cristal de agua - Tratamiento homeopático para el Río de la Plata. *Aquella mañana fue como si recuperara si no la felicidad...* The Memorial Park, Buenos Aires, 2013



Osiás Yanov
I<>I<. Aquella Mañana
Fue Como si Recuperara
si no La Felicidad
 The Memorial Park, Buenos
 Aires

ABTE - Agrupación Boletos Tipo Edmondson
Quince Años de Cultura Ferroviaria Abte
 MAMBA, Buenos Aires
 Photo by Jorge Miño

Liliana Maresca
Mapeos, 2014
 secondary project, Buenos Aires



ments, to episodes and images that lasted only seconds. However, they were also memorials to models that represented – and created – cooperation between individuals.

Pablo Bronstein's *Trojan Horse* (2003), in contrast, transported the viewer to ancient Troy to dismantle the mythical horse of the ancient story and display its contradictions: in shape it resembled an equestrian monument but it unexpectedly hid a military function.

Another exhibition that stood out focused on Argentina's industrialisation. Titled *ABTE (Edmondson tickets group): 57 x 30,5 mm. Fifteen years of railway culture ABTE*, this was an unconventional show for the Museum of Modern Art Buenos Aires, and perhaps signalled a new direction. MAMBA reopened last year with Victoria Northoon as director and a completely new team. The exhibition brought together fifteen years of research focusing on the development of the railways. The exhibition aimed to bring ABTE artefacts to the public and, at the same time, illuminate particular moments of railway history in Argentina.

At the Museo La Ene, an independent and active space, Francisco Lemos curated *Lo bello, luego lo terrible* (The beautiful, Then the Terrible). This was a curatorial essay about the artistic context of Buenos Aires in the 1990s. The exhibition reflected on the past to make the present dynamic, understanding the 1990s as an affective period where different artistic proposals on 'the new' in the artistic scene converged. And clearly, La Ene is one of the spaces where 'the new' is happening today. In many respects an artistic project, *Le Ene* is re-thinking the artistic institution in 2014, within the context of Buenos Aires.

But of course, if we are to think about 'the new' we have to talk about artistic education. *Uno solo y varios lobos* (One and several wolves) was the final exhibition of the Artist Program at Instituto Di Tella. This is an annual course for young artists and curators, bringing together international and local visitors, work presentations and collective processes aimed at providing students with the tools to develop as professional artists. The exhibition – as well as the course itself – took the topic of 'alternative communities' as its inspiration. Organised by the group of curators who par-

ticipated in this year's Artists Program, the exhibition took as its starting point the tension between the desire for communion and the desire to escape as the basis for alternative communities. Overall, the exhibition explored isolated architectures, spontaneous communities and different social rites inscribed into the ordinary. The different works explored ideas of the individual and collective, the artistic and curatorial, and tackled notions of production, reflection, collaboration and utopias, as well as code sharing and system leaks.

I left the Di Tella neighbourhood to view the future through the eyes of the youngest members of the polis. The Liliana Maresca Secondary School Project aims to develop an educational programme focused on the visual arts for a public secondary school in La Cava de Villa Fiorito, a shantytown in Lomas de Zamora. The programme empowers community members through the production of collective works that are born from the neighbourhood's identity and particular – and very immediate – problems. The collective's current members operate not just as educational advisors to the school's authorities, but also as practitioners and educators, integrating visual arts methodologies into the general curriculum. These methodologies seek to develop students' perceptions both as spectators and producers of visual culture, and to foster critical thinking and creative solutions for difficult everyday situations. The artists establish relationships with artistic institutions and alternative art spaces, organise visits to museums, art centres and art fairs and invite artists and art professionals to lecture at the school. The collective – invited to participate in the 2013 Istanbul Biennial – also organises art exhibitions featuring renowned artists, staged in hallways and classrooms, using their work as teaching material for academic subjects.

In my journey around different art projects and exhibitions in Buenos Aires over the last few months, it has become evident to me that memory is not only essential for the articulation of the polis, but also for the creation of new scenarios for the future. Perhaps art can provide us with the tools to revisit discarded and rejected historical narratives, allowing us to look at history with different eyes?

TOLLAN / POLIS

THE CITY, THE COUNTRY AND THE RESURGENCE OF THE DISAVOWED

by Walter D. Mignolo

Today, global processes of re-existence and re-emergence are demanding that the universalising impulse of Western vocabulary – which includes such terms as ‘democracy’ – is reduced to size. Is it about time?



Cities live on the exploitation of the land and natural resources of the countryside. On August 31, 2006, in Asuncion, Paraguay, peasant organisations, women, neighbourhoods, NGOs and individuals protested about the monocultural agricultural production model (monocultures of the minds, Vandana Shiva's famous formula) promoted by the government and major national and international multinational corporations, which meet at the Golf Hotel Yacht Club, in the city.

I

The Aztec word ‘*Tollan*’ can be translated as ‘city’: meaning not just the place but also the significance of the place. ‘*Tollan*,’ for the people of ancient Anahuac (today the state of Mexico), referred to a place of particular relevance to the community and its surroundings. So the expression ‘*Tollan Tenochtitlan*’ was used to underline the relevance of such large centres of communal life as religious centres, markets and government. Today, however, we understand ‘polis’ to be the universal name for city. This is because of the imperial trajectory of Western civilisation since the European Renaissance.

When the Spaniards dismantled *Tollan Tenochtitlan* at the beginning of the sixteenth century, they also had another word for city: the Latin *Civis*, a translation of the Greek *Polis*. *Civis* also encompassed the inhabitants of the place, that is, the *citizens* (*civis*, *civitates*) who constituted the social body of the place. From *civis* was derived civilisation:

civilisation (n.)

1704, “law which makes a criminal process civil,” from *civilise* + *-ation*. Sense of “civilised condition” first recorded 1772, probably from French *civilisation*, to be an opposite to *barbarity* and a distinct word from *civility*. Sense of a particular human society in a civilised condition, considered as a whole over time, is from 1857. Related: *Civilisational*.¹

Tollan – Miguel León Portilla² tells us – literally meant “the place of abundant reeds”. Metaphorically, it meant a place with abundant water and vegetation. By extension, it was understood as an ideal place for the settlement of a population or community. Further uses and mutations of the word alluded to a large and (non-capitalist) prosperous community. Thus, it came to be used as a general term for large communal centres like *Tollan Tenochtitlan*, which could be translated as ‘City of Tenochtitlan’. In Greek, it would have been translated as *Metro* (*Mother*) *Polis*. In reverse, and as far as *Tollan Tenochtitlan* became the centre of a given so-

cio-economic-religious and cultural formation, metro-polis could have been translated as *Tollan Altepctl*, which would be translated as ‘city-state’ in modern European imperial languages. *Polis* and derived expressions (metropolis, cosmopolis) as well as its translation into Latin (*Civis*) *occupied* and successfully displaced all other equivalent words and universes of meaning in co-existing socio-economic-religious configurations that today are identified with the imperial word ‘civilisation’. And this is an aberration.³

Altepctl was the basic structure of a politico-economic-religious community. For that reason it is often translated into English as ‘city-state’ without requiring the word *Tollan* next to it.⁴ An *altepctl* was formed by a series of *calpulli*. *Calpulli* is generally translated as ‘large house’ (household, a clan-type of community) and each *altepctl* was a compound of several *calpulli*.

But there is more. Derived from the word *Tollan* was the word *Toltecátl*, which refers to a person who inhabits a given *Tollan*. In Rome, the name they used was *cives*, and it was translated to vernacular languages as citizens, *ciudadano*, *ciudadino*, *citoyen*: “*Civis romanus sum*” (Cicero). In addition, *toltecátl* is the name for a refined person, a person of wisdom, an artist or intellectual in our vocabulary. All in all, it may be what Cicero had meant when he pronounced his well-known sentence. Last but not least, the most abstract concept *Toltecáyotl* (something like ‘Toltequity’) was formed to describe all that belongs to and defines the people who live in a *Tollan*, that is, in a city: its citizens. Today, then, we should refer to Aztec Toltecáyotl instead of Aztec Civilisation. Or, we could refer to Western Toltecáyotl to underline and undermine the imperial dimension of a word such as ‘civilisation’.

II

I am aware that the story I just told doesn’t have an obvious correlation with the ‘indignados’ that disrupted the life of large cities in Southern Europe this past year and with the ‘intifadas’ that erupted in the Middle East and North Africa.

There is, on the one hand, a subterranean continuity in the way Western Civilisation has imposed its names all over the planet. On the other hand, there is a derailing of that continuity that allows us to understand the differences between seemingly similar indignados and intifadas. Naming became derailed at the moment when Western Christianity built, in the sixteenth century, the three pillars of Western Civilisation: Greece, Rome and the Atlantic (Africa–New World).

Names come with baggage – there is history behind every name. In that sense, Southern Europe’s indignados and North Africa’s intifadas are, and are not, similar. They are similar in that they can be seen as a manifestation of a ‘Southern state of mind’. However, one is *the South of Europe* and the other is the *North of Africa*. There is a long history dividing one from the other. And there is a defining moment: the expulsion of the Moors from the South of Europe to the North of Africa.

If Southern Europe and North Africa fit the ‘Southern state of mind’ (and so they are similar), it is because there is something more than water that divides the former from the latter; and there is more than being ‘cities’ that distinguishes Madrid (the locale of indignados) from Cairo (the local of intifada). If the question is about a ‘Southern state of mind’, then life during modern/colonial history of Western Civilisation, since 1500, has to be brought into focus.

It is in the city where mainstream media concentrates and the differences between Cairo and Madrid are glossed over. That is why we know a lot about indignados and intifadas, but know much less about La Via Campesina (The Peasant Way) and the daily struggles that communities in Argentina and Peru are waging against transnational corporations engaged in extractivism and poisoning local populations. It is known already that cancer

has increased in the developing world, the Global South. That is also part of ‘South as a State of Mind’.

There are several reasons why cities are highlighted and the country is played down. One reason is the poisoning underatken by agri-business; another is the creation of artificial lakes composed of cyanide and water used to extract the minerals from the rocks. Less is known also about the African palm plantations in Guatemala and Colombia, where working conditions are possibly comparable to those on the plantations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is the silenced country. The mainstream media rarely covers why so many people leave the country and go to the city. Country is another word for land, and who keeps the land when people move to the city?

Before closing I’d like to come back to La Via Campesina. They are not just protesting, which is important, but also acting: taking charge of their own destiny. This is the Global Coordinator of La Via Campesina:

“Good morning. I am Elizabeth Mpofu of Zimbabwe. I am a peasant farmer [...] I am committed to building food sovereignty in Zimbabwe, in Africa and in the world.

I speak to you as the global coordinator of La Via Campesina, the worldwide movement of peasant and small-scale farmers, farm workers, landless peasants, indigenous people, rural youth and rural women.

[...]

As peasants we believe that we are on this Earth for a reason. And that reason is to grow food – food for our families, food for our communities, food for our countries. Healthy food. Food that is grown with respect for the Mother Earth.

While we may not have had a high level of formal education, that does not mean we cannot think for ourselves, and organise ourselves into a powerful global movement of resistance. But we are not just resisting; we are also trying to build something new, a better world; with our ideas, and with our actions.”

Self-organisations (not guided by NGOs) are growing as people take their destiny into their own hands, in the city as well as in the country. ‘Democracy’ – a word revamped in eighteenth century secular Europe – has become a good idea, as Mahatma Gandhi said more than a century ago about the word ‘civilisation’. What we are witnessing are global processes of re-existence and re-emergence, and these processes are demanding that the universalising impluse of Western vocabulary (meaning Greek and Latin, plus the six modern European and imperial languages) is reduced to size. It have been my goal to decenter the Western appropriation of polis in two ways. First, by showing the polis is local not universal. Its universality is the effect of the coloniality of knowledge. Second, by surfacing the power of the countryside occluded by the recent overwhelming attention to the cities.

1. From the online etymology dictionary for ‘civilizaton’ [sic] – <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=civilization>
2. *Toltecáyotl*, *Aspectos de la cultura Nahuatl*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980.
3. I asked my friend and colleague Weihua He, in Shanghai, what is the Mandarin word for ‘city’ – here is his reply: “The Mandarin words for city-state is *Chengbang*. In ancient China we do not have city-states; we only have vassal states. As for the conglomeration of people organised in a common space, we usually call them *chenmin* or *zimin*, meaning ‘the subjects or people of certain kingdoms’.”
4. *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, by Braun and Hogenberg, was published between 1572 and 1617. It is an atlas depicting the cities of the world, *orbis terrarium*. *Tollan Tenochtitlan* is not there.

AN ATTEMPT TO EXHAUST PUBLIC SPACE

by Chris Sharp

Democracy is inherently agonistic, conflictual, unstable and contingent. Like the public square, it is essentially empty, constantly awaiting content and meaning

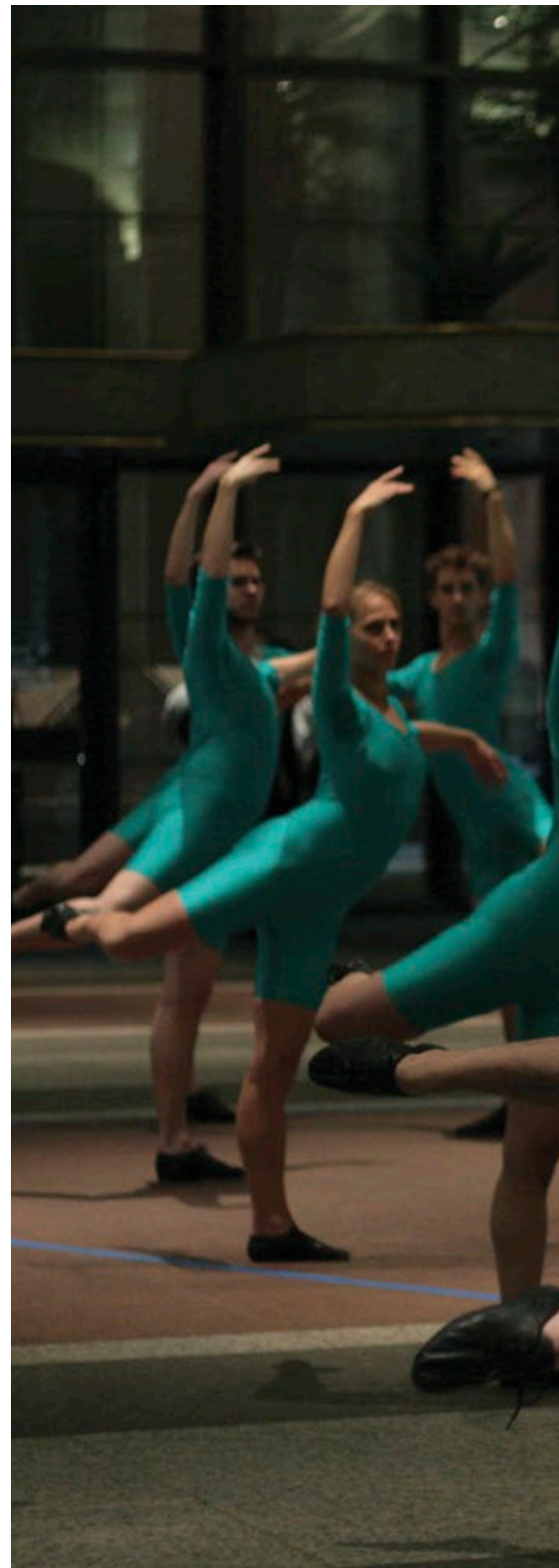
This short text draws its title from Georges Perec's short novella, *Tentative d'épuisement d'un lieu parisien* (*Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris*). Perec's novella consists of a registration of the most banal activity that could be observed while sitting at different cafés over the course of three days at the Place Saint-Sulpice in Paris in October 1974. What is curious about his text is that, given he concentrates on the banal, it is not actually exhaustive, which in turn renders the evocative title he appended to it actually quite interpretable. Perhaps it had less to do with a commitment to describe everything that took place than with how much banality he could actually endure before moving to a different square? Whatever the case may be, the title takes on a certain and potentially useful salience when thinking about the argument regarding the origins and nature of public space in Rosalyn Deutsche's historic essay "Agoraphobia" (for the record, this essay will be less an argument than a speculative observation).

In this brilliant essay, Deutsche draws upon a group of radical democratic or agonistic philosophers (Claude Lefort, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, Étienne Balibar, Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe) to evaluate the origin and nature of urban public space, as well as its use. Basically, she argues that in a democratic paradigm, public space is an essentially empty space. Which is to say, the moment a specific use is assigned to public space, it forfeits its public nature. In order for this space – a park, a square, and so on – to remain public, it must be able to host any given activity at any given moment, even at the risk of hosting conflicts between the inhabitants of the space. According to Deutsche, and the group of thinkers she draws on, democracy is inherently agonistic, conflictual, unstable and contingent. It, like the public square, is essentially empty, constantly awaiting content and meaning, which it will always and invariably subsequently liquidate.

Considered even for a moment, such a perspective of public space is immediately, if beautifully, beleaguered by paradox. The first one of such a radical democratic position is that while it is predicated on the ideology of democracy (power to the people) it is also pre-ideological in that it is fundamentally resistant to the permanent residence of any given ideology. Akin to Giorgio Agamben's characterisation of 'movement' as pre-ideological, insofar as for a movement to be a movement, it must not have yet congealed into the hard (and slippery) stuff of ideology. Public space, in its refusal to contain meaning with anything but brevity, is equally pre-ideological.

The second paradox that issues out of this is perhaps more literary than practical, in that it brings to mind Borges's library of Babel and classical structuralism. Given its intrinsic power of tabula rasa, public space is, like Perec's tentative attempt, inexhaustible, and yet, by the same token of its tabula rasa nature, everything has always already happened within it. It is at once inexhaustible and exhausted – at once totally empty and totally full. In essence, it is like the alphabet that engenders Borges's famous library. And yet, if it has a commitment to anything, if its nature could be characterised by any single quality, it would be emptiness. In its commitment to always representing the interests of the people, it must always return to its most fundamental state: emptiness.

Pablo Bronstein
Plaza Minuet, 2007, performance
Photo by Elizabeth Proitsis
Courtesy of PERFORMA, Herald St, London
Franco Noero, Turin



IN DEFENCE OF URBAN ALIENATION

REGRESSION, LOCALISATION AND DREAMS OF EXODUS IN GREECE TODAY

by Kostis Stafylakis

Considering the effects of the Greek crisis on modes of collective organisation, is it time to question the very boundaries with which collective actions operate?

In an interview with the portal tvxs.gr, the educator/eco-farmer Giorgos Kolembas explained that the only viable answer to globalisation is the decentralisation, re-localisation and self-organisation of an ecological and equal society. According to Kolembas, this is an escape from the ‘*Rocas coincidentes*’ of both statism and privatisation. Kolembas explores a third sector comprising social economy, egalitarian economy, ethical economy and popular economy. In his view, small-scale units of production should guide this sector, with an emphasis on locality (economy of proximity), participation and democratic function. He concludes with this moral dictum: “He who provides for all, provides for himself.”¹

In a recent article on the blooming of eco-communities on mount Pelion, Kolembas also stresses the need for a return to nature and a recovery of our essential bond with it.² The website of the Network of Eco-communities in Greece informs us that the notion of an eco-community is a model of life that strives to restore harmony between man and the natural environment. The residents of Greek eco-communities, or members of eco-groups such as Real & Free, State of Nature, Hope-Village and so on, strive for cultural development, moral values and spiritual ascent.³ Meanwhile, at the self-organised Navarinou Park in downtown Athens, participants have circulated a manifesto analysing why they have “dismantled the asphalt” to create a garden. Against the state’s tendency to turn space into an “unfriendly” and “deserted” setting for “hasty metropolitan life”, they have re-appropriated space in order to “educate” themselves and others on the cultivation of land and the self-management of food. In an age of crisis, defined by the relentless attacks of both capital and the state, they try to rediscover

the “relation between city and countryside” and understand the process of the production of food, which is fundamental for “every human cell and for society itself”.⁴

These examples are only a small sample of the critiques of the city that have multiplied during the Greek financial crisis. In different ways, these subjects or collectives express their disgust with urban alienation while envisioning various forms of societal/reproductive autarky. I believe that we will not grasp the ideological sources of this discontent if we don’t dare to attempt a methodological disengagement from the spoken language of these urban subjectivities. Usually, such movements adopt the language (or guise) of an autonomist critique of the state/capital. Meanwhile, the most politicised versions of self-organisation – squatting and urban occupations – are inspired by theories of autonomous Marxism and assert themselves in reference to

notions such as the commons or communisation, or more traditional versions of autonomy. This is a dominant narrative amongst art collectives that flourish in Greece today. Perhaps we should not accept such arrangements as spontaneous adaptations of widespread radicalisms though, but rather revisit historical genealogies that have been overlooked by these theoretical exigencies and claims? In a sense, the fascination with alternative communities in Greece matches the reinvention of decentralism and distributism by recent social movements such as the Occupy movement in the United States. In Greece, romantic agrarian communalism has been a vibrant philosophical trend since the time of the Greek communalist/distributist Ion Dragoumis (1910s). Communalist ideologies have been revived several times in recent decades in the

framework of the East/West identity wars. In recent decades, during the government of PASOK (1980s), Greek society experienced a blooming of state-funded first sector associations. But during the current crisis we witnessed the birth of something completely new: full-blown local versions of distributist endeavours by local movements such as No Middlemen, the Potato Movement or the *Den Plirono* (I Won’t Pay) movement. Those movements don’t call themselves distributist but they embody a distributist spirit that claims local production for local consumption.

In the western world, these tendencies are typical of what social history defines as ‘Third Way’ politics – against both socialism and capitalism (not to be confused with Anthony Giddens’s or Tony Blair’s ideas). This spiritual wave is mostly associated with the history of conservative Catholic corporatism of the 1890s and Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (1891). This famous encyclical (a papal letter sent to all bishops of the Roman Catholic Church) recognised organised labour unions but also preached a Catholic corporatist alternative to socialist statism and liberal capitalism – the ‘Third Way’ of restructuring society as an organic corpus integrating the church, government, organised labour, guilds, private societies and religious clubs.⁵ In the 1910s, influenced by the *Rerum Novarum* doctrine, G.K Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc developed the social/economic programme of distributism, a call to support small-scale farming and private ownership. In general, they preached the return to the productive micro-scale of the family against the “servile state” (Belloc). They also imagined a new morality crafted by the autonomous-anarchist development of family values, kinship and spiritual communities (Chesterton).⁶ The distributists supported family businesses, local cooperatives, differential taxation, micro-credit, local currencies and farming communities.

Various anarchist trends in the Occupy movement seem to have rediscovered old-school ideas of distributism, decentralism, agrarianism, mutualism and so on. Such ideas have also enriched the social references of the peer2peer movement.⁷ For example, the programmer/activist Jeremy Weiland of Occupy Richmond belongs to a new wave of libertarian individualism⁸ suggesting that modern greed has to be tamed by revolutionary redistribution through organic networks of consumers, suppliers and neighbours.⁹ In a public discussion he admitted that he would even cooperate with National Anarchists (a version of neo-Nazi Third Positionism).¹⁰

Recently, a project by the Greek art collective Filopappou Group put some of these ideals of autarky to the test. Inspired by the overwhelming discourse of a return to rural life, propagated by various worshippers of the Greek countryside, the group

carried out a social experiment of survival and co-existence. The *off-shore project* (Summer 2012) invited a closed number of people to inhabit the small island of Meropi for ten days. One rule was agreed on: no one would arrive at the island after the project’s start and no one would leave before the project’s end. The rule was broken by both members of the Filopappou team and their guests. Today, some of the guests refer to the “breath-taking” experience of coexisting. But some members of the group admit that cohabitation was characterised by inactivity, leisure and, of course, various disputes. Some felt discomfort with the lack of a specific programme, while the “hosts” explained how they did not want to impose any. In these endless discussions on the meaning of collectivity and autonomy, no one challenged the group’s fundamental choice: to choose a remote isle where the control of the population was achieved by physical borders. Perhaps the reason for such an omission is obvious: everything would end in ten days.



Filopappou Group
Off-Shore Project, 2012
Courtesy of Filopappou Group

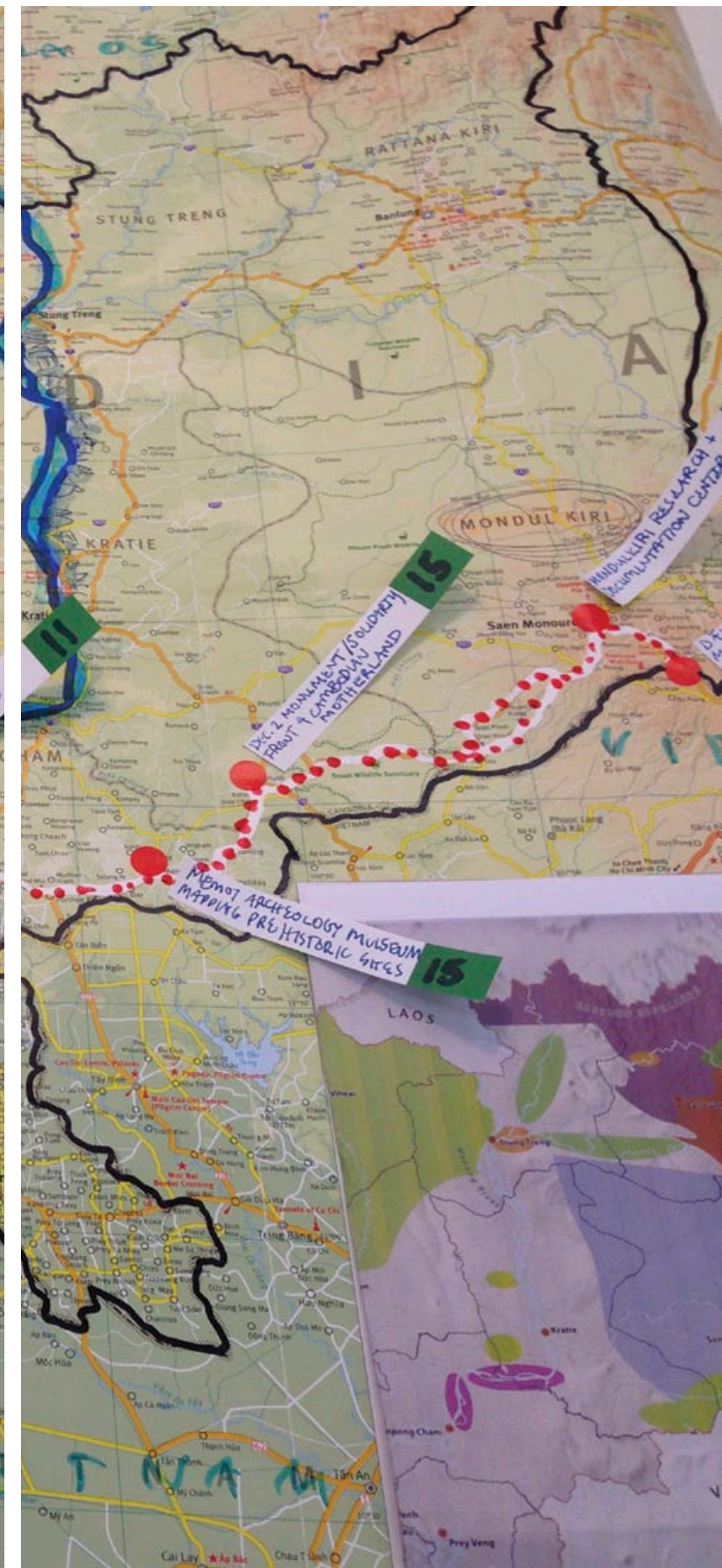
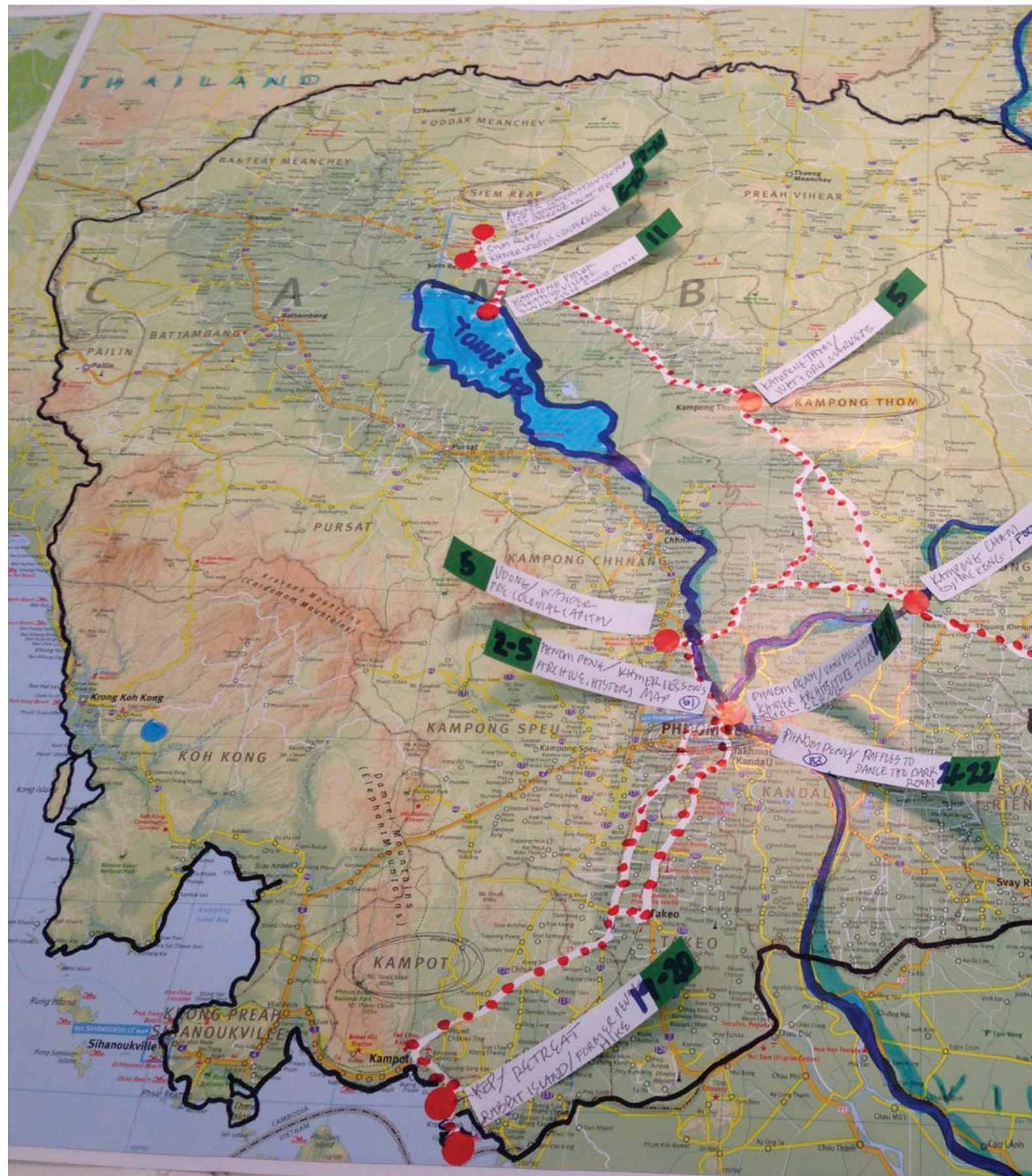
1. Georgios Kolembas, “Social and Egalitarian Economy,” published 10 June, 2012 on Tvxs.gr, <http://tvxs.gr/news/egrapsan-eipan/koinoniki-kai-allileggya-oikonomia-toy-giorgoy-kolempa>
2. “Ecocommunities: A Response to the Crisis, published 24 February, 2012 on Tvxs.gr, <http://tvxs.gr/news/kala-nea/oikokoinotites-sto-pilio-mia-apantisi-sti-krisi>
3. See the Eco Village Greece WordPress: <http://ecovillagegreece.wordpress.com/>
4. See the statement from Navarino Park: <http://parkingparko.espivlogs.net/files/2012/02/Περιβόλι-στο-πάρκο-Ναυαρίνου.pdf>
5. For a history of corporatism, see: Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Comparative politics: the Other Great “ism,”* M. E. Sharpe, New York, 1997.
6. For an analysis influenced by the ideals of distributism, see: Allan C. Carlson, *Third Ways: How Bulgarian Greens, Swedish Housewives, and Beer-swilling Englishmen Created Family-Centered Economies – and Why They Disappeared*, Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2007.
7. p2p Foundation website: <http://p2pfoundation.net/category:movements?title=Category:Movements&until=Identity+Commons>
8. Gary Chartier, Charles W. John, Kevin Carson (et al.), *Markets Not Capitalism: Individualist Anarchism Against Bosses*, Minor Compositions, New York, 2011.
9. Jeremy Weiland, “Let the Free Market Eat the Rich: Economic Entropy as Revolutionary Redistribution,” at *Social Memory Complex*, <http://www.socialmemorycomplex.net/features/let-the-free-market-eat-the-rich/>
10. See Weiland’s interventions: http://radgeek.com/gt/2009/04/26/open_thread/

FIELDS

AN ITINERANT ENQUIRY ACROSS THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

by Erin Gleeson, Vera Mey, Albert Samreth

The cartography of a twenty-day nomadic residency in Cambodia,
through a politics of memory, inheritance and tradition



What is found here is elsewhere.

What is not found here is nowhere else.

— Mahabharata, Adi Parva
(*The Book of The Beginning*)

A story does not have a beginning until one has been assigned to it. From the 2-22 December, 2013, FIELDS brought together artists, curators and educators from eight countries to engage in what we called “contemporary ritual practice”. Our beginning was the coupling of a historically and personally complex setting, Cambodia, with a wilfully naive and earnest pursuit of romance and academia. The twenty-day nomadic residency was a proposal that traversed space, temporality and culture by performing a cartography that informed and altered its references. It drew on a politics of memory, inheritance and tradition. The nation’s agrarian landscape, the fieldwork of anthropologists and aid workers, Buddhist notions of merit-fields, the psycho-geographical landscape referred to as ‘the Killing Fields’, and the history of art practices in the expanded field all served as starting points. Owned by neither guests nor hosts, the FIELDS proposal was intended to act at a personal level of education and transformation: one that could potentially, over time, critically engage with Cambodia’s lesser-known histories.

The project’s peripatetic and multidisciplinary nature was intentionally associated with tensions around modes of colonial exploration, exoticism and contemporary tourism. The curators’ invitation to our fellow ‘fieldworkers’ explained our aspiration to merge the sacred and the profane and to consider the effect of the virtual on the actual within a framework of pedagogy and action. A FIELDS reader, containing our schedule and a selection of readings assigned by participants, a symbolic little red notebook and a red and white Khmer *krama* scarf were offered as our collective ritual objects. These were our tools each night when we met for *Pipheaksaea* (the Khmer word for discussion) wherever we happened to be: a temple, a café, a hotel room, a pool or an island. What ensued was a privileged tour through spaces and events that could be as enchanting as they were vexing.

Our three-week journey by bus, boat and on foot followed historical trade routes and former capitals situated near the Tonle Sap and Mekong Rivers, into the northeastern highlands of Mondul Kiri bordering Vietnam, and south to the waters and islands of the Gulf of Thailand. Our Phnom Penh *sakasalas* (the Khmer word for workshops) introduced us to basic Khmer language skills, and to audiovisual archives that showed the occupied histories of Cambodia. We gathered for these *sakasalas* in a variety of sites, including a typical karaoke salon, the historic Buddhist Institute and the famous Psar Kap Ko Restaurant.



Upon arrival in the ancient capital of Siem Reap, our explorations of the Angkorean area mainly concentrated on the overlooked: archaeological questions and technologies investigating the practices of artisans and labourers during the 9th–15th century age of empire, private facilities established in the colonial era for the storing and cataloguing of thousands of ancient stone and wooden fragments, 19th–20th century ‘living’ temples situated within ancient complexes where rare mural paintings face restoration and the local traditions of white and black magic through yantra tattooing. South of Angkor at the floating village Kompong Phluk and in the northeastern Cambodian highlands of Mondul Kiri province, inhabited by the indigenous Bunong, villagers seek viable patterns of continuity to centuries-old traditions of subsistence fishing and forestry, and related spirit worlds. We self-consciously participated in boating, cooking, rice harvesting and home stays, activities all adapted for tourists. We observed performances of weaving, blacksmithing, basket making, and were given tours of medicinal gardens. The long road back to Phnom Penh was dotted with time travel, including a drive by instead of a stop at an Iron Age earthwork that had been recently levelled by the government.

It was being prepared for villagers recently forced from their ancestral land by a private land concession.

Our second round in Phnom Penh focused on what is known as New Khmer Architecture, created during the post-independence Sangkum Reastr Niyum era (1953-1970) by Vann Molyvann. His vision harmoniously fused ideas from Bauhaus and International Style modernism with traditions from the Angkorean period. Only towards the end of our journey did we visit the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, established by the occupying Vietnamese communist regime in 1980. Our finale was a retreat to a Sihanouk-era penal colony, Koh Tonsay (Rabbit Island), off the coast of the former royal resort town of Kep. We got lost following a dense army path from a brutalist bunker, emerging into a seaweed farming village. It seemed right that our concluding *Pipheaksaeas* challenged the legitimacy of democracy, confronted tensions between desire as capital and love as commune, and questioning how this does and does not translate in contemporary Cambodia.

Beyond the confines of our itinerary, the realities of our context were also changing rapidly even within the relatively short period of the project. Large anti-government protests and la-

bour union strikes, unprecedented in recent decades, persisted throughout our travels. As visiting FIELDS participants departed, violence erupted in the capital. Armed military police indiscriminately fired live ammunition into a crowd of protesting garment workers, killing four people. Freedom Park, a one-hectare space established in 2009 as the only legal space (after ruling party permission is granted) for assembly, was violently stripped of its freedom. FIELDS navigated these layered tensions to reconfigure ideas of knowledge exchange and the stratified roles that inform this kind of ‘cultural’ exchange.

Looking back, we question if FIELDS reconstituted practices of fieldwork through our roving lectures and site-visits, discursive and silent spaces. While our vision remained perhaps unavoidably ethnographic, our experiences were rooted in mutualism, with no claim to represent, report or produce. The privileged time and cadence in the field, grounded in Cambodia but equally and importantly among each other, seems to have confronted and revived in most of us the idealistic desires that lead us to our lives as artists and curators.

Our ending was not an ending. The generative nature of ex-

change has prompted each of us to engage with questions inspired by Cambodia in a number of individual and collaborative projects, including a book due later this year with contributions by all participants.

Participants: Vera Mey, Charlotte Huddleston, Janita Crow, Luke Willis Thompson, Alex Monteith, Sarah Munro (from New Zealand), Albert Samreth, Amy Lee Sanford, Erin Gleeson (from USA/Cambodia), Khvay Samnang, Lim Sokchanlina, Tith Kanitha (from Cambodia), Roger Nelson (from Australia), Julia Moritz (from Germany), Tue Greenfort (from Denmark), Fang-Tse Hsu (from Taiwan), Arin Rungjung (from Thailand) / **Project Coordinator:** Chum Chanveasna / **Design:** Albert Samreth

F-I-E-L-D-S is a collaborative project by SA SA BASSAC, Phnom Penh, and ST PAUL St, Auckland and is co-curated by Erin Gleeson and Vera Mey. Generous support comes from the School of Art + Design, AUT University, School of Education, AUT University, NICA, University of Auckland, and the Asia New Zealand Foundation.



*The Door of Saint
Ludovico, Venice
2010*

THE KEYS OF THE CITY

by Francesco Urbano and Francesco Ragazzi

Venice: A city in the north of Italy and in the south of Europe, located among the international waters of art and its pavilions

Living without a car is like moving in a platform game.

Everything occurs following a path, as in a sequence plane. Meetings, fights, refuels. The landscape flows as steps advance. Sometimes, as on a treadmill, it is not even possible to stop. The game has a time span, the city has a rhythm; feet have autonomy. Everything is a function of itself, but also against. Want it or not, everybody is a pilgrim.

We have been living in Venice for almost twelve years. There, our couple was born, halfway between the north of Italy and the south of Europe, among the international lands and waters of art and its pavilions. It is on such a field that we have been evolving as curators.

More than our city, Venice is our pied-à-terre. We might as well call it an investment. We are long term, temporary inhabitants. No properties, no stable relationships or habits. We don't even have the right to vote. We are non-citizens between citizens and foreigners, amongst the others. We would like to define ourselves as guests, but we don't feel that much at ease. Ancient Latins would have defined us as *hostēs*, a word that – up to the first century BC – was used to indicate with perfect ambiguity both the stranger to whom hospitality is due and also the public enemy. The pied-à-terre is our outpost from which to catch sight of battlefields, pieces of the Promised Land and ways of escape. For a certain time, our priority was that of conquering spaces to allocate them for artistic experimentation. At times for a season, other times for years, we took possession of public and private properties: palaces, warehouses, weapons deposits, projection rooms, porches, gardens, showrooms, cultural centres, churches, wells, *campos*, monasteries and private houses. Our game, our mission, was to gather the keys we encountered on our path and acquire them in order to think about new forms of opening. In such a way were our first waiting rooms born, performance magazines, live studios, artist storages, contemporary bottegas, project spaces, dance floors and resident museums. At a certain point, on the island of Giudecca – an isle in the island – we had created a sort of barricade composed of five venues, spread over a couple of kilometres. Continuously moving from one to the other, we were putting together our decentralised art centre.

We have never been the landlords though. We have always kept the role of usufructuaries. Keys were the only things we possessed: the only evidence of our right of pre-emption. We have gathered dozens of them, each carrying its own story, each linked to a project, to a network of relations. We meant to build a diffuse fortress for this new honorary citizenship: a new Venice, capital of the stranger. But islands always impose bonds of proximity, if not of endogamic kinship. We would have not been able to resist. Thus, a little because of constriction and a little because of willpower, we decided to change our strategy and gradually renounce the growth of our estate in a loan.

Venice is now a gateway for us: a point of junction – of external links more than bonds. Our keys stopped opening doors. Equally, though, we found a way not to give them back to their owners: we have duplicated all of them and they are kept in a dedicated box in the eventuality that, one day, we will need to enter these places of our past. Meanwhile, many of these have changed locks, others were reconverted, others finally abandoned.

On our side, we forgot the correspondences and the modes of use for most of these keys. The actual usage value of our collection is now almost down to zero, such is the case with every collection worth its name. We might decide to get rid of every bunch of keys, with some gesture of romantic pragmatism. For example, we might melt the metal in a single sheet as a commemorative plate to our Venetian years:

τοῦτον δὲ φράζε μή ποτ' ἀνθρώπων τινί, μήθ' οὐδέ κεκευθε
μήτ' ἐν οἷς κεῖται τόποις: ὥς σοι πρὸ πολλῶν ἀσπίδων ἄλκην
ὁδε δорός τ' ἐπακτοῦ γειτονῶν ἀεὶ τιθῇ. ἃ δ' ἐξάγιστα μηδὲ
κινεῖται λόγῳ, αὐτὸς μαθήσει, κεῖσ' ὅταν μόλις ἄνθρωπος.1

We would like it even more, though, if the dysfunctionality of the collection could coincide with the growth of its symbolic value. These tangles of metal would then tell us about the infinite degrees of depth of the city, the impregnability of its spaces, the obsolescence of those keys as symbols. In other words, a city with no more doors; a city that doesn't need walls anymore. A city where, everywhere, the moving speed of goods has become more important than the safety of the sovereign, of his wealth, of his people – the polis, ventilated by the Hausmann boulevards, becomes a metropolis. In its own way, even Venice surrounded this dimension, being connected to the land via the Ponte della Libertà (Bridge of Freedom), the longest bridge in the world from 1846 to 1931.

We could then linger on every single piece of the collection, in an attempt to reconnect it to our personal history and as part of a rebus: of a chronology to rebuild. Each key would be a position marker and the sign of the conclusion of a briefer: traces of an independent path in a map dedicated to disorientation. The following step would be to make the collection public and leave it as heritage. A passing on of the baton through which it might obtain a new life: without any reverence for what it was and with all the consequent risks of that case. It would be the perfect curatorial gesture: a declaration that takes place only through abandonment. There – our keys of the city, a gift to find. As in the tales of Aesop in which the treasure received is not a localised good, but the work that went into the search for it. There are no instructions attached, or other directions of any kind. If we had catalogued everything with major precision we might have been able to offer more direct and precise information. We would have been Nordic curators with a clerical vocation.

Yet, we prefer to leave those keys to memory and its many tricks. Our keys fluctuate in the indeterminate, in the infinite space of exploration, in the uncertainty between memory and distraction. And it is there that we can find and lose again the coordinates of the city, halfway between the north of Italy and the south of Europe, among the international lands and waters of art and its pavilions. In Venice: the door of the South.

1. “But that place reveal thou never unto mortal man, tell not where it is hidden, nor in what region it lies; that so it may ever make for thee a defence, better than many shields, better than the succouring spear of neighbours. But, for mysteries which speech may not profane, thou shalt mark them for thyself, when thou comest to that place alone.” Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, tr. gr. sir Richard C. Jebb, Cambridge University Press, 1904.

THE JOY IN THE STRUGGLE OR CLAIMING BACK URBAN CATALYST SPACES

by Danilo Correale

In this contemporary moment of protest and urban militancy, *THE GAME*, a three-sided football match, proposes a move towards trialectic relations



In his book *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre defines space as a series of relationships rather than as a 'thing' that can be defined in absolute terms. This series of relationships comes from three different areas that simultaneously and consecutively inform one another symmetrically, which Lefebvre talks about in terms of material space, representations of space and spaces of representation. Today, these three spaces are more often thought of as perceived, conceived and lived spaces, or alongside Edward Soja's terminology: firstspace, secondspace and thirdspace.

To understand Soja's notion of thirdspace, it is necessary to mention the hybridisation of factors that allow the perception of these 'extraspaces'. It is in these spaces that "subjectivity and objectivity, abstract and concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, consciousness and the unconscious, mind and body, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history" come together.¹ But these are only some of the many ways to understand our reality beyond the usual binary structure of dialectics. Our everyday life experiences are governed, in fact, by frontal relationships. These range from the lesser exciting aspect of being: as consumers (seller and buyer) to the politics (the concept of agnostic formation) to the psycho-sexual drama of the fuckers and the fucked (this last taken also in financial terms). Therefore, expanding the environment that surrounds us through the notion of space as made by constant interaction – more than merely to the one-to-one relationships that we perceive – could be a very hard task. An interesting tool to read these semantic couplings is the embroidered work on 'trialectics' by the Danish situationist Asger Jorn. The notion provided radically different equations whereby three 'domains' exist in a dialectical relationship with each other, often never resolved, but which spark a flux of endless creative ideas that could then be

combined in further trialectics. In this, there's always a player, a referee and a spectator negotiating in a physical space.²

Due to the extreme complexity of such a theoretical approach and the permanent feature of Situationist theory being applied to the context of ordinary life, the trialectics discourse found a fairly good metaphorical translation in the popular game of football (as it is clearly paradigmatic of the frontal relationship of 'us' and 'them'). Here the game becomes, according to the above described tri-logic, a three-sided affair. It is through the understanding of the relationship between the Situationist movement and Jorn's trialectic that it is possible to return to Soja's spatial theory. It emphasises the idea of a non-binary structure, freed by dialectical axioms. This makes possible a change in the way we imagine living in the city as a space and, moreover, to live, perceive and conceive it not only as someone who produces and consumes.

And it's from this point that the five-month long project *THE GAME* began, with research and workshops that ended in a three-sided football match held in the Municipal Stadium of Colle Val d'Elsa (Siena, Italy) on 8 December, 2013. On the football pitch, three teams (Gladiatori – Real Cristal – Esuberanti 301) were created specifically for the occasion from the workers of three main factories in the area, all experiencing a deep economic crisis, redundancy and lack of union organisation. The pitch, specifically designed for the occasion, had a hexagonal shape. The rules of the game (according to the Situationist's suggestion and further developments that happened during the weeks of workshops with the participating workers) stressed non-aggression and non-competitiveness.

Three-sided football is a game of skill, persuasion and psycho-geography. It's not easy at all to play in a pitch where your eyes perceive two distinct spots to aim at. Unlike two-sided football, no



Danilo Correale
THE GAME, December 8, 2013
Colle Val d'Elsa, Siena, Italy

team keeps a record of the number of goals they score; however, they do keep a tally of the goals they concede, and the winner is determined as the team that concedes the least goals. The trialectic appropriation of this technique dissolves a homoerotic/homophobic bipolarity, given that the nature of the trialectic generally implies co-operation with a third team. Meanwhile, the defense counterbalances the disadvantage of facing two teams, by trying to split the temporary alliance against them. This is achieved through exhortation, body language and an ability to manoeuvre the ball and players into such a position that one opposing team will realise that its interests are better served by breaking off the attack and allying themselves with the defending team. A team may also well find itself split between two alliances. Such a situation exposes them to the possibility of their enemies uniting, making maximum use of this confusion. Three-sided football is, to some extent, an easy exercise to prove our ability to strategically interact with the context that surrounds us, over-riding the performative role we typically play in the metropolis.

The stadium where the match takes place, the king of catalyst urban spaces, is (apparently) needed as a construction in every urban agglomeration and most of the time is regarded as an essential step for a town or a suburb to become a 'city'. This history of the stadium and its necessity is ancient and primal and it is loved and hated, and sometimes snubbed, by intellectuals. Stadiums are not much different to shopping malls, highways and other urban mega-structures: symbolic agents of the capitalistic assault on the urban context. Sports events have, in fact, recently played host to many struggles. From Occupy London to the ongoing protest against the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and Istanbul's riots staged at Gezi Park (where the protest against the nth mega project has teamed up with many different discourses), these are interesting

terrains upon which to analyse the status and the demands of protests.

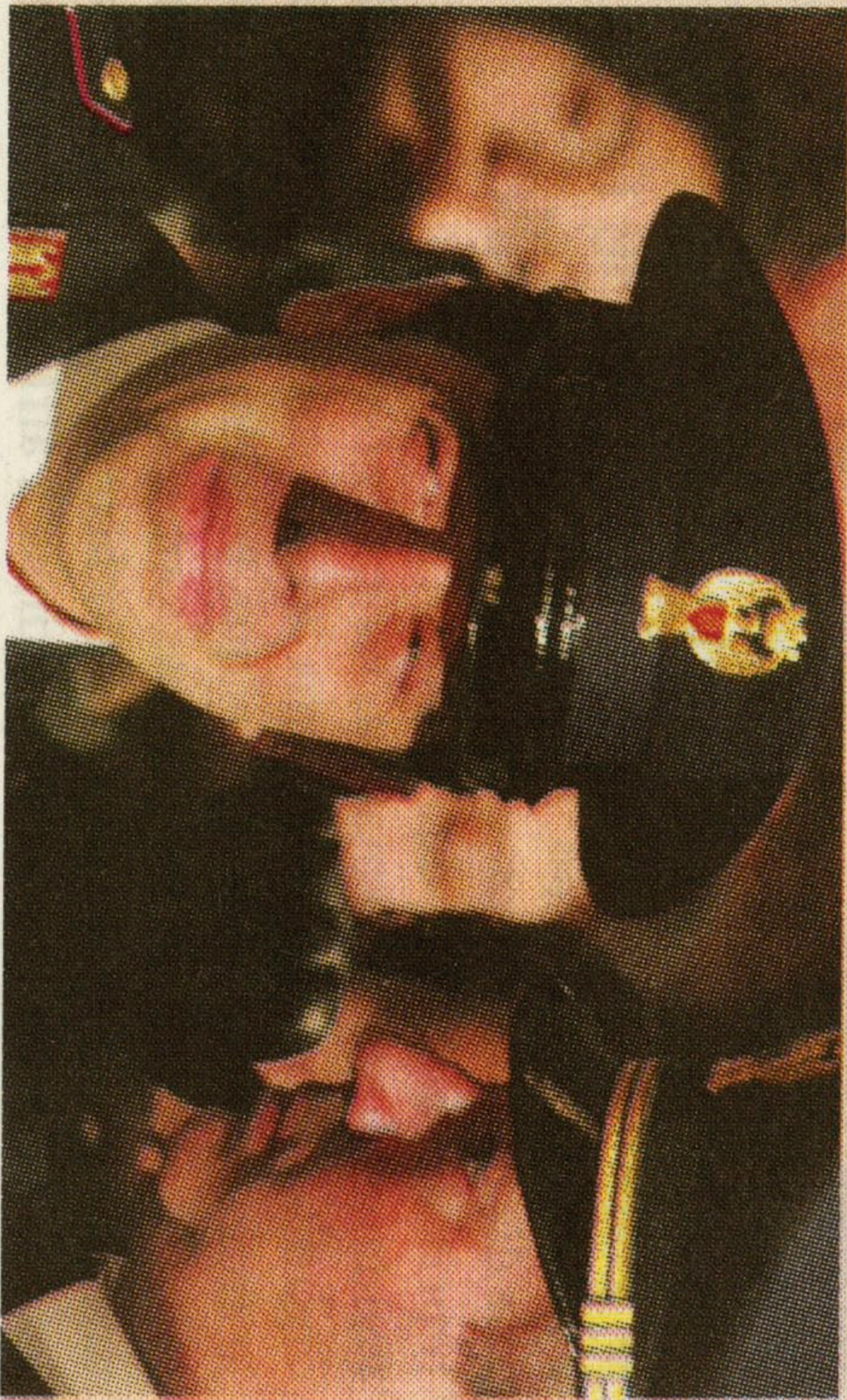
São Paulo, Istanbul, London and other cities are places where radical groups are not only building new discussion platforms but also testing the formation of a new style of militancy, working mostly with and through networks and tactical media, thus connecting different practices of struggle. Is it therefore key to look at these spaces/events as a chapter in the same story of struggle, since it is the very style of militancy that is changing. To connect these practices and make the claims effective, we must first claim back the pleasure of exulting, of rejoicing (and I am talking of a Spinoza kind of joy). It is also through the language of popular sport, music and comedy that it is still possible to stake a claim that – no matter where, when, or how, and whether we are protected by mates or not – the only thing that matters is to fill these catalyst spaces with the gleam of a never-ending utopia.

New York, January 2014

***THE GAME* was entirely produced by the Fondazione Ermanno Casoli in the framework of the IIV Prize Ermanno Casoli.**

1. Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1996, pp. 55–56.
2. Asger Jorn, *Natural Order and Other Texts* / *Naturens Orden and Vierdi og økonomi*, Scandinavian Institute of Comparative Vandalism, 1962.

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ELITE

FOOTNOTES ON THE STATE OF EXCEPTION

by Claire Fontaine

When war has been our staple diet since childhood, how are we to escape the amplified normalcy of our perceptions?



ABOVE:

Untitled (Suspended Battering Ram), 2011, american-made battering ram, cables, fasteners and so on, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist, Air de Paris and Metro Pictures, New York

PREVIOUS SPREAD:

Visions of the world (Catania), 2007, lightbox with digital print, 9144 mm x 610 mm (360" x 24")
Courtesy of the artist and T293, Naples and Rome

1. *War happens.* We know nothing of war, as they constantly remind us. War – always one and multiple – has been on our plates, since childhood, in what mustn't go to waste. They resented us for our presumed ignorance of war, as if we were ignoring pain or an illness, or simply as if this forever absent war was now over for good, and it had to be remembered as one remembers a dead family member. Through grief.

2. *Well-being.* All those born far from war, or after it, know quite well that it isn't over. They know it as possibility, as a nightmare that might come true. And this knowledge turns disquieting when war explodes in the distance, laying the childhoods, the kitchen smells, the bed sheets of others to waste. The past has dug a grave in the present and is again burying the living there – so they say – but it's a lie. Because war is really one of the names for our present, and not a tale of days-gone-by. It lives in bodies; it flows through institutions, traverses relationships between strangers and acquaintances, even here, in this moment, for a long while now. And the more we pretend to be innocent and alien to events, the guiltier we know we are. Guilty of not being present where blood is shed, and yet somehow we are there. They used to tell us, "you kids have it all" as if to say "you sons of bitches", yet who has raised and built this affluence, this inexhaustible source of war? Sometimes we have even suspected that if war is elsewhere, then life must be too.

3. *Rest in peace...* We know everything about war just like we know everything about prison, without having been there, since they are at the heart of 'peace' and 'free life', already implied in them. Just as we know that nobody in our system is innocent, that only power relations exist, and that the losers and not the guilty are the ones being punished. That is why war has become someone else's dirty job, which we are obliged to ignore. On every street corner they ask us to forget its possibility and its reality, to be surprised by it though never complicit in it. We are thanked in advance for our vigilance. Our choice is between collaborating in the social peace or with the partisans of terror. War is no longer concerned with us; we look at it and it doesn't look back, it is too close. Its distance from us is not the same as that between a spectator and a football match, where we can still desire victory for one team and defeat for another. It resides in the limbo of things we would like to abolish. So we never have to take sides or believe that words have a weight that can be felt in the body, or that life has a meaning and that this meaning can also lead to its sudden end.

4. *...and live in war.* If we don't know what it means to live in war it's because we don't know what it means to live in peace. The more we are governed, the more we live in fear, and the more we need other people to arm themselves in our place, and that's how war continues. We do not know past struggles for rights and freedom of expression as experience (of conflict and victory), but only as a result. We are nothing but the dazed heirs to a fortune that is impossible to spend: an archaeological inheritance that crumbles a bit more day by day, of no use-value. Those old victories are not even established, but already lost, because we do not know how to fight to defend them whenever they are threatened. Revolutionary becoming is a process that seems to exclude our participation now. It is by forgetting the oppression of control in exchange for the guarantee of protection that we have expelled ourselves from our own history. And so we mistake the struggle for the war, and we allow it to be simultaneously criminalised and delegated to professionals. While the struggle is what looms up from the discrepancy between what governments demand and what the governed can give them.

In struggles we seek those who will accompany and support us, whereas we go to war alone and come back alone (since it's always the others that die).

5. *The game of war*. Historical avant-gardes and war: a love story and not even a tormented one, an almost smooth-sailing romance, apart from a few expatriations. One could still – before the state of exception – play the exceptional singularity, play the game of war with one’s friends and rivals. But this is no longer the case for us. The war paradigm of rivalries between small groups, the war-matrix of the guerrilla’s imaginative, paramilitary strategies, the surrealists, the situationists, the Mao-Dadaists (and the list goes on) lived in a world where words and experience carried on a passionate conversation that could be turned to the extreme, erupt into a scandal or even be interrupted for good. These were toy-wars, wars for snobs. Nowadays we can frame and exhibit these lovely gesticulations and return to the curfew of our already-filmed everyday lives, to surfaces saturated with advertising images, to our socio-economically integrated solitudes, and understand once and for all that the battleground has changed – that we need to invent much more ambitious *dérives* if only in order to escape the amplified normalcy of our perceptions.

6. *Visions of the world*. Our consciousness now disarmed, we’ve been comfortably tucked into the nightmare of an illegible, deaf-mute present, in a territory marbled with anxieties. The cells in which the presumed guilty have been locked up and forgotten, the bare rooms with chairs and a desk where torture result in confessions, these continue to exist, and even though we can’t see them, we perceive them. Their smell, their silence, their white lights populate the invisible, administrative levels of everyday life. They have not disappeared. The eternal night of the television news brings us this intuition along with images of the actual theatres of war. From the police stations, hospitals, motorways, schools, prisons, high-security zones and barracks, to the trucks, trains and planes exporting hatred in the name of war, or what we agree to call war – all these things fill us with fear. Because they contain us and we contain them.

7. *Coherences*. Sometimes, in the insecure rhythms of our lives, we recognise a line of coherence. It’s the same line that transmits the knowledge of a war we haven’t experienced but whose effects circulate within our bodies. The line that connects the most common gestures of our everyday life here with the disasters that happen elsewhere – an electric line, a paratactic line conveying this link made of a lack of links. Eichmann lined up numbers upon numbers without ever being bothered by the idea that they represented human beings sent to the slaughterhouse. Contemporary art has even made this habit of participating in the disaster without being able to question it into its basic, structural principle. It builds surfaces of coexistence between incompatible elements, it questions what we can’t understand, and nevertheless it contributes – as much as these lines do – to the functioning of the machine. The means to either halt our becoming or to transform our subjectivity don’t seem accessible to us any longer. Somebody else has designed the form of our lives: now we are only free to choose the form of our products and to hope that our private property will protect us from war. Meanwhile, private property is itself the first stage of war.

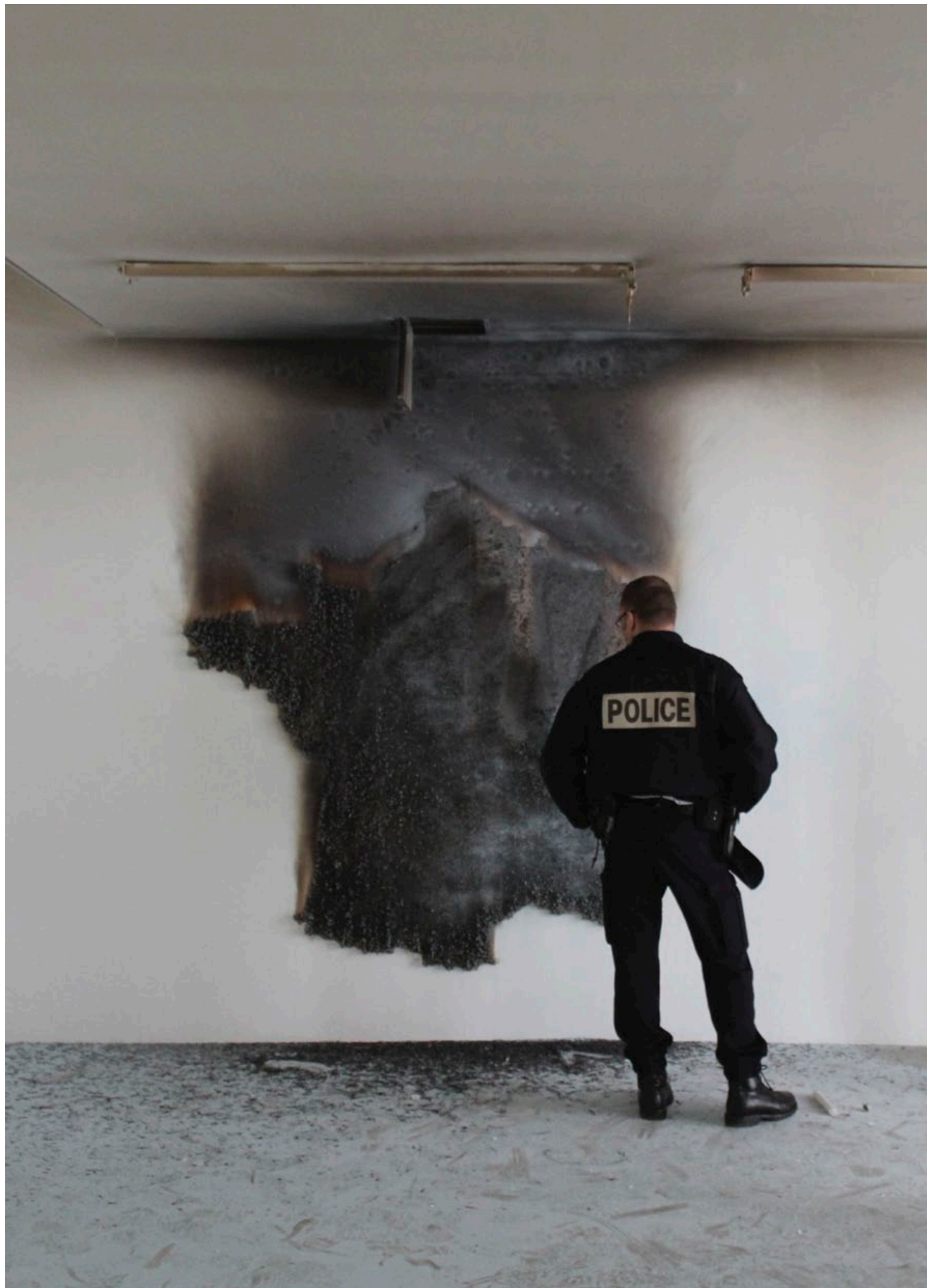
8. *The night where all singularities are whatever*. The simple soldier or the armed partisan of a cause are always represented as anonymous, as cannon fodder. Doomed to be pulverised for a nation or an ideal, they are abstract bodies, clockwork lives. The simple citizen, or the free

civilian, on the other hand, is the unique individual, different from any other, involved in the specificity of his social relationships, which are supposed to isolate him from his neighbour, to magnify him in his irreducible identity. Nevertheless, we can look all over for this truly human individual without meeting him or her in any region of the working world: over the counter, in the supermarkets and in the offices, we interact with interchangeable and insignificant singularities, all reproducing the same task so as not to be expelled from the productive process.

9. *Exceptions*. On the other hand. Experience, as impoverished as it is, teaches us that love is not an attachment to a pre-defined subject, that what we love or what links us to the other is their singularity as such, their whatever-singularity. Because love does not have a specific cause or a reason that can be communicated. The more we are governed or integrated into a discipline, the more controlled and isolated we are in our performances and our behaviours. Government sees the masses, but only looks at individuals. A loved singularity is whatever and non-interchangeable, whereas a productive singularity is isolated and individuated, and yet replaceable at a moment’s notice. The productive rules of universal substitution cause our certainty to vacillate. The knowledge that the organs of control possess our lives makes us all exceptions in the eyes of power. And when we meet the arm of the law, what it does with us does not depend on established conventions, but on the contingency of this particular friction. Our present has become unpredictable, each instant a potentially exceptional moment. This is precisely the new configuration of war, that of Identifying Power versus whatever singularities, which leads some to guerrilla suicide, and others to an anonymous solitude surrounded by objects.

10. *Rules of the Game*. Living in society has become a new and terrifying experience. Traditional humanism assured us that progress consists in the improved administration of our lives. But now we know that the discipline governing us can just as well produce merchandise as corpses. Our perception of this new state of things does not translate into words; it is made up of images and gestures. This new solitude has turned us into extraordinarily contemplative beings. Thousands of devices provide us with an intermittent and hypnotic visualisation of the monopoly of violence that governs us. Our contact with geopolitical information increases but is less and less intimate, and vocabulary, summoned to define all these exteriorities, begins to fray. The bodies on the receiving end of this flood of frontline news have become misaligned. Gazes rest on screens. Screen-memories, screen-images: a fragmented reality gives rise to the need for new distractions. Our perceptions are aligned only sporadically: this is the most devastating effect of the new war. This is also the reason we cannot counter it on the terrain of images or of iconoclasm (the dark screen is not the same as a monochrome, since the painter never pretended to inform us directly about the state of the world). And yet, spectators have never had so much influence, because their conditions were never so shared. It is the ethical use-value of our perceptions that remains to be negotiated and established, but it already exists as potential, just waiting for the gesture that will put it into circulation. Because, in times of war, it is not only monetary exchanges, but also the entire economy of desire, that is touched by inflation.

New York City, 7 January, 2007



ABOVE: *France (burnt/unburnt)*, 2011
burnt/unburnt matchsticks, dimensions variable, Courtesy of the artist and Air de Paris, Paris

RIGHT PAGE: *Untitled (Justice)*, 2009, laser cut aluminium stencil, Courtesy of the artist



art athina

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ΜΑΪΟΥ 2014

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Εγκαίνια:

Πέμπτη 15/5, 19:00 - 22:30
(είσοδος μόνο με πρόσκληση)

Ώρες λειτουργίας:

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(April 30 - May 25, 2014)
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Solo exhibition
(October 14 – November 8, 2014)
Tribute to Savopoulos - Group exhibition
(November 11 – December 6, 2014)

Οργάνωση

Υπό την αιγίδα



tradition

Superstudio was an avantgarde architecture group founded in Florence, in 1966, by Adolfo Natalini and Cristiano Toraldo di Francia with Gian Piero Frassinelli, Roberto and Alessandro Magris, and with Alessandro Poli between 1970 and 1972. Initiating the so-called 'radical architecture', Superstudio's visionary production ranged between design, photomontage, filmmaking, storytelling and anthropological research, working out a subtle critique of contemporary consumerism, technological progress and utopic ambitions.

"Having continued for years to dream up, on paper, testaments, lovers' promises, immobile colloquies with fellow-guests of stone, having confided to paper bottle-messages, love poetry, invisible whispers. And again: having built, on paper, castles and cities, and inviolate oases amid the sands, and empty houses, or warehouses full of useless objects, or funeral processions. And having for years interrogated the stars on the itinerary to follow, the navigator drew the constellations in the night. Having for centuries interrogated the earth, the farmer drew geometric patterns on hills and valleys, transforming them into mosaics. Finally, after examining the omens, the founder of the city drew a geometric perimeter on the ground and thereon he built the city. Innumerable cartographers delineated the terraqueous globe, marking invisible boundaries that later turned into paths of blood on the earth and seas. Others drew flags in blood or gold. In this fashion they also made vestments for kings and other dignitaries.

The marks we left on the paper, or the pieces of photos glued together, and the blueprints of perspectives and axonometrics, and the sheets from the copier, the drawings done with coloured pencils or shaded ones done with the airbrush, were ways and maps for ancient or future journeys. They were paths running through the territory of will and hope. They were plans for journeys, activities, magic calendars, lists of gifts. They were always projects. In the beginning, we designed objects for production, designs to be turned into wood and steel, glass and brick, or plastic. Then we produced neutral and usable designs, then, finally, negative utopias, forewarning images of the horrors which architecture was laying in store for us, with its scientific methods for the perpetuation of existing models... Then the images slowly disappeared, as if in a mirror: now there remain only fables and parables, descriptions and speeches.

No longer figures, but traces of a mode of behaviour directed towards suggesting the magnificent possibilities of rediscovering and of governing ourselves. The only project is thus the project for our lives and our relationships with others."

From "Superstudio on Mindscapes," pp. 30-4, 1973.

tradition

BUT REALITY WENT IN ANOTHER DIRECTION...

Interview with Adolfo Natalini by Michelangelo Corsaro

Superstudio's anti-utopian adventure into radical architecture



Michelangelo Corsaro: Superstudio's projects interact with the context of nature along with very complex relationships between individual biography, technology and the production of commodity goods, to the extent to which architecture is conceived as responsible for the creation of an alternative model of life on Earth. Can you explain the difference between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*?

Adolfo Natalini: Using hyperbolic language characteristic of avant-garde manifestos (Vittorio Gregotti spoke of religious terrorism in Superstudio's writings), we opposed the world of nature to the one of culture; the image of uncontaminated nature to a nature altered by man by means of culture (technology).

Using figures of speech such as hyperbole, irony, logical extraction and proof by contradiction, Superstudio exposed the absurdity of faith in the power of technology (able to build highways) and of symbolic representation (able to build monuments) through their union in *The Continuous Monument*. A monument of colossal dimension that could concentrate all constructions in one, it was made possible by the conquerors of technology and was able to give an order to the world. In the visuals we created, *The Continuous Monument* engaged with natural and artificial landscapes, mountains, plains and cities.

The absurd and terrific beauty of these images was supposed to trigger a reflection on the absurdity of current ideas about the redeeming power of technique and monumentalism.

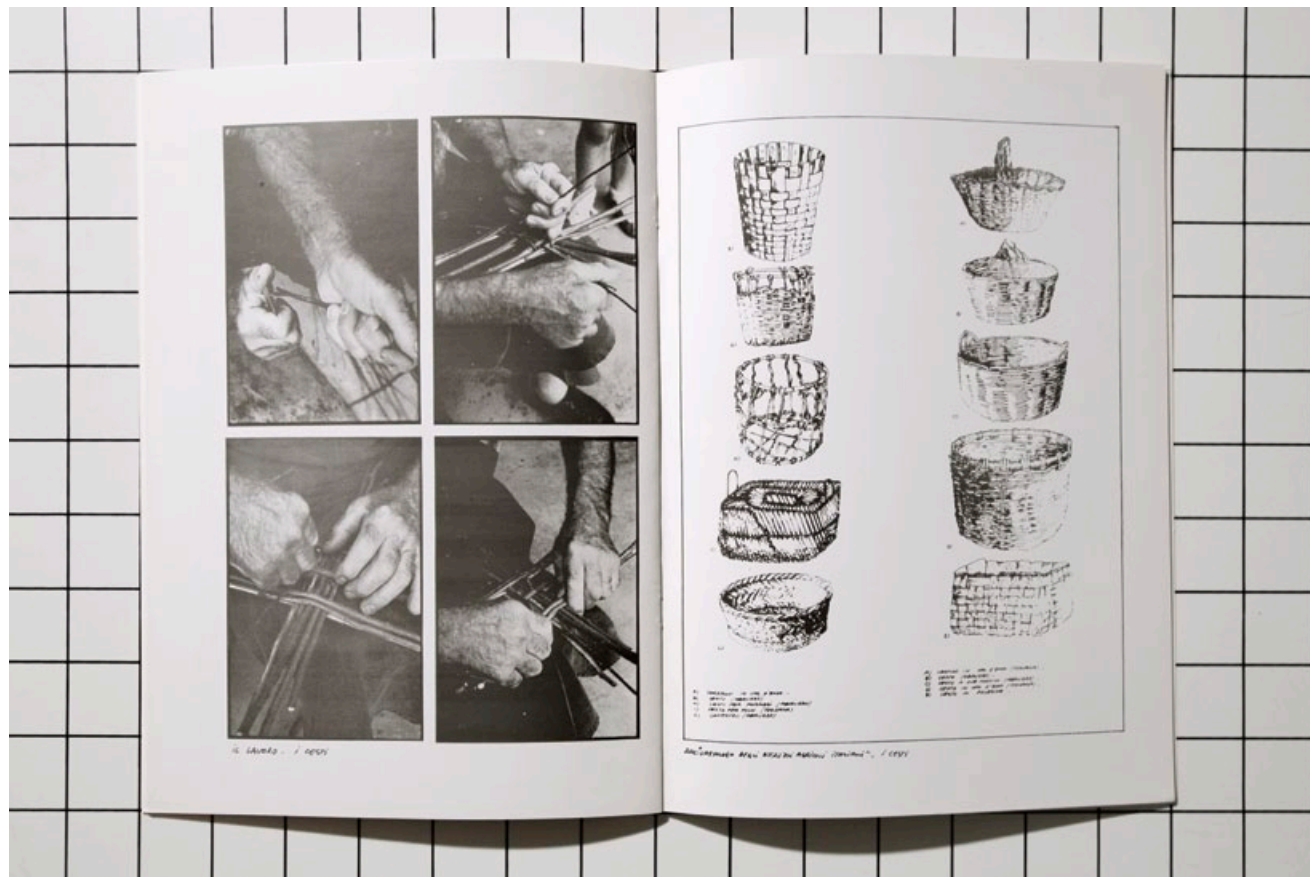
The text that accompanied the publication of *The Continuous Monument* in 1969 said: "We believe in a future of 'rediscovered architecture', in a future where architecture will regain its full powers abandoning any ambiguous designation and posing itself as the only alternative to nature. In the dichotomy between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* we choose the latter term."

MC: I want to ask you about technomorphic architecture, namely about the use of technology for the realisation of communities in perfect balance between collective and private memory. Can you tell me of the project for the Cemetery of Urbino?

AN: In 1969, together with Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, we published an essay named "From Industry to Technomorphism" in the magazine *Necropoli*. It was about the evolution of the relationship between architecture and an image-producing technology, tackling the critique that architecture can exercise on science and on technique. We coined a neologism (technomorphism) at a time when the term 'hi-tech' wasn't yet popular. The interest in science and technique came from Cristiano's family: his father, Giuliano Toraldo di Francia, was

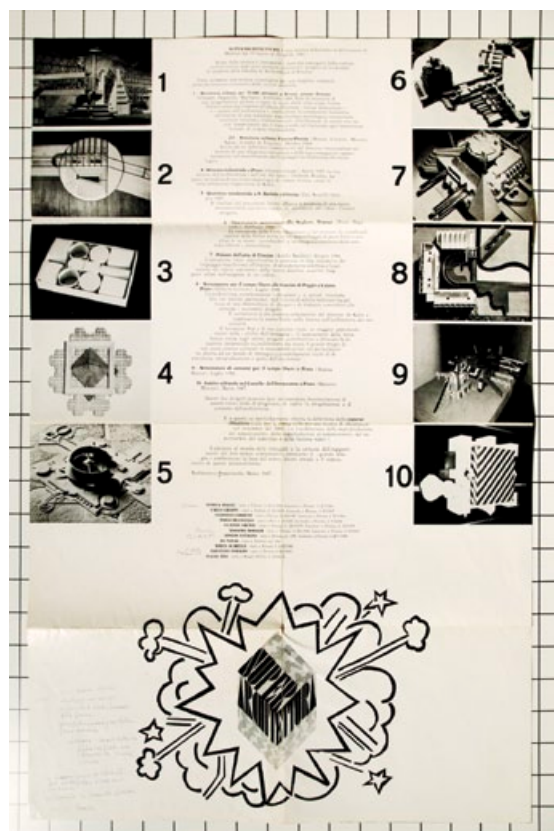
PREVIOUS SPREAD LEFT PAGE:
Superstudio, *Quaderna Table*, 1970, Photo by Giovanni Savi

PREVIOUS SPREAD RIGHT PAGE:
Archizoom - Superstudio, *Superarchitettura*, poster of the exhibition, recto, March 19 - April 12, 1967
Galleria del Comune di Modena, Photo by Giovanni Savi



TOP:
Proposte di analisi su fenomeni
delle culture marginali
 Bibbiena Sala Comunale, 1979
 Photo by Giovanni Savi

BOTTOM:
 Archizoom - Superstudio
Superarchitettura
 poster of the exhibition, verso
 March 19 - April 12, 1967
 Galleria del Comune di Modena
 Photo by Giovanni Savi



a famous scientist, and after that a philosopher of science. My interest in science drifted towards science fiction: at the end of high school I won a contest by supporting the thesis of a machine that would have been able to think better than a man. The *Twelve Ideal Cities*, inspired by the passion of Piero Frassinelli for anthropology and science fiction, were written a little later, inspiring *Invisible Cities* by Italo Calvino, as reported in a review in *Il Mondo*.

The project for the Cemetery of Urbino hypothesised a machine handling the burials. Soon after, the project for the Cemetery of Urbino utilised satellites, computers and network-connected memory capsules.

MC: When Rem Koolhaas got to know your work in 1970 he defined it as “optimistic about ‘easy’ architecture”. What struck him most about your projects? What was “easy” architecture?

AN: Rem Koolhaas, who studied at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London, invited us to his school as an antidote to the freaks of technology: the Archigram. I believe Koolhaas was fascinated by the surrealist feeling in our projects: by the exalted rationalism. He had a genuine passion for the critical, paranoid method of Dali and for Russian avant-garde. In his first projects we find quotes from *The Continuous Monument* and the *Histograms*.

MC: The *Histograms* are an essential work, often considered as the beginning of a certain minimalism, although not deemed as a manifesto of Superstudio.

AN: In 1969 we started working on the theory of unique design. Architectural design seemed to us a secondary activity, compared to a social action, so it wasn't worth much effort and time. We thought that planning could be achieved with a unique design, a sort of universal grid, which, on different scales, could devise objects, architectures and urban structures. So the catalogue of histograms, the catalogue of the villas and *The Continuous Monument* were born.

MC: How does irony function in your work? I'm particularly interested in the vision of the idea of collectivity and the dualism, often unresolved, in the relationship between the individual and society.

AN: Superstudio used different rhetorical artifices, researching ways of effectively communicating: metaphor, allegory, paradox, irony, logical extraction and proof by contradiction. Our images weren't utopic – they were anti-utopian, but often, critics didn't notice. So in the final of the *Twelve Ideal Cities*, we added an ‘epilogue’ then a ‘post scriptum’ and a ‘thirteenth city’. However, it seems that after more than forty years the misunderstanding continues.

MC: About the *Twelve Ideal Cities*: There's a peculiar use of languages and references to contemporary pop-culture. I'm thinking about the *Urania* series [note: *Urania* is an Italian sci-fi book series started in 1952 and still going, by the publishing house Mondadori. The most well-known and long-lasting of its genre, it runs to more than 1,600 issues, each easy to recognise by the characteristic red circle on the covers of the books. Many science fiction writers like Asimov, Ballard, Dick and Le Guin published their first Italian editions with this series.], Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Chaplin's *Modern Times*, *The Planet of the Apes*. It would be too easy today to interpret these references as just a combination of prophetic visions. How was the *Twelve Ideal Cities* received at the time in terms of the use of pop references as a way to investigate contemporary culture?

AN: The scientific background in Toraldo di Francia's family and the passion for science fiction, mine and Frassinelli's, as well as the ‘interplanetary’ curiosity of Alessandro Polis, between 1970 and 1972, together with the enthusiasm of the others (Roberto and Alessandro Magris), resulted in an exorbitant use of popular-science language.

The *Twelve Ideal Cities* had worldwide diffusion and great success. It was published in *Architectural Design* in December 1971, which dedicated the cover to Superstudio with a prophetic group portrait by Adrian George; in *Casabella* in January 1972, in *Architecture in Greece*, and in countless other magazines, being translated in a dozen languages.

MC: What about the concept of the network? It seems dominant today as an ideological trend towards the idea that we are all ‘connected’. How have things changed since the time you became passionate about connection elements: pipes, communication systems, transport?

AN: From 1971 to 1973 we worked on a series of research projects on *Fundamental Acts*, focusing on the relationship between human life and architecture as a conscious formalization of the planet. We planned five films: *Life, Education, Ceremony, Love, and Death*. The films attempted an anthropologic re-foundation of architecture. In the first, *Life-Supersurface*, the Earth, made homogeneous by an information network, became available to a life without objects. The network could control the environment and provide full support for a life free from work and from any conditioning. Art and life could be the same thing. What we knew about the first networks led us to expand our vision of future developments. But reality went in another direction, and today it is difficult to consider the net – any network – as a liberating function.

MC: I would like to talk about *Global Tools*' activity. How did the laboratory system begin? What references to contemporary culture influenced this aesthetic turn in Superstudio's research?

AN: After the *Fundamental Acts*, between 1973 and 1978, Superstudio undertook a series of research projects about extra-urban material culture, working with a huge number of students in the university. We looked for the roots of creativity in local cultures, in cultivation and production techniques, and in architectures without architects. Dismissing any myth of globalisation, we tried to understand and speak the languages of the places. There are catalogues of tools, descriptions of artisanal techniques, inspections and passionate surveys. As a final research act, in the 1978 Venice Biennale we presented a two-stage work: *Lot's Wife* and *Zeno's Conscience*. In the first one, a bachelor machine proved that “Architecture is to time what salt is to water”. The second showcased the objects and the life of Zeno Fiaschi, a Tuscan peasant.

Parallel to the work on material culture, together with other fellow travellers of Radical Architecture, we attempted the creation of an alternative school for planning: *Global Tools*, a group of didactic laboratories. It has been an absorbing and difficult experience, with encounters and clashes. Everyone brought their world with them.

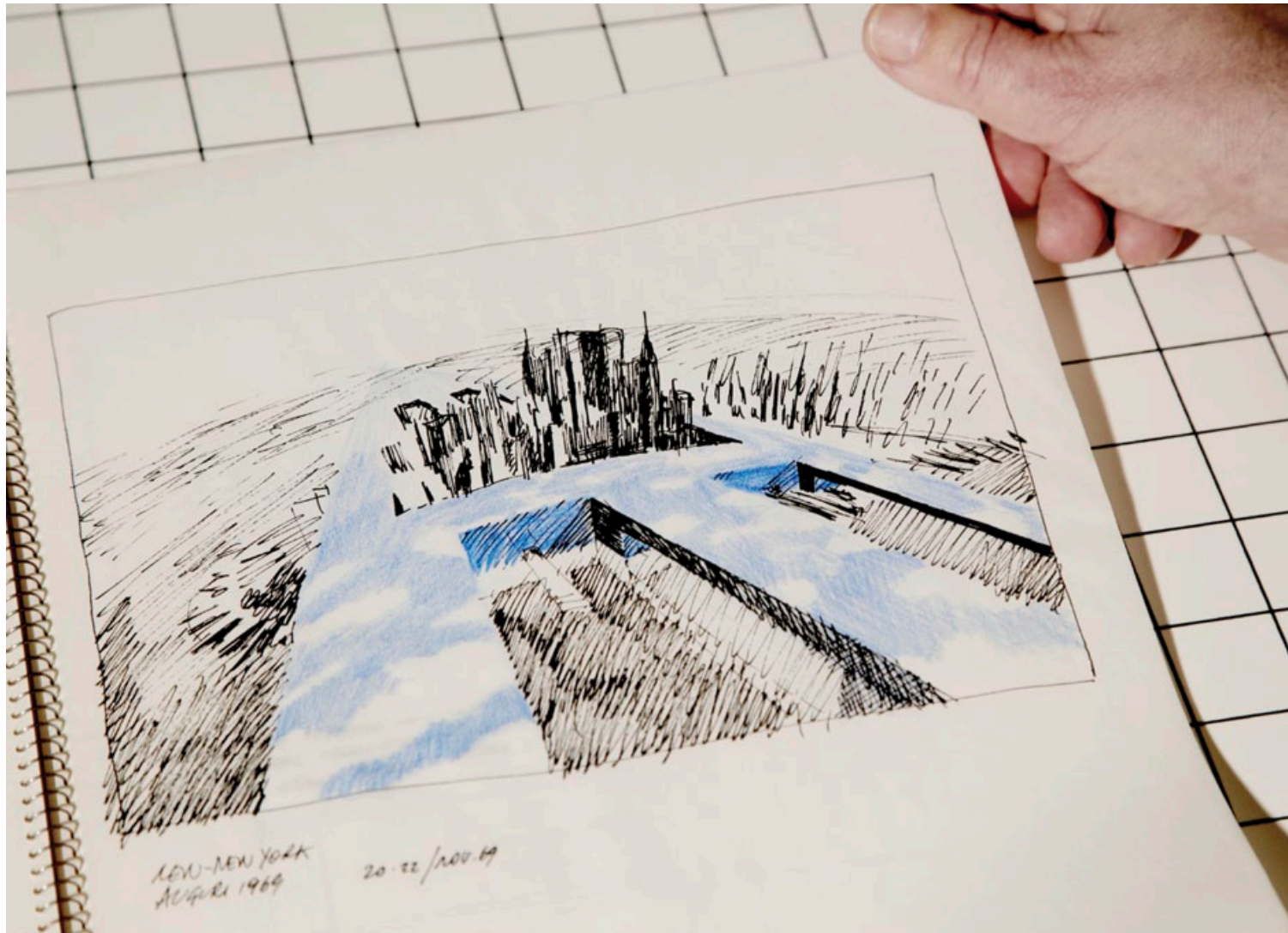
Among the many references, among the experiences that crossed and collided, there were probably references to Arte Povera and of course to contemporary culture. However, everything was reworked on the basis of personal experiences. The encounters, the seminars and the produced documentation didn't lead to the creation of a school, nor had that ever been thinkable in such an atmosphere of anarchic creativity.

tradition

HOW GREAT ARCHITECTURE WAS IN 1966

by Adolfo Natalini

Look beyond the metaphors; resist the treatment of everything



In 1965, Le Corbusier drowned swimming in the sea. His architectural oeuvre continued to swell as successive volumes of his complete works were issued. Louis Kahn had exploded classic antiquity. Aldo Rossi had published *The Architecture of the City*. Mies and Aalto continued producing their models (the former all seriousness, the latter with a smile). For minds more acute or scientific, there was methodology, prefabrication and industrial design. For appetites whetted by the avant-garde, the Japanese Metabolists and Yona Friedman continued to turn out mega structures (*Tange docet*), while the Archigram boys burst onto the scene with their ironic technologies as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones strummed away in the background. In Austria, Pichler, Abraham and Hollein were doing incomprehensible things and in Milan, Ettore Sottsass and Ugo La Pietra worked away in solitude (the former with a smile, the latter

with the height of earnestness); but very few were aware of all these goings-on. Those were the days!

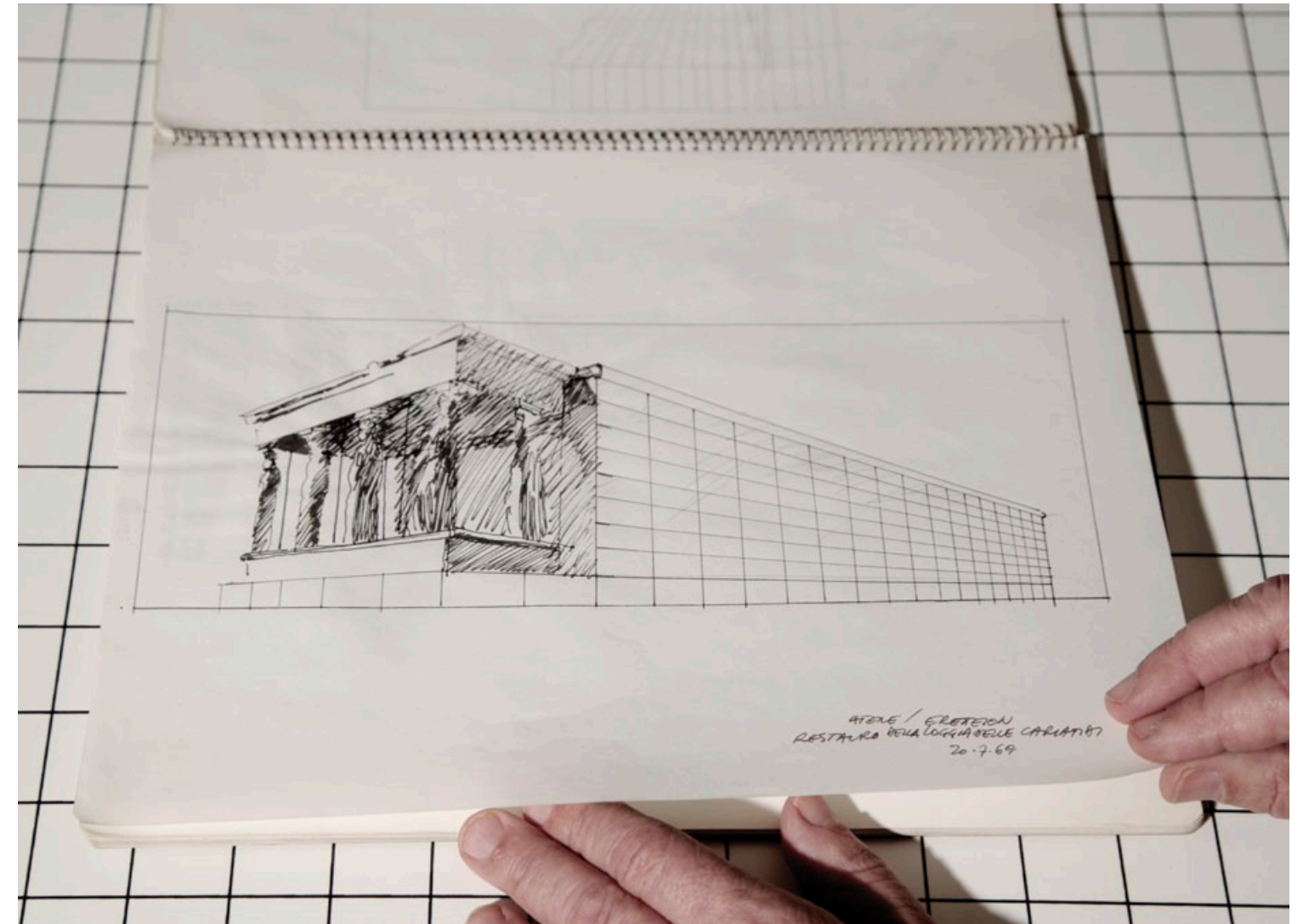
My earlier work is largely contained in my current work, even if it can be difficult to trace. My work is still anti-utopian, if the only utopia left to us is globalisation. Superstudio's work was necessary for the 1960s; my work in Holland was necessary for the 1990s and for the beginning of the new millennium. At the time, we needed a revolution, to break away from established culture. Today, with our failed ideologies, we need to work against extreme liberalism and consumerism, against the too-fast pace of fashion and aesthetics devoid of content, against the cult of personality and useless experimentation.

On November 4, 1966, the Arno invaded Florence: it was the most disastrous flood of the century, with water that reached nearly six metres in the Santacroce area. The same

tradition

LEFT PAGE:
Superstudio, New-New York
Auguri 1969, November 20-22, 1969
Photo by Giovanni Savi

RIGHT PAGE:
Superstudio, Atene/Eretteion.
Restauro della Loggia delle
Cariatidi, July 20, 1969
Photo by Giovanni Savi



day, Superstudio was born. Unaware of the water advancing through the streets, I spent nearly the whole day designing the first Superstudio manifesto. Then, at 5 o'clock, the water reached my studio. This extraordinary coincidence has been noted with subtle Eastern intuition by Arata Isozaki in his article, "Superstudio, and the traces of the flood," published in the September 1971 issue of *Tosbi Jutaku*.

With the full weight of insecurity and skepticism (a vague unease, feelings of alienation, and so on...) on our shoulders, and with a dose of cynicism, we decided to become *Super*. The early works between 1967 and 1969 were responses to two imperatives: to get rid of all remnants of, and infatuations with, the architectural through a massive ingestion of projects/images, and to begin the demolition of the discipline through guerrilla incursions (this was Archizoom's theory of the "Trojan Horse"). In this way, operat-

ing fitfully between architecture and design, 'Vantidesign' was born, goading and harrying Milan designers with its vulgarity (though the breath of fresh air it brought appealed to the industry).

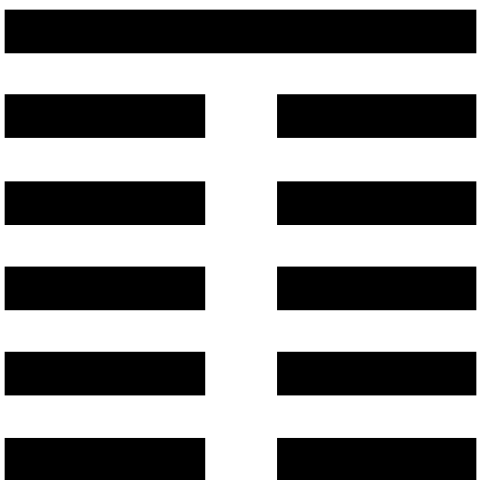
Superstudio's involvement was manifestly didactic: to analyse and annihilate the discipline of architecture by using "popular means of illustration and consumer literature" (Gregotti was to speak of "religious terrorism"). Naturally, there were those who could not see beyond the metaphors and treated everything as yet another utopian proposition (some crammed No-Stop City into the same pigeonhole). Too bad for them.

Originally published in *Spazio-Arte*, no. 10 - 11, 1977.
Translation by David Radzinowicz-Howell.

U(YOU) TURN. FROM SELF-DESTRUCTION TO SELF-ORGANISATION

by Lorenzo Romito

What is beyond the contemporary city in accordance with an I-Ching reading



剝
Hexagram 23 Bō
(Splitting Apart)

Before attempting to envision what is beyond the contemporary city, we should attempt to understand what is behind it. The contemporary city is the house of our society. This house and what is inside it are declining.

The main actors in this declining contemporary city are the economy, politics and the media. They activate a vicious circle leading to an increasingly 'passive' society, where citizens become consumers of their speculative devices, users of controlled and secure spaces and acquiescent audiences for spectacles.

We consider this a crisis that, by necessity, will lead to a structural change of the system itself. We are not there to fight for this change or resist it, but to help let it happen in the most spontaneous and ecological way, avoiding useless conflicts or, even better, helping those conflicts to evolve into complex dynamics.

To understand and enable this transformation, to allow it to have a place – according to the Stalker Process of run-time profiling, state mapping and tracing – is not to oppose or plan the change; better to be aware of the danger of the crisis and discover the possible opportunities in it. The change is an immanent spontaneous process and cannot be driven by voluntary action. Instead, evolution could be better understood and promoted by engaging with experience, exploring the emerging signs of chance within reality, attempting to perceive the beginning of the spontaneous process of change, and catching the opportunity within it.

Since 1995, the Stalker Process has been crossing the territories of change: what we call 'Actual Territories'. It has become aware of its emerging and spontaneous becomings, transformative processes, relationships, common experiences, knowledge memories and imaginaries. By providing the 'reverse engineer' with an intuitive visual interface

to filter meaningful data, it helps make necessary changes happen by transforming the way we relate to others and the environment.

This experiential thinking, and the logic of immanence that is bound up in it, is where the Stalker practice resembles a certain Chinese way of thinking, expressed through Taoist philosophy and by the *I-Ching, the Book of Changes*.

In "the I-Ching, the Classic of Change, there are only two signs, continuous and discontinuous lines. - - -, are the different combinations of these two lines that build the text and not the enunciation of a discourse or the formulation of a meaning. (...) It is just from the game of alternances of its figures, from the effects of juxtaposition and correlation, from their possibility of transforming, that sense emerges." (F. Jullien, *Figures of Immanence: a Philosophical Reading of the I-Ching*, Bari, 2005).

I-Ching is a device composed of sixty-four hexagrams representing all the possible phases of change in the transformation of reality. Through this device, one can interpret and interrogate oneself starting from the experience of reality and the possible 'becoming' of it.

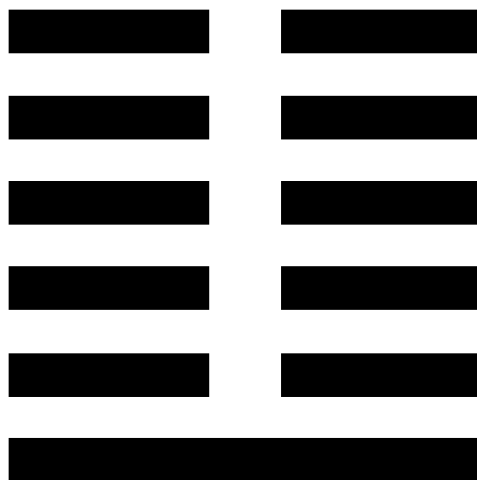
Trying to interpret the stage of change we are living today, I have chosen two figures from the I-Ching. The phase of change we are now living in is between them:

One is 'Bo' (n.23), the splitting apart, the crisis. The next is 'Fu' (n.24), the coming back or the turning point, the possibility of going beyond.

Bō

In the architecture of Bo, the splitting apart, a Yang line sits on top of a pile of Yin lines.

"The Yin is at the apex of its power and tends to expel the Yang (...) this figure is the most 'ill-omened'. There is



復
Hexagram 24 Fù
(Turning Point)

no profit in going beyond. This time of 'deprivation' corresponds to the 'making through' of all the foolish and consequently is unfavourable to the fair man. (...) Is exactly the roof that these are dismantling, because it was up to the Yang line to cover and protect them (...). In the times when the disorder reaches its top, when nothing could be undertaken in accordance with the world, the literate sits unswervingly at the margin. (...) If the wise cannot 're-establish order' this allows at least that, thanks to him, the consciousness of 'values' doesn't get abolished. This allows us to wait with trust the situation when, at the end of the 'deprivation', the Yang is conducted to come back." (F. Jullien, 2005).

Fù

In the architecture of Fu the turning point, a yang line, appears at the bottom of a pile of yin lines.

"(...), this phase of emerging, meant as a return, is precisely the crucial moment in which the invisible connects to the visible (...) offering a transversal way to access the invisible: it opens a breach in the mystery of immanence. This phase of coming back makes us 'perceive the heart of reality', the oracle suggests to try to understand it, starting from our experience." (F. Jullien, 2005).

From this perspective, only the experience of reality allows us to investigate the future by attempting to catch the possible 'becoming' of what is emerging today. This emergence offers us the possibility of looking beyond without abandoning reality.

For the Stalker Process, this experience of reality is driven by the practice of 'crossing' the edges of reality – territories, disciplines, social and cultural boundaries – and catching spontaneous signs of change.

Entering from the bottom, the Yang line is welcomed by

the pile of Yin lines because its behaviour provokes the Yin lines to become creative. The related comment in the I-Ching shows:

"(...) on a moral and political level, the harmonious relationships that could be established in between any community, (represented by the Yin lines) and the capability of the initiation that could come from the outside (represented by the Yang line). The true initiative should not consist in submitting the other to its norm, imposing on them plans to change, but consists in allowing them to develop their virtuality through actual contact." (F. Jullien, 2005).

Stalker has been trying to similarly incite processes of self-consciousness and self-organisation by building devices to promote dialogue and creative collaboration, share common experiences and visions, and establish processes of reciprocal learning.

One more cue, offered by the 'coming back' figure, is the possibility – in this phase of transformation – of the spontaneous emerging of a common consciousness in people's behaviour.

This collective *realisation* could lead to a deep transformation in the process of self-organisation within our society.

It would also mean that a U-change will only take place if YOU change.

This evolutionary potential is, according to self-organisation studies:

"(...) the self-transcendence: the capability to go beyond the physical and mental borders in learning, developing and evolution. (...) When the system gets closer to the turning point, the system 'decides' which way to take, and this decision will determinate its evolution." (F. Capra, *The Turning Point*, New York, 1982).

To entice people to share this co-evolutionary vision is the Stalker's actual task: as is facing the immanent necessity of today's turning point.

AFTER COURBET

by Tanja Ostojić

In certain periods of history, public nudity has frequently served as a carrier for other, more political, messages. Thinking about this, Ostojić recalls her controversial work and considers what censorship means in the political context of the European Union

Besides the composition and the reference to the title, *L'origine du monde* – *The Origin of the World* (1866), my reference to Gustav Courbet refers directly to his position as an artist who was concerned with the class struggle during the time of the Paris Commune and who believed in the emancipatory role of art in society. His artworks were banned from shows, and he was arrested as well, primarily because of political engagement. The painting, *L'origine du monde*, remained hidden for more than 120 years in private collections, but has been on display at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris since the 1980s.

After Courbet was first published in 2004 as a double-page spread in *ESSE*, a contemporary art magazine from Quebec. It was exhibited in the group exhibition *Double-Check: Re-Framing*

Space in Photography: the Other Space, Parallel Histories, curated by Marina Gržini and Walter Seidl, and was displayed at the Gallery for Contemporary Art in Celje, Slovenia, in 2004, and in Camera Austria, KunstHaus, Graz, Austria, in 2005.

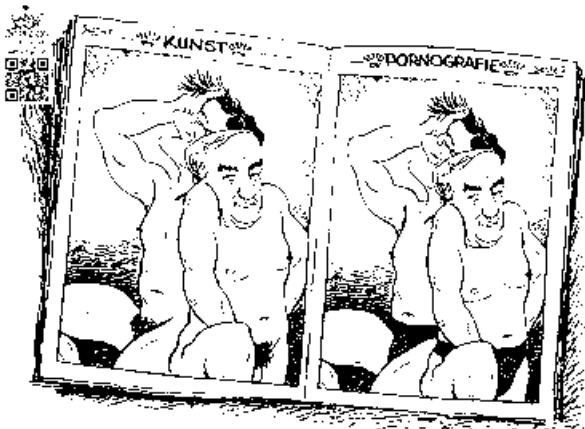
The piece was displayed on several rotating billboards at the end of December 2005, in public space and on streets in Vienna as part of the exhibition *EuroPart*. Following a large media scandal, after only two days the work was removed in an act of censor-

ship, at the moment when the Austrian Prime Minister was about to take over the Presidency of the EU. The work was removed from public space along with another artwork done by Carlos Aires, a Spanish artist, who presented a poster of the Queen having sex with Chirac and Bush. Both works, displayed as part of the exhibition, were attacked publicly as being supposedly offensive to Austrian public morality.

Over 100 articles and over 1,000 readers' comments witnessed the events in an interesting and complex way. The 3,5 m x 4 m poster was re-mounted on the façade of Forum Stadtpark in Graz between January and March 2006.

Today, the European Union states are sharpening control over non-citizens. The immigration police, for instance, continue the long-time practice of 'checking-the-warmth-of-bedsheets' in in-

termarriages between EU- and non-EU partners. In the event of Greece's EU presidency this year, one has to reflect on these issues. With this poster, there was no intention whatsoever of producing what one might call an advertisement for the EU. Rather, I accepted the invitation to produce a public poster to challenge work about the changing European geopolitics. These should be open to critical positions, since they, in turn, reflect individual standpoints.



From the press coverage:
Kronen Zeitung, cover, 29 December, 2005
Der Standard, 30 December, 2005, caricature by Oliver Schopf

Tanja Ostojić
Untitled / After Courbet
(L'origine du monde), 2004
colour photo, 46 cm x 55 cm
Photo by David Rych
Copyright/ Courtesy of Ostojić/Rych



ON THE THRESHOLD

Interview with Gabriel Kuri by Michelangelo Corsaro

“I use the language of art to understand my position in the world and also to imagine how this world could be”



Gabriel Kuri
Quick Standards, 2009
emergency aluminium blankets taped on wooden sticks
dimensions variable
Copyright the artist, Courtesy of Sadie Coles HQ, London

Michelangelo Corsaro: In your work one can always recognise a discreet balance between the visual arrangement of the form and the conceptual and political implications it sets forth. How do you relate to these two essential perspectives on artistic practice?

Gabriel Kuri: I use the language of art to understand my position in the world and also to imagine how this world could be. I am a maker, not just a thinker or strategist, and in the making there is, for me, already the imprint of concept and politics as you hinted in the question. I guess it is in the formula of how things are made that these implications can be eloquently imprinted to a greater or lesser degree.

MC: You have often worked with found or discarded materials that seem to have ended their function in the production-consumption cycle. How do you think the idea of exhaustion relates to the difference between material and immaterial commodities?

GK: I think this is an interesting question, especially as immaterial commodities seem to be as abundant – or more so – than those we can see, touch and ultimately visibly wear. The practice of art in a sense invests in the possibility of something substantial in the value of the artwork being invisible and immaterial. However, I by no means imply that by ‘invisible’ or ‘immaterial’ that this quotient should be distanced from reality. Its reality has to be equal to that in the work’s physical manifestation.

I am not sure I understand what you mean by exhaustion, but if I interpret it correctly, it is the exhaustion and re-purposing of meaning that interests me most. And this can be found in both the material and in the baggage that informs the material.

MC: How do you relate to the notion of exoticism? When does it become problematic for you, if at all?

GK: I have been subject to positive discrimination more often than negative. I would be lying if I said the opposite. I am Mexican, but I am not native-looking nor working class, and I have felt, more often than not, that being who I am has been a factor in some people paying attention and not just projecting their fantasies. I started to come of age as an artist right at the threshold of the age of globalisation and feel lucky to be part of this generation. Mexico is a culture that has been exoticised many times before in different periods, so maybe the allure of the exotic (as a patronising gaze) had worn thin, at least in the art world, and the exoticising Anglo-Saxon or Eurocentric gaze had already turning to Eastern Europe, Asia or the Middle East.

MC: Between corporate-colonialism and *antropofagia*, what issues does Latin America still has to face in order to name a legitimate sense of belonging?

GK: This is a question that I ask myself all the time, but I always try to ask it concretely. I leave it to the works I make, and not with a sense of distance and using myself as a study case. If the question is not asked and its answer (or further question) sought within the artwork itself, then

what is done is actually not art but rather a reflection on art. And I would rather leave that to the academics.

MC: Education seems to have become a luxury business. Also, qualifications are more or less traded as proper commodities. Since your education followed a peculiar path, could you tell me which ones you keep as valuable among your learning experiences? Is it somehow necessary or viable to challenge institutional academic education?

GK: My formation was and still is a sum of several important circumstances, periods and rites of passage. I cannot overestimate the importance of having grown up where I did, and having done my undergraduate degree before the explosion of globalisation and instant communication. The fact that information did not travel instantaneously seemed to give that early formative period a priority of depth over speed. Since I also lived through the threshold into the globalised world in my early post-MA years, I feel privileged to have a perspective that was not simply formed at high speed and with an apparent omnipresence, and this I feel significantly helps me place myself within all the shifts of this very fast-paced present.

A fundamental part of my formation was also attending Gabriel Orozco’s workshop on Fridays throughout my undergrad days in the late 80s and early-90s. This was fundamental in complementing the more academic and artisanal formation I was getting at college. At the Friday workshops, I feel that we dealt with the more important and lasting questions about artistic practice.

And another comparison I often make is the very valuable two years I spent at Goldsmiths College doing my MA in the mid-90s, where and when I was thrust into the real world and experienced a complete feeling of restarting.

MC: What is your understanding of the combining of the agency of the artist and that of the activist?

GK: I don’t think you need to combine them to be an artist. Activism (however it is that you understand it as an individual) has to be embedded, a real part of the practice. I think as an artist you have to understand and acknowledge the potential and limitations of your métier. I don’t like to see artists who reach out to activism out of a clear feeling of impotence or guilt for being in a seemingly socially anodyne field. I think there is a lot that can be done by practising art consequentially and that can have social significance and effect (although this manifests more slowly than straightforward social activism). But this can only happen if there is an unyielding sense of commitment to the language and form of art.

MC: What is your opinion about the European crisis and on the events that followed this economic downturn? In particular, what do you think about the situation in Europe in comparison to what happened in Mexico during these years?

GK: How can I answer this without going into one generalisation after another?



Gabriel Kuri, A55, 2014
 each page: 33,5 cm x 26,2 cm
 vintage magazine pages and collage
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RADICALLY OPEN

Interview with Jürgen Mayer H. by Haris Biskos and Eleanna Papathanasiadi

Architecture is not a background to everyday life. It is a catalyst: something that provokes a rethinking of spatial conditions



Metropol Parasol, Photos by Nikkol Rot for the Holcim Foundation

Haris Biskos: There are many examples of cities, which acquired global attention through architecture. Can architecture save the city?

Jürgen Mayer H.: Architecture is always about the future, about some improvement or other, be it social, economic or aesthetic. Architects can provide the vision, but it is an alliance of many people, or at least two – the client and the architect – that makes architecture happen. However, in the end it is about the user, the people living and working in the buildings. When we try to make assumptions about the future of cities, it's mostly our projections of what we see today. You wouldn't expect five years ago that social media like Facebook would take over the means of communication, or ten years ago that mobile phones would function the way they do now. We need to bear in mind that our prediction of the future often falls into the extremes of what we nowadays desire or despise.

HB: It is often considered that 'bigness' is associated with the generic. In Seville, you created one of the largest wooden structures in the world. In what ways does your project create links with its given context?

JMH: Metropol Parasol was a redevelopment project of the Plaza de la Encarnación, an archaeological excavation site in Seville, Spain. It combines many aspects we investigated in the past – contemporary architecture speculation, innovation in construction, new timber and coating structures, mix-use and public space.

Eleanna Papathanasiadi: What are the challenges when designing a project, like Metropol Parasol, in a public space? How do you approach the notion of the 'city' in your work?

JMH: Metropol Parasol combined research and ideas that we had worked on for many years into one complex urban space. Cultural spaces, an archaeology museum, a food market, open public areas and a panorama terrace: all are creating a new kind of public space in the very medieval centre of Seville. The large parasol structure covering the plaza became one of the largest timber constructions in the world. References for the design were the big trees on the neighbouring Plaza Christos de Burgos and the undulated stone roof of the cathedral.

EP: What should the role of urban and communal spaces be? In what way do you think Metropol Parasol and the transformation of Plaza de la Encarnación have possibly

changed the civic face of the city of Seville? In what way is Metropol Parasol a 'place of identification'? How does it interact with people? Is it a place of communication, a meeting point?

JMH: As an architect, I am always very excited about designing buildings that can be radically open to their environment, blurring inside and outside spaces. This atmosphere of openness in architecture, and its integration of nature, translates into everything from spatial concepts and construction materials to objects and furniture design. It has now been two years since it opened and immediately it became the new lively centre of the city, attracting all kinds of public gatherings, from Catholic processions at *Semana Santa*, gay pride festivities, hip hop and flamenco videos, film shoots, political demonstrations for the *indignados*, to massive public viewing events during the UEFA Euro Championship games in 2012. It works for locals and tourist alike. Metropol Parasol is also a project that received social and cultural meanings from the Occupy movement: social gatherings and political demonstrations, which happened on the plaza after its completion. Combining both technological features and social interaction, I think Metropol Parasol represents what we have always strived to explore.

HB: In Seville, a non-standard, sculptural shaped structure with non-repeating elements is made possible through computerised design and construction processes. What is the role of high-end technological tools in the design and the implementation of the Parasol project? Could you describe the structural system, construction methods and materials, and also the technological features of Metropol Parasol?

JMH: It's the largest timber construction in the world and one of our most innovative projects because it uses the latest glue technology for connecting the joints in the parasols, of which there are thousands. Overall it is a structure with many different materials: on-site reinforced concrete, vierendeel-beams in steel, and the timber construction made of Kerto laminated wood panels with a polyurethane coating. The three-dimensional volume of the parasols designed for the competition had to be transformed into a structure that could be realised – we decided to develop a geometric grid of 1.50 m x 1.50 m. The timber shapes were defined with the help of the computer and all information was sent to the timber construction company. The final parasols are constructed out of plates of glued laminated wood.



HB: What is the influence of digital tools, as pragmatic and conceptual instruments for exploring new spatial identities as well as for constructing and implementing architecture, on your architecture? Could these tools incorporate aspects that enable buildings to interact with the user and the environment?

JMH: I think virtual spaces, social media and communication are what we have to consider in architecture today. Technology has brought not only new construction methods and new materials, but also a new virtual and digital reality, which is part of the space that we design. The beauty of our profession is that we can make many different interesting spatial productions, and building is one of many.

EP: Do you consider your buildings to be sculptures? Is art an important part of your work? Is there a difference, in your opinion, between art and architecture? How does one inform the other?

JMH: I don't see much of a difference. Architecture tends to be more complex because it involves so many layers of creation and getting things done, which can be equally painful and joyful. There are rules, clients, a political dimension, even, such as when projects fall within election schedules, which often occurs with the public projects that

we're involved in. They make it more the art of negotiation than the art of creation. In practice, though, I don't see such a difference [between art and architecture]. Both raise similar questions: how does our body communicate in space? What is the current state of art in relation to technology and nature, and our body in terms of communications? Sometimes that happens in an architectural context, sometimes in art and sometimes in a design context.

EP: How are digital communication spaces related to actual spatial creations?

JMH: Architecture is a catalyst, which is not a background to everyday life, but something that provokes you to rethink spatial conditions. Every time, I am very curious to see how our speculations about communication and public space might transform once they are handed over and begin their own life.

HB: Could you name for us architects and/or artists whose work has influenced the development of your architectural language and identity?

JMH: Frederick Kiesler, Erich Mendelsohn and one not to be revealed.

Sketches and models of Metropol Parasol's design phase

THE CITY OF THE FUTURE OR VISIONS FOR IT

by Jürgen Mayer H.

How social media will change the way we interact with the polis is a question that concerns architecture, now

Architecture is a dynamic process. Our cities are organisms in constant transformation and the planning process never stops. As soon as a building is complete, it immediately starts to develop its own momentum. This continual change is what keeps us on our toes and makes designing, planning and constructing so exciting. Building is the future and, by definition, the future always entails uncertainty. As architects, what we design will last for decades and sometimes even centuries, and no one would invest in a project without hoping that it might contribute to a better future. No one ever really knows if this expectation will be fulfilled, however, and in this respect architecture is always an adventure of sorts. Architecture can be 'timeless' if it captures a moment. It then becomes a witness of a particular historical epoch. In the future it will serve as a retrospective account of the issues that moved society and of how we once imagined the world of tomorrow. In this sense, architecture is the most visible piece of evidence for society's constant transformation.

How will social media change the way in which we interact? This is a question that also concerns architecture. We are already able to control our heating from a distance using a smart phone and protect our homes from burglars by making it seem like we are at home when we are not. But this is just the beginning. If, in the future, facades were able to reflect moods or react intelligently to the sun or wind, or if buildings were able to generate their own energy, entirely new urban spaces could form. Working together with a design company and an electronics firm, we explored ways in which such media facades could be developed. This intelligent form of communication has already been realised in the shape of interactive media facades within art projects, but these are currently little more than applications on conventional buildings, and as yet integral architecture has barely begun to explore the technology. The facade should be organically merged with the rest of the building, creating an animated space in which architecture is not treated as a static frame or background, but as an active part of public life. And that would add a completely new dimension to the urban landscape.

When talking about the future, age is also an important topic. We are all growing older. Living space doubles abruptly when children leave the home or a partner dies. How do you deal with the sudden increase in space that you then have as an individual? What are the micro-movements that will gain importance? How will people get from their cars into their apartments? How many obstacles will there be along the way? These questions are extremely exciting, and they are issues that our generation will have to confront more and more regularly. There are increasing numbers of single people in Germany. They will all grow older and will have to see how well they can cope on their own.

Many of these questions are directly related to the design of our homes, workplaces and public spaces. Our approach is to see architecture as an activator; a building block that triggers social and communicative processes and sharpens our focus on the building's surroundings – both from a spatial and a sociological point of view.

The role of architecture is to offer new technical possibilities to build efficiently and mobilise adequate technological resources. Nowadays, all this has to happen with sustainability in mind. Sustainability usually only refers to an ecological balance, but it is more important to consider its cultural significance. How does the demand for sustainability fit into daily life, also from an aesthetic point of view? What are the social consequences and what are the correct economic components? After all, it is only when profit is generated in some form or another that we are able to reinvest.

When sustainability is discussed, the question that often arises is how this 'uncertain society' in which we currently live should confront the issue. How should we go on, what are the right decisions, what is the best way to consume? Things are developing so quickly that these questions need to be renegotiated on a daily basis.

What will remain in the future is the individual's need for a home. This has less to do with the building itself than with family, friends and increasingly social networks. Even in generations to come, people will still need to start families and have children. If not, society will have no future.



Metropol Parasol, Photo by Nikkol Rot for Holcim Foundation

MODERN ARCHITECTURE AS ANACHRONISM

TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN THE WORK OF DIMITRIS PIKIONIS

Yorgos Tzirtzilakis



Dimitris Pikionis with
Caresse Grosby in Delphi

“Anachronism is necessary; it is fertile”

Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps. Histoire de l'art et anachronisme des images*

The impression most people have retained of Dimitris Pikionis is that of a solitary man who spoke in a gentle, mumbling voice (“like a soft drill”, N. Hadjikyriakos-Ghika used to say) and spent a quiet life designing and teaching at the Technical University. In his writings, his paintings, his few buildings and the outdoor layouts he designed one can find a melancholy world with bursts of physiolatry and geocentric mysticism. In effect, however, he was an even more complex personality: an architect-thinker (he knew long excerpts from ancient Greek texts by heart) who gave precedence to painting. It seems strange that the best-known Greek architect of the twentieth century never missed an opportunity to say that “Architecture was never among my central inclinations”.

Today we know that Pikionis tried an ascetic approach to attaining ‘authenticity’, and was enough of a

mysticist to believe that what we call tradition could help us express a timeless and life-giving essence. The catch in this attitude is easy to discern: it is the difficulty in conceiving tradition not as a contemporary thing but as a changeable and diffused relation to reality. Indeed, in his notes for a speech at the Athens Academy, Pikionis himself would go on to generalise and speak of a “single tradition on the planet” which spreads “between East and West, North and South”.

So the time is ripe for a ‘misreading’, a revision of stereotypes. First of all, let us touch on a taboo subject: The most enduring elements of his work are the water-sheds, the vertigo of mixtures and the cultural redefinition of bricolage. Although his relationship with handmade decoration and handicraft more generally is known, it has never been examined in the cultural, anthropological and

Dimitris Pikionis,
The Shepherd settlement in Aixoni, 1950



Dimitris Pikionis, Resting place at the church of Aghios Dimitrios Loumbardiaris, Landscaping of the archeological area surrounding the Acropolis, 1954-1957

conceptual context of the culture of bricolage. Pikionis moved around the crisis of the ‘engineering’ paradigm and the transition to that of the ‘bricoleur’ – the one who makes creative use of any material and object, working with disparate leftovers, scraps and combinations to renew or enrich his stock.

If the model of the ‘engineer’ was the uncontested symbol of modernism, the ‘bricoleur’ liberates the process of design from the dominance of industrial self-reference. The bricoleur, as described by Claude Lévi-Strauss, works with unexpected combinations and conversions, re-evaluating handicraft and the repressed dynamic of popular material culture. What matters most here is the process, not just the form. In every historical fragment, every material relic or leftover, we can recognise the units for creating another – and this is why the process of bricolage is always partial



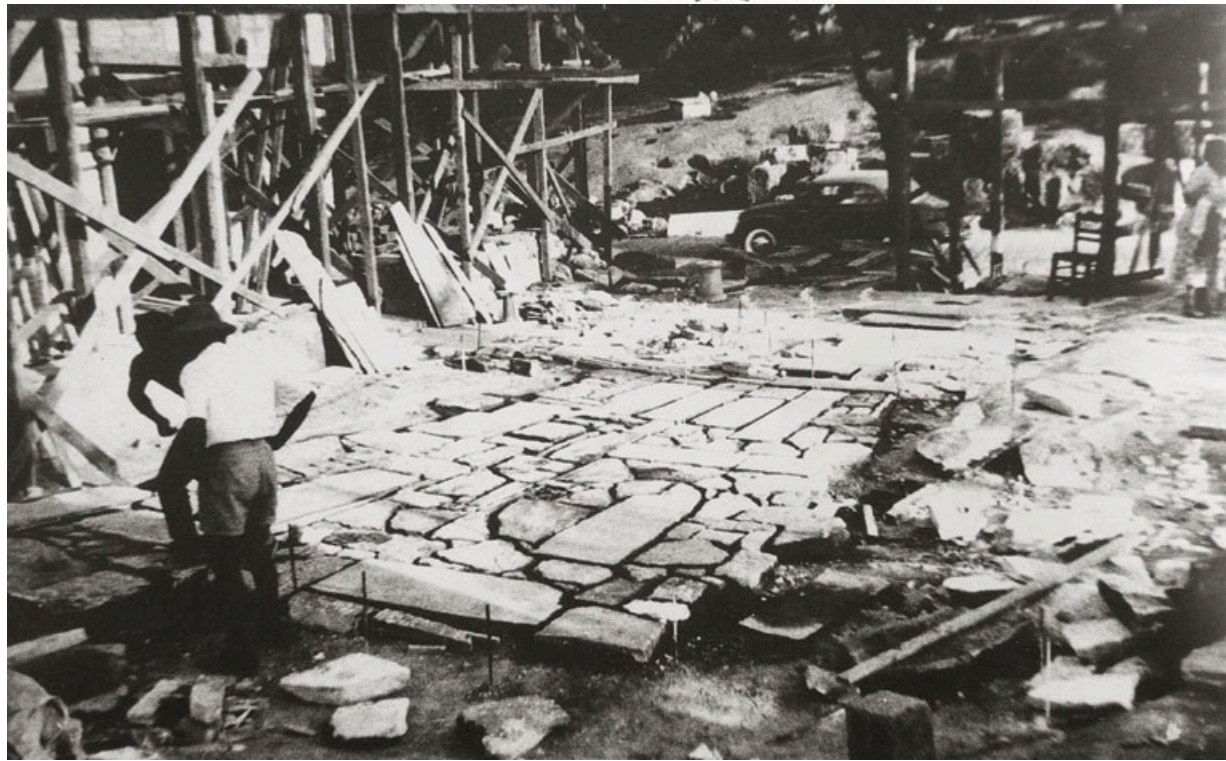
Dimitris Pikionis, the Shepherd settlement in Aixoni, 1950



Dimitris Pikionis, illustration from “Sentimental topography”, *The 3d Eye*, pp. 2-3, 1935
Image from: Dimitris Pikionis, *Texts*, ed. Agni Pikioni, Michalis Paroussis, foreword by Zissimos Lorentzatos, MIET, Athens, 1985



Dimitris Pikionis, “Love”, from *Poems in Prose*, 1918



Dimitris Pikionis during landscaping of the archeological site around Acropolis



Dimitris Pikionis, the Andiron on Philopappou Hill, Landscaping of the archeological area surrounding the Acropolis, 1954-1957

and never finished. The intellectual equivalent of this type of strategic correlation with the past is the mythical or magical thought, that is, the kind of practical constructional process and learning which, according to Lévi-Strauss, is a trait of “primitive” societies.

It is this attitude that invests the work of Pikionis with a contemporary character. The “authentic” is combined with the handmade and the personal. This is evident throughout his work, from which I select indicatively the home-studio of sculptor Frosso Efthymiadi-Menegaki in Ano Patissia (1949). It is a ‘landscape building’ which promotes an impression of Secrecy. Indeed, more than an impression it seems to be a key goal, since there is no habitation without Secrecy. If “nature loves to hide”, as Heraclitus said, this is even more true of habitation. And Pikionis was well aware of this, even when he said that “children learn by hearing the secret voices within them.”

Walter Benjamin was one of the thinkers who persistently explored this special aspect of habitation and the changes brought about by the advent of modernity: the

quintessence of architecture is its ability to hide, to protect from both the elements and prying eyes. “Glass is generally the enemy of secrets”, he wrote in 1933 about Paul Scheerbart’s *Glasarchitektur*; “This has now been achieved by Scheerbart, with his glass, and by the Bauhaus, with its steel. They have created rooms in which it is hard to leave traces”. Now see how Pikionis added “the problem of the form” in 1946: “the great incongruous contrasts between [large] openings and walls divests the building of the half-lights which, as Rodin put it, are the life of a sculptural work”. The half-light is also what can make “‘plaster’ look like ‘human skin’ and turn architecture into painting, into a ‘sculptural work’ in itself”.

In the Menegaki home-studio – and in a more luxurious version in the Potamianos residence (1954) – the ‘half-lights’ of tradition unexpectedly coexist with some modern elements which belie the architect’s accepted idiosyncrasy. Indeed, it appears that Pikionis did not summarily reject changes in house equipment, the new sanitary norms and the reorganisation of home life within the house.

Visitors to the Menegaki residence will note the hidden atmospheres, the architect’s handmade fantasies and the sculptor’s luminous studio; Menegaki used to say that during construction Pikionis would go there at night with a candle, and next day he would change the staircase because he didn’t like its shadows. This is more than an anecdotal testimony. In one of his poems, “Love”, from the 1918 collection *Poems in Prose*, the architect himself says: “With divine light it clothed the oil lamp’s feeble glow. Its presence makes the earthen walls, the humble threshold radiate. A light pierces the darkness of the night, and the winds hum in its glory”.

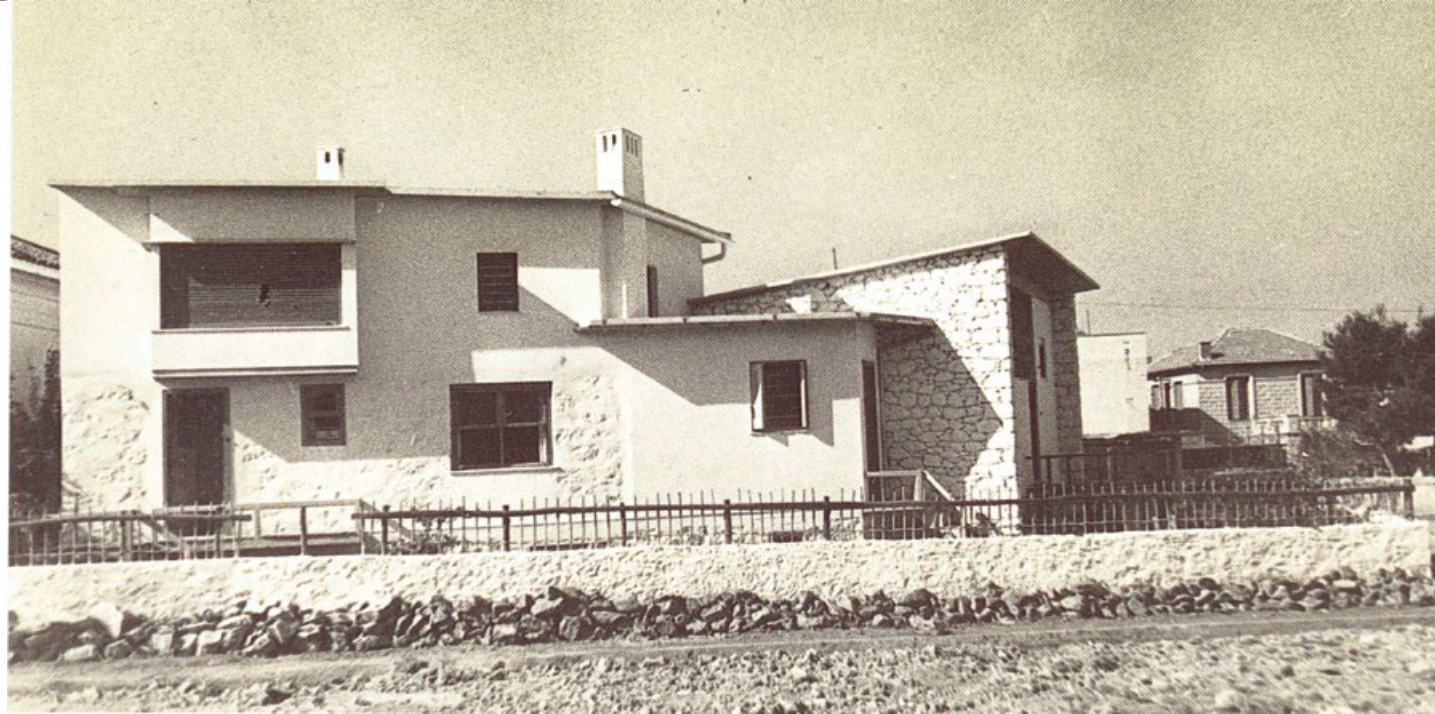
It is worth noting here the affinity of the drawing that adorns and accompanies the poem with a specific kind of illustration which emerged in the early twentieth century and aimed at the ideal of primitivism, idealising man’s ‘pure’ relationship with nature.

Pikionis thus remains firmly focused on the Secret, not on the modern ‘transparency’ but on the incorporeal, the intangible or the pure. In other words, he concentrates on the relation of (rough) matter with light.

His projects and designs bring to mind an architecture which is modern and local in an unorthodox way. The same feeling is triggered by his famous archaeological landscaping projects around the Acropolis and Philopappou, the church of Aghios Dimitrios Loumbardiaris and the tourist pavilion (1951-1957), or the Playground of Filothei (1961-1964). What seems to stand out in all these places is a narrative perception of architecture and the physical experience from following certain routes. As we walk there again today, we realise that what matters most is not the way in which they assimilate the forms of tradition but the slow and quiet life they suggest: a sluggish time of emotions which makes us see differently, legitimising the delicate decorations and the rough details; a serene architecture that politely shares out moments of waiting, a sweet languor and images to discover. The model of slow living in these spaces attempts to exorcise the spectres of the capitalist metropolis and encourage you to savour the pleasure of innerness: a perception of time that approaches the “nostalgia of Adam’s bliss”,



Dimitris Pikionis, Forest village in Pertouli, Pindos, 1953-56, perspective



Dimitris Pikionis, Home-studio of sculptor Frosso Efthymiadi-Menegaki, Athens, 1949, side view

which we could also describe as “the bliss of tardiness —this would be the fitting name for the best part of this feeling of happiness”.

Paolo Virno quotes in *Grammar of the Multitude* an excerpt from the novel *La vita agra* which can help us understand the anthropological paradigm derived from such an attitude: “The peasant moves slowly because the work is so related to the seasons; the peasant cannot sow in July and harvest in February. Workers move quickly, but if they are on the assembly line... One produces something from nothing; the other transforms one thing into another.”⁷¹

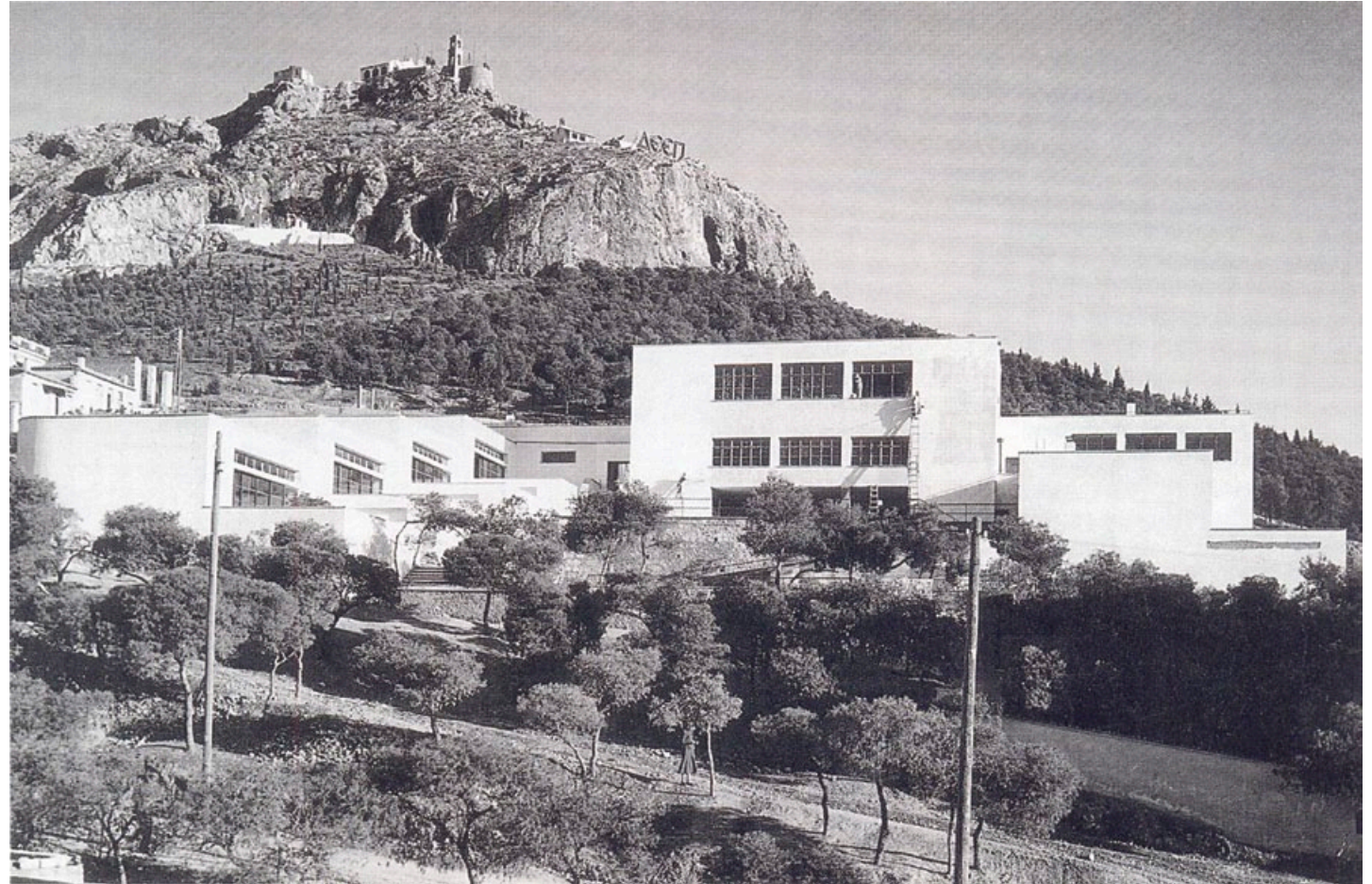
So more than an ostentatious relationship with tradition, this architecture expresses towards tradition a loving and ennobling awkwardness. It is in this spirit that we must look at the architect’s well known obsession with the geophysical surroundings. I shall not repeat here the many things that have been written on this. I shall only stop at one way of putting it: “The architecture of Pikionis comes straight from the earth – as does the architect.” This is the most apt observation made by Zissimos Lorentzatos: the earthly origin of architecture from the “primordial matter of mystery” (C. G. Jung) and its encounter with an almost pagan secretiveness.

The architect as ethnographer

In his *Autobiographical Notes* (1958) Pikionis condenses in two paragraphs much of the subsequent endless debate around his work: “When I became familiar with the Modern Movement, I felt instinctively close to it. If the more perceptive minds among us accepted and embraced the Modern Movement at that time, it was for the following reasons: it promised to become the embodiment of organic truth; it was austere, and fundamentally simple; it was governed by a geometry that conveyed a universal design capable of symbolising our age.

The Lycabettus School was built in 1933, but as soon as it was completed, I found it did not satisfy me. It occurred to me then that the universal spirit had to be coupled with the spirit of nationhood; and this led me to make buildings like the Experimental School in Thessaloniki (1935), the apartment block on Heyden Street, Athens (1938) —for which Mitsakis produced the floor plan— and the house for the sculptor Frosso Efthymiadi (1949).”⁷²

This distinction had a number of side-effects, to the point of drawing a dividing line between a first ‘modern’ period and a second one in ‘the spirit of nationhood’. This may have been Pikionis’s way of acquiescing to the views on ‘Greekness’ so prevalent in the 1930s Generation, to



Dimitris Pikionis, Primary School in Pefkakia, Lycabettus, 1932

which he is known to have made a decisive contribution; however, it also promoted a great misunderstanding which prevents us from discerning the cohesive element that permeates his entire work: the constant preservation of the enigma within the difference.

In the same text Pikionis quotes the phrase that de Chirico had written on one of his portraits: “Et quid amabo nisi quod aenigma est...” The preservation of the enigma plays a binding role in the work of Pikionis and the distinctions between the ‘contemporary’ or ‘universal spirit’ and ‘the spirit of nationhood’ can easily tumble, simply because they coexist and make inroads into each other. Besides, Pikionis himself in “The Spirit of Tradition” spoke about the “deeper affinity of principle between the cubic shapes of Aegean architecture and those of New Art.”

Nevertheless, Pikionis is the best-known but also the most misunderstood of Greek architects. The architect who is widely recognised internationally through exhibitions, tributes and publications is thought of by most as a venerable amateur of tradition who exalted the Greek landscape: in short, an exile from the reality we live in and a sterile rejector of everything new. Historiography and his ‘followers’ have been promoting his work in the wrong way, as a depressing cartoon of pietism. And it is

truly strange how the false traps of schematisation are still reproduced.

On the contrary, Pikionis secured for Greek architecture a kind of modernism which (hoarsely) proclaimed as its motto the phrase: “Let us look like what we really are”. To avoid misunderstandings I must say that if architecture today is postmodern, it is not necessarily so in the manner of Pikionis. The serene “return to Earth” advocated by Pikionis can be better seen today through (rather than against) the contradictions of modernism. We know now that one part of modernism came out of a strange return to myths and a renewed engagement with the ‘spirit of cottage industry’, bricolage, manual work and the traditional crafts and was fed by the rise of nationalisms in the inter-war years. Thus his true contribution is not a sterile rejection of the modern but the anthropological enrichment and its “metaphysical” priorities. This may be the source of the “emotional” (a word he often used) and melancholy strain of his work, which highlights the “loving” function of architecture.

Consider his much-debated references to Cubism, the novel and sometimes weird ‘implants’ of concrete in his shapes or his close relations with a staunchly modernist urban planner like Constantinos Doxiadis. And all this

Dimitris Pikionis,
Settlement of Aixoni
1951-1955, residence
preliminary plan



while he writes about the “absolute unity” of the “nation’s roots”. Characteristically, he is at once “attracted to and repulsed by” German idealism (whose “metaphysical mood”, however, made it “particularly capable of approaching the mystical content of Greek civilisation”) and modern painting, both of which he got to know during his studies.

The best things we have lie at these disturbed watersheds. So it would be no exaggeration to claim that one of the most interesting sides of Pikionis is that he realised the vertigo of these mixtures. I believe we should re-evaluate this aspect more carefully. Indeed, once he described the varied elements in these contradictory zones as alien, unequal and of different minds (*diba-froneonta*) – or what in contemporary terms we might call schizoid. It is an attitude with the traits of a cultural neurosis, in that it contains a series of symbolic expressions of clashes and multiple fusions between desires and defences. In any case, such situations produce meanings, have an active and retroactive character, primary and deferred (*Nachträglichkeit*) fantasies which combine in peculiar ways the before and the after, temporality and anachronism, origin and repetition. In this sense, the elevation of anachronism into a dominant practice questions the established historical views and activates the modern approach of the montage – the constant layering of different times which coexist.

If not from folklore studies, Nikos Politis and Georgios Megas, it was certainly from poets like Gatsos or Elytis and writers like Nikos Gavriil-Pentzikis that we got to know of a folk imaginary which attempted to decode nature, giving a measure of balance even in areas of human activity that lie in the dark or the ‘half-light’. Today we know that at some point this kind of strategy intersected with surrealism, and its impact has yet to be fully evaluated.

Yet if the architecture represented by the Rodakis House (1880)—an archetype for the architecture of Pikionis—had a collective, folk character, in Pikionis it becomes personal. What we perceive in this architecture today is not the frenzy of details but certain atmospheres; certain psychological conditions which have a special way of promoting the symbolic function, the hermetism, the attraction of ‘opposite worlds’, the juxtaposition of materials, and so on. Under such a perspective the writer, the artist (or the architect) is not a ‘producer’, as per the title of one of

Benjamin’s essays, but an ‘ethnographer’, according to the change introduced by Hal Forster.

Architecture and melancholia: the libido of the unattainable

In recent years many of us suffocate under the inflated philology with which certain ‘fans’ and ‘followers’ have burdened the oeuvre of Pikionis. Yet his work itself reminds us today in an almost scandalous way how much we had been ‘fooled’: What was it that we missed? That his architecture laid claim to an area of discretion and to certain melancholy atmospheres (we must insist on the concept of atmosphere) in which Pikionis found a profundity, a scepticism, perhaps a disappointment, a spleen, but above all a kind of surprising self-sufficiency.

How we would define the relation of architecture with the melancholy mood (*Stimmung*), with these “ruins in the sphere of things” (as Walter Benjamin calls them)? Do not expect any linear corroboration of the familiar imagery, such as pictures reminiscent of the morose angel with the discarded scientific instruments at his feet (Albrecht Dürer, *Melancholia I*, 1514), the seated woman who stares at her expressionless face in the mirror (Arnold Böcklin, *Melancholia*, 1900), or the dark and gloomy figures that haunt the uninhabited cityscapes of Giorgio de Chirico, with whom Pikionis had become close friends as students: “we had endless discussions about painting and our future plans under the arcades of the Technical University”.

I think it is more of an atmosphere, a *Stimmung*, which Pikionis shapes as an idealisation of certain myths and as a state of alertness over the vanishing pre-capitalist (rural) tradition in all its versions and aspects: pagan, classical, Byzantine, popular.

Pikionis himself turns to depictions of Ariadne for many of his drawings, while he refers to *Melancholia* in the *Autobiographical Notes* as he links certain of these works with the sculptures of Scopas: “I must note here that my adoration of Greek antiquity had led me to produce a number of figures drawn in charcoal on Ingres paper, which, upon being placed near a flame, became suffused with the delicate tinge of ancient marble. I had also drawn some heads in red chalk in an attempt to capture some of the melancholy quality of Scopas’s work—that ‘powerful breath of inner life, but also pathos’, as the architectural historian Tsoundas once described it. These



Dimitris Pikionis, collage from the
“Documents of Folk Art” series
Image from Agni Pikioni (ed.), *Pikionis
Paintings*, Vol. B, Indiktos, Athens, 1997

drawings depicted venerable, bearded figures, with serene and austere brows furrowed by deep thought. While they had no great value as works of art, they showed the beloved idols which peopled my imagination.”

It is worth going closer to the core of the concept. In 1915 Sigmund Freud, “clarifying certain theoretical precepts of psychoanalysis”, links melancholia to mourning, pointing out that they are both reactions to loss. However, unlike the mourning process where what is lost is replaced by something else, in melancholia the emotional investment may be of a more ideal kind or unknown to conscience, extending into a part of the ego equated with what is lost. Under these terms we can say that in the case of Pikionis we have the faint outline of an architecture which encountered the notions of wear and poverty (*Verarmung*); the “shades” and “half-lights”, not darkness; the inner rather than the visible nature of things.

In this peculiar encounter lies the meaning of his work. In a strange way we can assume today that by processing this loss his architecture gained in terms of live inwardness and mystery (“a breath of inner life and empathy”). The obsession with allegories, the practices of bricolage and the earth themes – that “primordial matter of mystery” we saw earlier – is inevitable: throughout medieval cosmology the connection between earth and melancholia is inseparable.

We do not need much more to suspect that we are before a revival of the romantic spirit, which is in any case a fundamental precept of the modern. This hypothesis is confirmed by the paradoxical ‘folk combinations’, the ‘half-lights’, the neo-Platonic hints, the preference for the handmade and the irregular, the love for the picturesque and the fragment (what we usually describe politely as attention to detail) and the melancholy atmospheres. The difference is that Pikionis (like Cezanne) never resorted to the romantics’ corrosive irony. Rather, he sought to familiarise us with certain practices of tradition at the very moment of their foretold eclipse – as if this would save “the last crumbs on which the Shape survives”, or at least it would preserve their testimony.

We can discern a fetishist echo in this preservation attempt, which necessarily points to the lost Whole, the one

‘we cannot have’. In short we have to do with a ‘work of mourning’ (*Trauerarbeit*), which enables the processing of the disjunctive contrasts between past

and present, and above all the idea of reiteration as a form of “protection” against the shock of the new and as the “potentiality” of what used to be.

Kosmas Politis once said that the Greeks are the most melancholy people on earth after the Jews. If this is true, it is easy to understand why Pikionis is seen as one of the greatest Greek architects of the twentieth century. His kind of attitude would be hard for others to continue, exactly because it touched on some truths that we still do not know how to handle.

Yet if today we set architecture at the core of a broader cultural approach, to a large extent we owe this to Pikionis. What really emerges is an architectural approach based on exchange, interaction and the appropriation of pre-existing forms, practices and tools, as well as an incomplete and contradictory cultural plan which in today’s post-industrial age most people compare with contemporary creation.

It is through this prism that we must examine his relation to tradition. The dilemma in this case is the following: did Pikionis follow faithfully what Derrida has called “nostalgia for origins”, identifying himself with all the entrenched illusions that see tradition as immutable, or did he recognise the changes that render tradition “open, so to speak, to the patterns of the avant-garde movement of New Art”? His attitude in this respect seems to have been equivocal: he often appears to favour the former direction while at the same time leaning towards the latter. It may be this very ambiguity that nurtures and enhances his work. “I coveted the unattainable” Pikionis once wrote, summarising his entire course in the primary motive of libidinal desire.

1. Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, transl. I. Bertoletti, J. Cascaito, A. Casson; <http://www.generation-online.org/c/fcmultitude3.htm>
2. Dimitris Pikionis, *Autobiographical Notes*, English translation from http://www.eikastikon.gr/arxitektoniki/pikionis/en_txt_cv_self.html

RELATIONAL VALUE

Interview with Oliver Laric by Stephanie Bailey

On the repetition of space, proverbial monologues
and landscapes of variation

Stephanie Bailey: How do you view repetition in relation to your work?

Oliver Laric: I am inclined to believe Gertrude Stein, when she said that there is no such thing as repetition. It's a very liberating thought when applied to objects and images. Having seen something once before is different to having seen it twice before.

SB: What kind of ideas or theories feed into the theoretical constitution of your work?

OL: Currently, I'm influenced by the theories of Bakhtin, Borges, Beauvoir, Bhabha and Butler.

SB: How do these theories apply to the composition of your work, especially when thinking about how your pieces relate to the audience, or how you intend the work to exist in the world?

OL: I'm happy if the work can exist for several audiences, as speech takes place between particular people, in a particular situation, for particular reasons. The particularities shape the creation of each utterance and the work is shaped by the audience. The arrow in the diagram should be drawn both ways.

SB: I want to think about this in terms of *The Collection, Lincoln*. This was a result of you being awarded the Contemporary Art Society Annual Award in 2012. The project involved you scanning works from the Lincoln Collection and producing 3D models, which were made available for download, and eventually made available to view online via the New Museum, though this was not part of the original project. Could you talk about the conceptualisation of this project and how it builds on work you have done around the object, the simulation and the repetition of objects in digital space?

OL: The first works I uploaded to my website in 2006 or 2007 were unexpectedly modified by others. This made me realise that the moment of publication can act as a beginning, as opposed to a moment of completion or conclusion. The 3D scans can be viewed and studied, but they also function as starting points. Whenever a blog mentions the project, new iterations appear. And I'm sure that I'm not getting to see everything that is being done with the models. I quite enjoy this aspect of not knowing, as it allows me to project

and imagine things that might never be. Possibilities may be in excess of actualities.

SB: The digital models were made available to download and use, free from copyright restriction. Can you talk about how this approach deals with notions around the creative commons or the digital commons? How do you think this affects the practice of art and culture in an online, or even a networked world?

OL: The Lincoln 3D Scans have no copyright. The scans can become anything, also things I don't want them to be. I've given up custody. The work emptied itself to act as a generative and communicative space of inscription. The more it is known, the more it is inscribed. It presents itself like a palimpsest.

SB: Is there an act of neutralisation going on here, or the reflection of such a process through the repetition of things?

OL: In the project, we've scanned objects that are described as culturally significant, but also office chairs and museum staff members. They are presented in the same manner, without differentiation. The objects lose their texture

and get reduced to polygons. But this neutralisation is temporary, as the data will hopefully be modified and charged with charisma.

SB: You named a 2011 show in Basel *Kopienkritik* after a nineteenth-century school of art history in which Roman sculptures – which were copies of Greek sculptures – were pronounced inferior to Greek originals. You produced an archive of casts of famous sculptures made in polyurethane, arranging the artefacts alongside video projections and painted renditions. The effect, as described by Alex Gartenfeld, who mentions this show in his own interview with you, “was a pantheon of heroic figures and deities with no progenitor”. I wonder if you could talk about how the notion of simulacra fit into this, if at all, and what your thoughts are on the idea of the simulacrum.

OL: Existing sculptures form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new work among them. The simulacrum becomes a site in which a mere reflection can assert itself. It creates change both in the reflection and the source. It's a play within a

Oliver Laric
5, 2013
HD video, colour, sound, 10 mins
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya
Leighton, Berlin





Oliver Laric, *Mansudae Overseas Project*
2013, bronze, 72 x 27 x 25 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya
Leighton, Berlin



Oliver Laric, *Versions*, 2012
HD video, colour, sound, 6 mins
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya
Leighton, Berlin

play, book within a book, monument within a monument, etc. within etc.

SB: Saying that, do you have any thoughts on the notion of Ersatz things?

OL: I tend to favour the Ersatz thing, the secondary, the stand in, the substitute, the by-product, the deuteragonist, the tortoise, secondary literature, metonymy and the B-side.

SB: You also deal very much with the online world as a space of hyper-mediation and hyper-relation. Can you talk about how the notion of relation feeds into your practice?

OL: There's a novel titled *The Weather Fifteen Years Ago* by Wolf Haas, written as an interview between a literary critic and the author. There are two layers: the fictional interview and the fictional novel. Over the course of the interview, all details of the plot are revealed through the subjective interpretations of both critic and author. Borges also preferred to pretend that books already exist, to simply offer a summary or commentary on them. And I enjoy summing up these summaries.

SB: You have described your recent exhibition at Seventeen Gallery, 5, which consists of one video work, as a

theatrical version of *Versions*, a series of videos in which you explore ideas of repetition, since 5 explored ideas in *Versions* but through people rather than objects. Can you elaborate on this?

OL: 5 is essentially *Versions*. There are five characters and each one vocalises 15 utterances. The phrases are idiomatic and they don't belong to anyone. Even if I can associate myself with the dialogue, I'm not sure if I have written it. It's a language without a permanent author. I was looking at the proverb in medieval literature and painting, where it had a prominent position. Cervantes let Sancho Panza speak in proverbial monologues and Pieter Bruegel painted proverbial landscapes. The idiomatic language becomes specific through combination and context.

SB: Which fits when thinking about versions and your interest in repetition...

OL: *Versions* functions as a basis for further development. I'm hoping that it will lead to alternate incarnations such as poems, short stories, novels, musicals and merchandise.

FREUD ON THE ACROPOLIS

The texts selected in this section of the magazine function like a domino game. They invite us to follow the paths charted by the main actors of southern Europe’s cultural history, and go beyond. Together, they form a possible portrait of the South and the artistic, political or philosophical initiatives that shaped it.

by Florence Derieux

Sigmund Freud was eighty years old when he offered his friend Romain Rolland a travel memory in the form of an open letter, on the occasion of the writer’s seventieth birthday on 29 January, 1936. In the letter, Freud describes an uncanny and haunting experience he had more than thirty years earlier, in early September 1904, while visiting Athens with his brother Alexander. Freud was a great admirer of Romain Rolland, a central figure of his generation. They began a correspondence in 1923. In a letter dated 20 January 1936 and addressed to Arnold Zweig in Haifa, he wrote:

So much for Moses and Monotheism. [...] I have been very much besought to write something for Romain Rolland’s 70th birthday. [...] I managed to write a short analysis of ‘a feeling of alienation’ which overcame me on the Acropolis in Athens in 1904, something very intimate. [...] But combine the two proverbs about the rogue who gives more and the beautiful girl who will not give more than they have [sic] and you will see my situation.1

A new French translation of this letter was recently published in Marlène Belilos’ *Freud en ses voyages*, Michel de Maule, Paris, 2010, pp. 83-96. The letter has been reprinted here in full.

A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis

My dear Friend,

I have been urgently pressed to make some written contribution to the celebration of your seventieth birthday and I have made long efforts to find something that might in any way be worthy of you and might give expression to my admiration for your love of the truth, for your courage in your beliefs and for your affection and good will towards humanity; or, again, something that might bear witness to my gratitude to you as a writer who has afforded me so many moments of exaltation and pleasure. But it was in vain. I am ten years older than you and my powers of production are at an end. All that I can find to offer you is the gift of an impoverished creature, who has “seen better days”.

You know that the aim of my scientific work was to throw light upon unusual, abnormal or pathological mani-

festations of the mind - that is to say, to trace them back to the psychical forces operating behind them and to indicate the mechanisms at work. I began by attempting this upon myself and then went on to apply it to other people and finally, by a bold extension, to the human race as a whole. During the last few years, a phenomenon of this sort, which I myself had experienced a generation ago, in 1904, and which I had never understood, has kept on recurring to my mind. I did not at first see why; but at last I determined to analyse the incident - and I now present you with the results of that enquiry. In the process, I shall have, of course, to ask you to give more attention to some events in my private life than they would otherwise deserve.

A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis

Every year, at that time, towards the end of August or the beginning of September, I used to set out with my younger brother on a holiday trip, which would last for some weeks and would take us to Rome or to some other region of Italy or to some part of the Mediterranean seaboard. My brother is ten years younger than I am, so he is the same age as you - a coincidence which has only now occurred to me. In that particular year my brother told me that his business affairs would not allow him to be away for long: a week would be the most that he could manage and we should have to shorten our trip. So we decided to travel by way of Trieste to the island of Corfu and there spend the few days of our holiday. At Trieste he called upon a business acquaintance who lived there, and I went with him. Our host enquired in a friendly way about our plans and, hearing that it was our intention to go to Corfu, advised us strongly against it: “What makes you think of going there at this time of year? It would be too hot for you to do anything. You had far better go to Athens instead. The Lloyd boat sails this afternoon; it will give you three days there to see the town and will pick you up on its return voyage. That would be more agreeable and more worth while.”

As we walked away from this visit, we were both in remarkably depressed spirits. We discussed the plan that had been proposed, agreed that it was quite impracticable and saw nothing but difficulties in the way of carrying it out; we assumed, moreover, that we should not be allowed to land in Greece without passports.

We spent the hours that elapsed before the Lloyd offices opened in wandering about the town in a discontented

and irresolute frame of mind. But when the time came, we went up to the counter and booked our passages for Athens as though it were a matter of course, without bothering in the least about the supposed difficulties and indeed without having discussed with one another the reasons for our decision. Such behaviour, it must be confessed, was most strange. Later on we recognised that we had accepted the suggestion that we should go to Athens instead of Corfu instantly and most readily. But, if so, why had we spent the interval before the offices opened in such a gloomy state and foreseen nothing but obstacles and difficulties?

When, finally, on the afternoon after our arrival, I stood on the Acropolis and cast my eyes around upon the landscape, a surprising thought suddenly entered my mind: “So all this really does exist, just as we learnt at school!” To describe the situation more accurately, the person who gave expression to the remark was divided, far more sharply than was usually noticeable, from another person who took cognizance of the remark; and both were astonished, though not by the same thing. The first behaved as though he were obliged, under the impact of an unequivocal observation, to believe in something the reality of which had hitherto seemed doubtful. If I may make a slight exaggeration, it was as if someone, walking beside Loch Ness, suddenly caught sight of the form of the famous Monster stranded upon the shore and found himself driven to the admission: “So it really does exist - the sea-serpent we’ve never believed in!” The second person, on the other hand, was justifiably astonished, because he had been unaware that the real existence of Athens, the Acropolis, and the landscape around it had ever been objects of doubt. What he had been expecting was rather some expression of delight or admiration.

Now it would be easy to argue that this strange thought that occurred to me on the Acropolis only serves to emphasise the fact that seeing something with one’s own eyes is after all quite a different thing from hearing or reading about it. But it would remain a very strange way of clothing an uninteresting commonplace. Or it would be possible to maintain that it was true that when I was a schoolboy I had thought I was convinced of the historical reality of the city of Athens and its history, but that the occurrence of this idea on the Acropolis had precisely shown that in my unconscious I had not believed in it, and that I was only now acquiring a conviction that “reached down to the unconscious”.

An explanation of this sort sounds very profound, but it is easier to assert than to prove; moreover, it is very much open to attack upon theoretical grounds. No. I believe that the two phenomena, the depression at Trieste and the idea on the Acropolis, were intimately connected. And the first of these is more easily intelligible and may help us towards an explanation of the second.

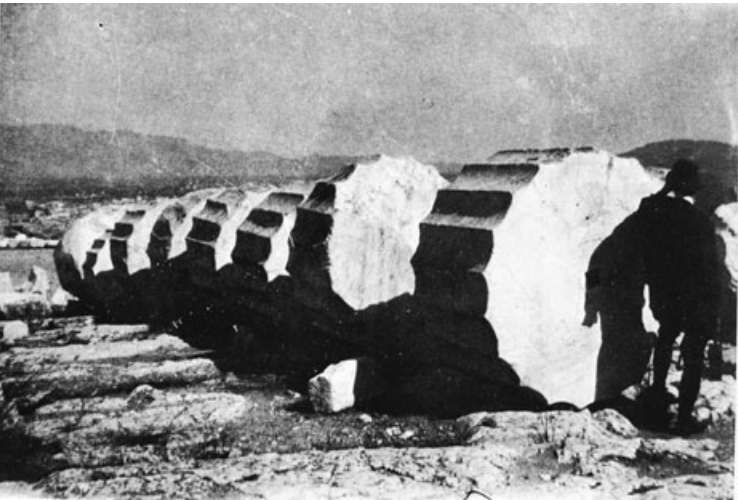
The experience at Trieste was, it will be noticed, also no more than an expression of incredulity: “We’re going to see Athens? Out of the question! - it will be far too difficult!” The accompanying depression corresponded to a regret that it was out of the question: it would have been so lovely. And now we know where we are. It is one of those cases of “too good to be true” that we come across so often. It is an example of the incredulity that arises so often when we are surprised by a piece of good news, when we hear we have won a prize, for instance, or drawn a winner, or when a girl learns

that the man whom she has secretly loved has asked her parents for leave to pay his addresses to her.

When we have established the existence of a phenomenon, the next question is of course as to its cause. Incredulity of this kind is obviously an attempt to repudiate a piece of reality; but there is something strange about it. We should not be in the least astonished if an attempt of this kind were aimed at

a piece of reality that threatened to bring displeasure: the mechanism of our mind is, so to speak, planned to work along just such lines. But why should such incredulity arise in something which, on the contrary, promises to bring a high degree of pleasure? Truly paradoxical behaviour! But I recollect that on a previous occasion I dealt with the similar case of the people who, as I put it, are “wrecked by success”. As a rule people fall ill as a result of frustration, of the non-fulfilment of some vital necessity or desire. But with these people the opposite is the case; they fall ill, or even go entirely to pieces, because an overwhelmingly powerful wish of theirs has been fulfilled. But the contrast between the two situations is not so great as it seems at first.

What happens in the paradoxical case is merely that the place of the external frustration is taken by an internal one. The sufferer does not permit himself happiness: the internal frustration commands him to cling to the external one. But why? Because - so runs the answer in a number of cases - one cannot expect Fate to grant one anything so good. In fact, another instance of “too good to be true”, the expres-



Le Corbusier in front of a broken column
on the western side of the Parthenon, 1911
© Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris

sion of a pessimism of which a large portion seems to find a home in many of us. In another set of cases, just as in those who are wrecked by success, we find a sense of guilt or inferiority, which can be translated: “I’m not worthy of such happiness, I don’t deserve it.” But these two motives are essentially the same, for one is only a projection of the other. For, as has long been known, the Fate which we expect to treat us so badly is a materialisation of our conscience, of the severe super-ego within us, itself a residue of the punitive agency of our childhood.

This, I think, explains our behaviour in Trieste. We could not believe that we were to be given the joy of seeing Athens. The fact that the piece of reality that we were trying to repudiate was to begin with only a possibility determined the character of our immediate reactions. But when we were standing on the Acropolis the possibility had become an actuality, and the same disbelief found a different but far clearer expression. In an undistorted form this should have been: “I could really not have imagined it possible that I should ever be granted the sight of Athens with my own eyes - as is now indubitably the case!” When I recall the passionate desire to travel and see the world by which I was dominated at school and later, and how long it was before that desire began to find its fulfilment, I am not surprised at its after-effect on the Acropolis; I was then 48 years old. I did not ask my younger brother whether he felt anything of the same sort. A certain amount of reserve surrounded the whole episode; and it was this which had already interfered with our exchanging thoughts at Trieste.

If I have rightly guessed the meaning of the thought that came to me on the Acropolis and if it did in fact express my joyful astonishment at finding myself at that spot, the further question now arises why this meaning should have been subjected in the thought itself to such a distorted and distorting disguise.

The essential subject-matter of the thought, to be sure, was retained even in the distortion – that is, incredulity: “By the evidence of my senses I am now standing on the Acropolis, but I cannot believe it.” This incredulity, however, this doubt of a piece of reality, was doubly displaced in its actual expression: first, it was shifted back into the past, and secondly it was transposed from my relation to the Acropolis on to the very existence of the Acropolis. And so something occurred which was equivalent to an assertion that at some time in the past I had doubted the real existence of the Acropolis - which, however, my memory rejected as being incorrect and, indeed, impossible.

The two distortions involve two independent problems. We can attempt to penetrate deeper into the process of transformation. Without for the moment particularising as to how I have arrived at the idea, I will start from the presumption that the original factor must have been a sense of some feeling of the unbelievable and the unreal in the situation at the moment. The situation included myself, the Acropolis and my perception of it. I could not account for

this doubt; I obviously could not attach the doubt to my sensory impressions of the Acropolis. But I remembered that in the past I had had a doubt about something which had to do with this precise locality, and I thus found the means for shifting the doubt into the past. In the process, however, the subject-matter of the doubt was changed. I did not simply recollect that in my early years I had doubted whether I myself would ever see the Acropolis, but I asserted that at that time I had disbelieved in the reality of the Acropolis itself. It is precisely this effect of the displacement that leads me to think that the actual situation on the Acropolis contained an element of doubt of reality. I have certainly not yet succeeded in making the process clear; so I will conclude by saying briefly that the whole psychical situation, which seems so confused and is so difficult to describe, can be satisfactorily cleared up by assuming that at the time I had (or might have had) a momentary feeling: “What I see here is not real.” Such a feeling is known as a “feeling of de-realisation”. I made an attempt to ward that feeling off, and I succeeded, at the cost of making a false pronouncement about the past.

These de-realisations are remarkable phenomena, which are still little understood. They are spoken of as “sensations”, but they are obviously complicated processes, attached to particular mental contents and bound up with decisions made about those contents. They arise very frequently in certain mental diseases, but they are not unknown among normal people, just as hallucinations occasionally occur in the healthy. Nevertheless they are certainly failures in functioning and, like dreams, which, in spite of their regular occurrence in healthy people, serve us as models of psychological disorder, they are abnormal structures. These phenomena are to be observed in two forms: the subject feels either that a piece of reality or that a piece of his own self is strange to him. In the latter case we speak of “depersonalisations”; de-realisations and depersonalisations are intimately connected. There is another set of phenomena which may be regarded as their positive counterparts - what are known as *fausse reconnaissance*, *déjà vu*, *déjà raconté* etc., illusions in which we seek to accept something as belonging to our ego, just as in the de-realizations we are anxious to keep something out of us. A naïvely mystical and unpsychological attempt at explaining the phenomena of “déjà vu” endeavours to find evidence in it of a former existence of our mental self.

Depersonalisation leads us on to the extraordinary condition of “double conscience”, which is more correctly described as “split personality”. But all of this is so obscure and has been so little mastered scientifically that I must refrain from talking about it any more to you.

It will be enough for my purposes if I return to two general characteristics of the phenomena of de-realisation. The first is that they all serve the purpose of defence; they aim at keeping something away from the ego, at disavowing it. Now, new elements, which may give occasion for defensive

measures, approach the ego from two directions - from the real external world and from the internal world of thoughts and impulses that emerge in the ego. It is possible that this alternative coincides with the choice between de-realisations proper and depersonalisations. There are an extraordinarily large number of methods (or mechanisms, as we say) used by our ego in the discharge of its defensive functions. An investigation is at this moment being carried on close at hand which is devoted to the study of these methods of defence: my daughter, the child analyst, is writing a book upon them. The most primitive and thoroughgoing of these methods, “repression”, was the starting point of the whole of our deeper understanding of psychopathology. Between repression and what may be termed the normal method of fending off what is distressing or unbearable, by means of recognising it, considering it, making a judgement upon it and taking appropriate action about it, there lie a whole series of more or less clearly pathological methods of behaviour on the part of the ego. May I stop for a moment to remind you of a marginal case of this kind of defence? You remember the famous lament of the Spanish Moors, “*Ay de mi Alhama*”, which tells how King Boabdil received the news of the fall of his city of Alhama. He feels that this loss means the end of his rule. But he will not “let it be true”, he determines to treat the news as “non arrive”. The verse runs:

Cartas le fueron venidas,
de que Alhama era ganada:
las cartas echó en el fuego,
y al mensajero mataba.

[“Letters had reached him telling that Alhama was taken. He threw the letters in the fire and killed the messenger.”]

It is easy to guess that a further determinant of this behaviour of the king was his need to combat a feeling of powerlessness. By burning the letters and having the messenger killed he was still trying to show his absolute power.

The second general characteristic of the de-realisations - their dependence upon the past, upon the ego's store of memories and upon earlier distressing experiences which have since perhaps fallen victim to repression - is not accepted without dispute. But precisely my own experience on the Acropolis, which actually culminated in a disturbance of memory and a falsification of the past, helps us to demonstrate this connection. It is not true that in my schooldays I ever doubted the real existence of Athens. I only doubted whether I should ever see Athens. It seemed to me beyond the realms of possibility that I should travel so far - that I should “go such a long way”. This was linked up with the limitations and poverty of our conditions of life in my youth. My longing to travel was no doubt also the expression of a wish to escape from that pressure, like the force which drives so many adolescent children to run away

from home. I had long seen clearly that a great part of the pleasure of travel lies in the fulfilment of these early wishes - that it is rooted, that is, in dissatisfaction with home and family. When first one catches sight of the sea, crosses the ocean and experiences as realities cities and lands which for so long had been distant, unattainable things of desire - one feels oneself like a hero who has performed deeds of improbable greatness.

I might that day on the Acropolis have said to my brother: “Do you still remember how, when we were young, we used day after day to walk along the same streets on our way to school, and how every Sunday we used to go to the Prater or on some excursion we knew so well? And now, here we are in Athens, and standing on the Acropolis! We really have gone a long way!” So too, if I may compare such a small event with a greater one, Napoleon, during his coronation as Emperor in Notre Dame, turned to one of his brothers - it must no doubt have been the eldest one, Joseph - and remarked: “What would *Monsieur notre Père* have said to this, if he could have been here today?”

But here we come upon the solution of the little problem of why it was that already at Trieste we interfered with our enjoyment of the voyage to Athens. It must be that a sense of guilt was attached to the satisfaction in having gone such a long way: there was something about it that was wrong, that from earliest times had been forbidden. It was something to do with a child's criticism of his father, with the undervaluation which took the place of the overvaluation of earlier childhood. It seems as though the essence of success was to have got further than one's father, and as though to excel one's father was still something forbidden.

As an addition to this generally valid motive there was a special factor present in our particular case. The very theme of Athens and the Acropolis in itself contained evidence of the son's superiority. Our father had been in business, he had had no secondary education, and Athens could not have meant much to him. Thus what interfered with our enjoyment of the journey to Athens was a feeling filial piety. And now you will no longer wonder that the recollection of this incident on the Acropolis should have troubled me so often since I myself have grown old and stand in need of forbearance and can travel no more.

I am ever sincerely yours,

January 1936

1. Sigmund Freud, Arnold Zweig, *The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Arnold Zweig*, Harcourt Brace & World, New York, 1970, p. 119.

fashion-ism

MANIFESTE SILENCIEUX

Photographs by Nikos Papadopoulos. Fashion by Nicholas Georgiou



ABOVE: Silk crepe dress, PRADA. Leather shoes, SALVATORE FERRAGAMO
RIGHT PAGE: Bird cage, stylist's own

Photographs by Nikos Papadopoulos. Fashion by Nicholas Georgiou

Make up: Athina Karakitsou

Hair: Danielle Babek

Models: Anastasia Peraki@Agencia, Yulia@D'Models

Photographer's assistant: Thodoris Kaimenakis

Stylist's assistants: Elena Papastavrou, Elena Psalti

Photographed on location at the Foundation of the Hellenic World on the set of Leon Tolstoi's *What Men Live By*

Set Designer: Caterina-Christina Manolakou

Light Designer: Sofia Alexiadou





fashion-ism



ABOVE: Leather gloves and sequinned brooches, PRADA
Vintage smoking jacket, BURBERRY PRORSUM. Vintage sequinned dress, PRADA
Vintage jewellery, all at SECOND HAND LUX

LEFT PAGE: Silk crepe dress, BALENCIAGA by Alexander Wang. Tape measure harness, stylist's own

fashion-ism



ABOVE: Silk jersey cape, vintage bra and mask, stylist's own. Vintage brooches LANVIN at SECOND HAND LUX. Patent leather sandals with plexiglass heel, CHRISTIAN DIOR by Raf Simons

RIGHT PAGE: Python trenchcoat, LANVIN by Albert Elbaz. Patent leather sandals with plexiglass heel, CHRISTIAN DIOR by Raf Simons





ABOVE: Wool mask from the American Navy, stylist's own. Crystal earrings
LANVIN by Albert Elbaz



RIGHT PAGE: Silk crepe dress, CHRISTIAN DIOR by Raf Simons

fashion-ism



ABOVE: Tulle veil and lace bra, stylist's own. Vintage necklace, LANVIN by Albert Elbaz at SECOND HAND LUX. Tights, WOLFORD

RIGHT PAGE: Bra, wool skirt with lace appliqué and tulle gloves, stylist's own. Necklace, LANVIN by Albert Elbaz. Tights, WOLFORD. Shoes, CHRISTIAN DIOR by Raf Simons



3rd Fotoptica Videobrasil Festival, 1985
Credits: Videobrasil



[são paulo]
**Videobrasil: Connecting
Cities – Collecting
Experiences**
**A Different Story of Video
from the South**
by Agustin Pérez Rubio

Having launched its 18th edition in November 2013, Videobrasil is an event that forms part of a much larger story surrounding the emergence of both video art and the Global South



It is clear to everybody that speaking of video and speaking of the South is to speak of alterity. Both terms were constructed as a sort of response to Art (with a capital letter) such as painting, sculpture or drawing or, at a geographic level, in response to the story that the avant-garde was not native to the South but rather imported. At least Derrida and postcolonial studies, as well as an increase in conceptual art and political views within art, have come to relieve this idea that the South is somehow more 'present'. This, to an extent, is a sedition from the North, in a similar manner to Torres-García who placed the map of Latin America upside down. Besides showing that video is no longer a niche practice, referred to almost pejoratively as 'electronic art', Videobrasil has been at the epicentre of artistic practice since its founding almost half a century ago in the late 1960s.

In all these years of video history, or better, of video stories (there are so many contexts, situations, uses and opinions in favour of an artistic discipline such as video), there has been a growing effort to increase the understanding of this artistic tool and the forms it can take. In this History (with capital letters) it is necessary to include everything the South has contributed to it, as there were a large number of American artists in the 1960s who were in constant discussion with their colleagues in Latin America, in particular in Argentina, Brazil and Chile. Moreover, there was a visible exchange of backgrounds and experiences by Latin American artists who lived in the United States in the late 1970s. This took the form of visits and festivals in the early 1970s in Latin American cities, leading to the circulation of ideas.

In Brazil, one exhibition staged in 1973 is particularly relevant. It was curated by Aracy Amaral and named *Expoprojection 1973 (Expoprojeção '73)*. That same year the first video screening was staged in Brazil at the Niterói Contemporary Art Museum (Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói MAC) when director Walter Zanini exhibited a work by Fred Forest named *Sociological Walk in Brooklyn*. Through *Expoprojeção '73*, relationships were established between Southern Cone artists in this medium. The exhibition was recently revised by the same curator and titled *Expoprojection 1973-2013*; it was held at Sesc Pinheiros, São Paulo.

During the 1980s, people started to become passionate about video art practice, investigating whether it really was a political tool to fight the artistic economic and gallery system itself? This contextual approach requires us to cover the birth of numerous events, in which video was an important subject of investigation, disclosure and study. There are a number of examples but none are as important or enduring as Videobrasil, which in the course of thirty years has become much more than a video festival let alone a Brazilian and Southern festival, as it once was. These two labels are precisely what Videobrasil, by being faithful to itself and to its will, has overcome, so as to become not only a video but an art festival: an obligatory stop every two years in São Paulo. It provides an outlook on the past and a vision of the future. It has the largest and most important video collection in Brazil and one of the most interesting in the South, owing to its uniqueness. And the characteristics of the collection harbour the history of the event itself and its circumstances.

flying rumours

VISUAL ARTS

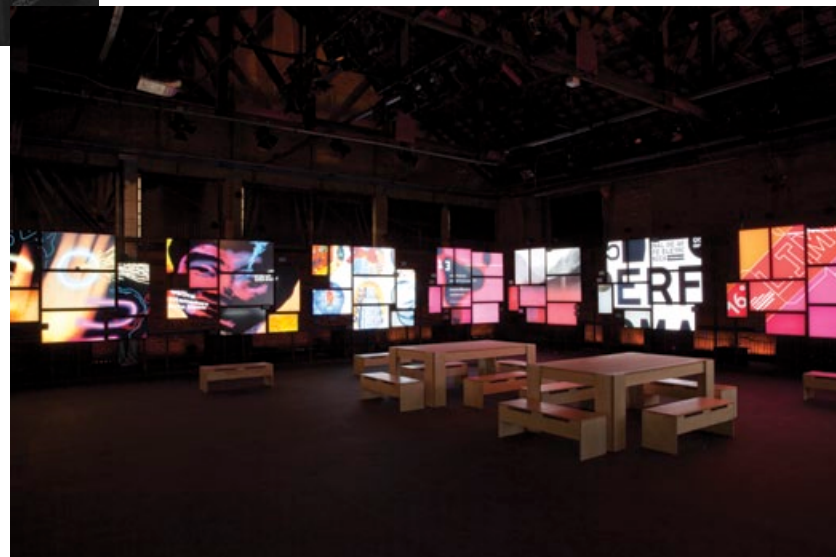


Exhibition view
1st Videobrasil
Festival, 1983
Credits: Videobrasil

30 Years, 18th Contemporary Art
Festival Sesc Videobrasil, 2013
Photo by Everton Ballardin



Ali Cherri
Pipe Dreams
2012
video
installation



Videobrasil has also achieved success because it has gone beyond being a Southern festival to become a festival of multiple Souths, or a 'geopolitical South', as its general director and curator Solange Farkas prefers to name it. Farkas has been this institution's driving force since its inception and who, by virtue of her tenacity and endurance, has succeeded in placing São Paulo in the midst of this new axis of the arts, and whose clearness of mind in visualising the future enabled her to see the present with which we are concerned. The programme has vigour, interest and quality, a striking list of artists, including prominent contemporary players, lesser-known emerging talents, and artists from a certain period that have become footprints of a specific and contextual reality.

Videobrasil was created in the early 1980s with a very different approach, as described by Videobrasil curator Eduardo de Jesús, who is well versed in the festival's history, which has several stages and periods. Firstly, in the 1980s, it was an annual festival, at which time Brazil was

undergoing a political opening, and during which video art had a love/hate relationship with television. In this regard, documentaries, reports, interviews and musical videos were part of the programme, which was more centred in countrywide affairs; the dictatorial government censored some works during this time.

Later, in the 1990s, Videobrasil became more international by connecting the Southern Cone with other realities not only in South America; multiple formats and the inclusion of parallel exhibitions further enriched what was now a biennial event. This is when *Southern Panoramas* began, first catering to a political reality in the Latin American context and gradually evidencing this Southern geopolitical view by embracing other Souths, from Africa to Australia, from the Middle East to China and South-east Asia. This political axis was maintained and is what increased and broadened the visions of the South we are now currently aware of, by means of the festival and its participants.

flying rumours

VISUAL ARTS



Gary Hill, *Remembering Paralinguay*, 2000
video installation, Videobrasil International Electronic Art Festival

The first decade of the twenty-first century led to Videobrasil's inclusion in the art world's broad international spectrum, in the same manner in which the medium of video found a place in museums, collections, galleries, and with artists who previously had not employed this tool but had progressively become participants in these formats. In the same manner, the event broadened its vision and increased its strands with the inclusion of more curated shows, including artists from outside the video world as well. Moreover, the relation of video practice to other disciplines such as performance became clear and very much present during the festival's tenth edition. It was also during this decade that the Southern platform became the event's essential axis.

In the last two editions of Videobrasil, in 2011 and 2013, the festival has been ever more intentional in its efforts to broaden its scope, not only in terms of video but also in terms of other practices – from painting and installation to film and sculpture. However, the works that are most effective in the exhibition are those that continue to essentially relate to video or to film, although this relation is formalised in other techniques or disciplines.

Following this summary of the history of Videobrasil, we can see that this is not an isolated event. Rather, it is an invitation to artists from Peru to Shanghai, Melbourne to Lagos, Buenos Aires to Delhi, Beirut to Durban, and Recife to Tel Aviv, to join together with special guests for public programmes, conferences, seminars, conversations and performances. This is what makes this event outstanding.

Each and every one of these cities and their contexts remain connected by means of experiences and interchanges among participants, which unleashes a powerful creative energy and a political and social commitment to the positioning of video practice. Moreover, in these last editions, there has been a renewed emphasis on artist residencies and the promotion of exchanges and experiences between institutions in cities that range from La Paz to Bolivia, Nassau to the Bahamas, Lagos to London. This has broadened the idea of connecting centres, cities and artists in different contexts.

All these experiences, visions, contexts, policies and situations have been gathered, saved, documented and collected. Videobrasil currently has on file 3,000 documents, including interviews, documentaries, television programs, and so on, that qualify it as a historian of video and of its own advent in the artistic world, not only in Brazil, but in a South that is connected by the experience of a biannual event. Yet, it also goes beyond this biannual event. Exhibitions are held itinerantly both inside and outside the country. Starting this year, the festival will also work with its collection during the years the festival is not held, just as Videobrasil's website remains active in how it uses the collection through its online Channel VB, with a complete series of publications and activities available.

In its thirty-year history, the story Videobrasil tells us is that of a city, São Paulo, which has become an important artistic centre thanks to its artists, institutions, galleries, collections and the São Paulo Biennial, not to mention the connections made, in large part, by Videobrasil.

[paris]
The Snake and the Snail
by Barbara Sirieix

Billed as two of the best exhibitions of the year, the simultaneous exhibitions by Philippe Parreno at the Palais de Tokyo and Pierre Huyghe at the Centre Pompidou constituted an art world moment that has kept everyone talking

The simultaneous shows by Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe at the Palais de Tokyo and the Centre Pompidou have generated a lot of discussion; I hadn't seen such excitement in Paris for a long time. Generally, there was a lot of speculation around the synchronicity, whether it was chance or strategy; many relished the idea of a fierce duel. This anecdote is not relevant. Nevertheless, this conjunction enables us to observe works correlated at one point in time.

Associations necessarily come to mind, as Nicolas Bourriaud defined the concept of the relational aesthetics using Parreno and Huyghe as references (among other artists Parreno collaborated with Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Carsten Holler, Liam Gillick, Rikrit Tiravanija). The artwork was “a soil for collaboration”.¹ This was particularly the case for Parreno, as he was always seeking discussion in exhibition-making to the extent that it was difficult for him to consider a solo exhibition at all.² Things have changed: he seems quite comfortable in the position of the ‘conductor’ at the Palais de Tokyo. AnnLee, the manga character Parreno and Huyghe bought together, is present in both exhibitions as a reminder, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 1999-2002. But where did the animals go?

In Pierre Huyghe's exhibition, like the sea creature inhabiting the *Sleeping Muse* of Brancusi (*Zoodrama 4*, 2011), the viewer experiences the space as a foldable material, with different expansions inwards and outwards like a house of leaves. A multitude of layers are encompassed: the walls have been reused from the former exhibition of Mike Kelley, and *Timekeeper*, 1999, reveals the scratched convolutions of different coats of paint used in former exhibitions. Some structures are awkwardly set or overlapping: the *Blanche Neige Lucie*, 1997, screen is placed at the edge of the space, like in a service corridor; a corner of the black ice rink, *L'expédition scintillante, Acte: Untitled (Black Ice Stage)*, 2002, disappears behind a wall. The works contaminate each other and let parasites develop. The sudden barking of the pink-legged dog from *Untitled*, 2012, overlaps with the chorus of the Kate Bush song coming from the film *The Host and the Cloud*, 2010. Various elements are dovetailed organically and shape the exhibition into an ecosystem.

Huyghe's project manages to be understood long after an ephemeral visit. After the exhibition was finished, I longed for it like a familiar place. It had grown roots like a garden or taken shelter like a gastropod in my memory. This impression is related to the inherent serendipity of the activation of the works. As it will be different for each viewer depending



on the hour, the day of the week or even the weather, there is always something more to expect. Tristan Garcia, in his essay on the exhibition, speaks about the contemporary necessity to be “more” present than the present as a quest to “intensify time”.³ Like living elements in an ecosystem, the works have the randomness of nature in the present. The viewer has to be on the lookout.

Anywhere Anywhere, Out of the World at the Palais de Tokyo is titanic by comparison. It unfolds linearly through the numerous plateaus of the 22,000 m² building, in the shape of a path snaking through junctions and revolutions punctuated by events of various intensities. This form defines the main difference in the typology of exhibition. Parreno creates a complex narrative using the properties of the architecture – massive empty spaces with bare walls (visible ligaments and cement skin). The atmosphere is spooky: neon lights blink intermittently (*56 Flickering Lights; Marquees*, 2013), pianos play (*Petrouchka*, 2013), walls move by themselves (*Bibliothèque clandestine* with Dominique Gonzalez Foerster) and cartels appear and disappear (*Flickering Labels*, 2013). The absence of the human figure signifies the presence of the machine in relation to language. The hand of an automat writes: “*What Do You Believe, Your Eyes or My Words?*” as a robot counterfeits Marilyn Monroe's writing (*Marilyn*, 2013). Then, a child appears like a ghost to tell us about the existential thoughts of AnnLee. The other children from *No More Reality*, 1995, and Zinedine Zidane (from *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*, 2006, with Doulas Gordon) are the spectral shapes of memories.

The script is very important. In this progressive construction of a drama, the visitor is constantly reinforced in his position as the viewer. The exhibition is contingent on the polarity



ABOVE: Exhibition view, Philippe Parreno, *Anywhere, Anywhere, Out Of The World*, Palais de Tokyo, 2013
Philippe Parreno, *TV Channel*, 2013 (detail). Courtesy of Pilar Corrias Gallery

On screen: *No More Reality, La manifestation*, 1991. Courtesy of Air de Paris. Photo by Aurélien Mole
LEFT PAGE: Pierre Huyghe installation view at Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2013, Photo by Marina Fokidis

between the audience and the staged set. It also refers to the apparatus of cinema with a succession of sequences with narrative disruptions, but the viewer can feel trapped in the cavern of simulacra. Parreno's exhibition leaves a narrative memory whereas Huyghe's memory is spatial.

Also the narrativity of *Anywhere Anywhere, Out of the World*, made me wonder about the backstory, which brings us to something very idiosyncratic. *Pierre Huyghe* puzzles with the detachment of the subjectivity. The human's absence allows the exhibition to become an organism in itself. I stand at the periphery with all the other viewers I don't know; the ones I talked with or the ones who came with me. Synchronicity, rhythm, minute movements shape a shared experience within the community of the audience.

If we consider that all exhibitions are the making of a public, the imagination of a world⁴, Huyghe manages to reconsider the mode of address to the public in contrast to Parreno, despite the quality of the story. He maintains a certain traditional idea of the spectacle based on drama: there is not enough imagination focused on how the public will interact with the exhibition, despite the ‘interactive’ displays. The ecosystem of Huyghe leaves the experience to chance and escapes, in a way, a commodification of time. In this sense, it extends on his early work on institutional critique around the allowance of free time (*L'Association des temps libérés*, 1995).

Even so, I have the feeling that this unanimous judgment that ‘Pierre Huyghe beat Philippe Parreno’ is connected to the present attraction towards speculative realism, which also influenced Huyghe. The subtle macabre procession at the Palais de Tokyo reminds me of the character of Orlando reading Sir Thomas Browne: Parreno's solipsistic approach is also an attempt to address mortality in the language of a Modern. Huyghe's vitalist approach, as Tristan Garcia concludes in his text for the exhibition, is more in connection with the contemporary spirit: “This nebulous contemporary spirit inhabits the work of Pierre Huyghe (...), it is asking: who am I really? the echo of his own voice answers: neutralised you are nothing ; you're just intensity.”⁵

1. Maria Lind, “Complications; On Collaboration, Agency and Contemporary Art,” *Public* 39, New Communities, Spring 2009.

2. Interview with Jean-Christophe Royoux in *Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parreno*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1998.

3. Tristan Garcia, *Qu'est-ce qu'être intense? Pierre Huyghe*, dir. Emma Lavigne, Centre Pompidou, 25 September, 2013 – 6 January, 2014, Editions Centre Pompidou, 2013.

4. Simon Sheikh, *Constitutive effects: the techniques of the curator in Curating Subjects*, ed. Paul O'Neill, Open Editions, 2007.

5. Tristan Garcia, 2013-2014.

[athens]
4th Athens Biennale, AGORA
From Shares to Sharing
by Despina Zeykili

Against the odds, the Athens Biennale challenged conventional modes of curatorial practice by occupying the Old Athens Stock Exchange and putting collective action into practice

Produced with meagre means in a country badly hit by a multifaceted crisis during a highly controversial time for Europe, the 4th Athens Biennale could not turn its back on the 'here and now'. It was conceived from the beginning as an experiment that would reflect on the way a biennial can operate under the current socio-economic circumstances. If the first two Athens biennials attempted to create a context for the local art scene to communicate with what was happening abroad, this time it was more important to find ways to take action while everything around collapses than to take part in the global rally of biennials. Instead of a sophisticated exhibition, emphasising a curator's oeuvre (and aura), with many layers of thought and large commissions, AGORA opted for a two-month collective experiment, realised in terms of production and curation by more than forty professionals from several fields (artists, curators, theorists, practitioners in the creative industries and so on).

With the question 'Now what?' as its central motto, the biennial transformed the empty and unused building of the former Athens Stock Exchange, a historic architectural gem that had played an important role in local pre-crisis history. It became a non-stop workshop, with daily events (lectures, performances, screenings and other happenings) covering a wide range of fields (art, economy, politics, activism, ecology and so on). These events attempted to explore creative alternatives to a state of bankruptcy. The emphasis on the live programme was manifested by the decision to leave the huge high-ceiling main hall with the stained glass decoration (where the stock trading took part) quasi-empty so that the space could instead host daily events and the café. The exhibition itself was staged in the rundown rooms of the upper floors, and the nearby art centre, CAMP (Contemporary Art Meeting Point).

The space hosted a number of notable events. Economic Conference, organised by David Adler, hosted important global speakers like Heiner Flassbeck, Director of the Division on Globalisation and Development Strategies of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, who blamed Germany for a large part of the current European crisis. The Sunday 'Kyklos' (Circle) programme gave a platform to different collectives and groups who took the microphone to present their practices. From the weekly 'Axia' meetings (an interdisciplinary workshop on the idea of value) to the lively biennale café, which was a collaboration between Nomadic Kitchen (a local cooking collective) and *Schedia*





magazine (sold in the streets by homeless and unemployed) – AGORA was by no means a static exhibition. It was a place of exchange, interaction and critique.

In fact, the exhibition itself, consisting of works by around sixty artists of different ages and countries, was one of the weakest aspects of the biennial; it looked like an accompanying event to the live programme. The use of the (far from neutral) space as an important part of the whole scenography was reminiscent of *Monodrome*, the previous biennial. But this time the lack of a strong narrative resulted in an exhibition which was not much more than the sum of its parts. As far as the (many) Greek artists are concerned, the younger generation is missing to a large extent, although their concerns (as were revealed in the recent group show *Afresb* in the National Museum of Contemporary Art, EMST) are very much related to the questions of this year's biennial.

The building of the former Stock Exchange inspired – to no surprise – some of the works by both its architectural and symbolic presence. Theo Prodromidis used it as one of the three locations (along with the new 'postmodern' Stock Market and the central office of the Greek Communist Party) for his well orchestrated video study on how to re-read Bertolt Brecht in the current economic climate, *Towards the Production of Dialogues on the Market of Bronze and Other Precious Materials*, 2013. Deb Sokolow approached it as one of the several stops of her 'treasure hunt' drawings and collages, resulting in an idiosyncratic cartography of contemporary Athens in *Several Mysteries*, 2013. The actual price board with the prices of one of the last sessions of the old Stock Exchange, reinstalled in the AGORA main hall, was a work by George Harvalias, *June 26, 2007, The Price Board of the Athens Stock Exchange*, 2007-2009. It was under

this board that Konstantinos Mihos performed a moving lecture performance under the 'frozen' prices of the 2007 deals depicting, among other things, the company which resulted in his father's economic collapse after the stock market 'bubble', *Explaining the Crisis to a Young Dancer*, 2013.

The deconstruction of the hegemonic economic logos, imposed by the neoliberal policies as one more tool of manipulation, was the subject of different works – from David Harvey's witty film *Crises of Capitalism*, 2010 (one of the films of the exhibition *Liquid Assets* in Graz which were also shown in the biennale), to Amund Sjølie Sveen's emotional lecture performance *Economic Theory for Dummies*, 2013. Two less direct, but equally powerful, points for introspection were offered by the notebook films of Steve Reinke, *The Hundred Videos: Children's Video Collective*, 1997 and Constantinos Hadzinikolaou, *Peacock*, 2003/2013. Reinke appropriated an amateur vintage home movie of kids collaborating while playing, transforming it through his commentary into an exploration of how childhood might propose other ways to deal with reality. Hadzinikolaou's Super 8 film following the twirling of a peacock in a decadent backyard, presented in a rundown room, turned a banal image into a poetic comment on vanity and illusion.

At a time when there is much talk about the concept of active citizenship and the references to the 1970s junta and the years after are commonplace in Greece, unfortunately the works of the Greek artists of the 1970s were not that well represented in the exhibition. Aspa Stasinopoulou's appropriation of loaded images and slogans in *Diavaste*, 1977, and *Untitled*, 1978, were among the most sui generis examples of political art of that time, and seemed out of concept. Although one could see in them direct relations to the current political situation, in the specific presentation of the biennale



they functioned more as historical references without being recontextualised. Similarly, the archival material from Leda Papaconstantinou and the Spetses Players from the same time was presented like nostalgic 'curios' instead of functioning as an example of an active intervention by art in a local community.

To use recent Greek history – a terra incognita for many local artists – as a way to rethink the present provided the starting points for two interesting new works: Dimitris Antoniou's humorous and thoughtful lecture performance *Despina: Photographic Snapshots*, 2013, based on his anthropological research and interview with the former dictator's wife, and Yota Ioannidou's *The Storyteller, the Knife and the 'Machine'*, (2013), a re-enactment of a series of well-picked stories from the unknown history of Greek anarchism in a central Athens square, where a riot against king Othon by Greek and Italian libertarians took place in 1862.

In a city where contemporary art remains a lonely business, cut off from other art practices and academic discourses, this coexistence of various agendas in AGORA along with the exposure to different audiences, had a rejuvenating effect by activating both a forgotten space in the centre of the city (and in the centre of recent history) and, at the same time, a space of memory on the verge of the personal and the collective. Moreover, the idea of a do-it-yourself, collective think tank instead of the usual curatorial, apart from temporarily satisfying the need for interdisciplinary art spaces in Athens, could be seen as a proposal for a new kind of biennial, now that the shrinking of funding and the demand for art to compete with sociopolitical reality is something that most European art institutions cannot ignore. Or at least it was a call to rethink

the idea of the biennial as something more than a mere showcase for artists and curators, in an era that the practice of recycling the same star curators does not make sense any more, as the rising number and budgets of Asian biennials set new standards and the re-evaluation of the dated concept of the grand show seems more relevant than ever before.

As far as we are concerned, the panegyric closing of AGORA, with dancing and eating, recalled a traditional Greek feast, and left us with lots of food for thought: from the deficiencies of the local art scene to possible strategies for survival. Outside, reality was waiting. Following a rather hot November, it was only during the last days of the biennale that you could feel the cold in the large non-heated space of the former Stock Exchange. One more winter without central heating for the majority of the Greek homes was about to start.

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Konstantinos Mihos
Explaining the Crisis to a Young Dancer, 2013
lecture/performance

LEFT PAGE:
Amund Sjølie Sveen
Economic Theory for Dummies, 2013
Courtesy of the artist

ABOVE:
Steve Reinke
The Hundred Videos: Children's Video Collective, 1997
colour, duration 3'20''
Courtesy of the artist

[hydra]
Meanwhile in Hydra
by Marina Fokidis

....I live on a hill and life has been going on here exactly the same for hundreds of years. All through the day you hear the calls of the street vendors and they are really rather musical... I get up around 7 generally and work till about noon. Early morning is coolest and therefore best, but I love the heat anyhow, especially when the Aegean Sea is 10 minutes from my door.

(Excerpt from a letter Leonard Cohen wrote to his mother)



Michael Landy



Mark Grotjahn, Matt Johnson, Frank Benson,
Pauline Karpidas, 2011



Group photograph, 2009

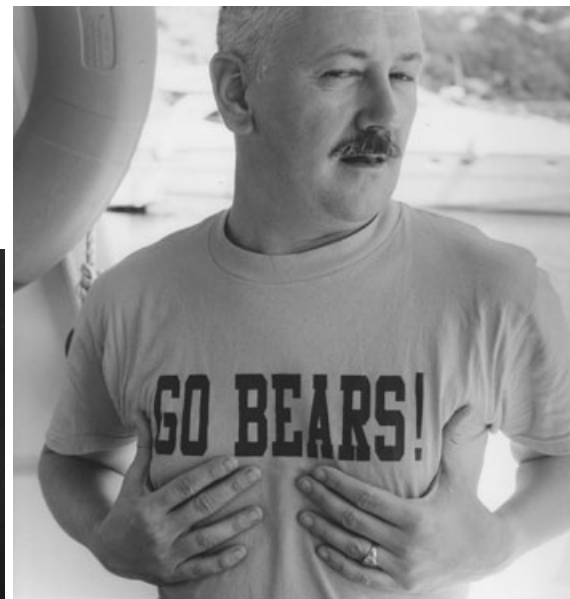
ALL PHOTOS IN THIS SPREAD
by Johnnie Shand Kydd

On 27 September, 1960, Leonard Cohen bought a house in Hydra for \$1500, using a bequest from his recently deceased grandmother. His commitment to a world that was as mysterious as it was unusual, was a big deal; yet, as Cohen later said, it was the smartest decision he ever made.

Half a century after Cohen described the island of Hydra to his mother, the island is almost the same, seemingly untouched. There are many more people coming from all over the world, of course, and the houses now cost a lot



FROM LEFT TO
RIGHT:
Cerith Wyn Evans,
Nate Lowman,
Rachel Feinstein



more, even too much (Hydra houses have become a bit of a must-have accessory for the international elite). Yet there is a prevailing mood of quietness and intimacy that makes the island an ideal sanctuary for those who are looking for a place to house their creative melancholia. Be it its particular architecture of high walls around the houses, or the absence of cars or other motorised vehicles which are forbidden on the island, or the primitive natural surroundings, or even the eclectic style of its permanent tourist-residents, Hydra is still a place of rare solitude.

Leonard found there his peace, his “sitting-down time”, as he called it. He was quickly accepted by the local community and was daily visited by the garbage man and his donkey, among others. Friends of his, starting with Allen

Ginsberg, came to visit him on the island. They discovered the essence of Greek life – which balances work and leisure – to be very productive for creative achievement. They spread the word about this hidden paradise. Ginsberg was followed by Greek and international beatniks, the legendary Pete Koutroubousis among them. Then Brice Marden and his family started visiting around 1971, before buying their own house and studios and the rest is history.

“Having this house makes cities less frightening,” Cohen used to say, and indeed the cosmopolitan Hydra of our day seems like the ideal location for a paradoxical ‘collective isolation’ not only for those (artists) that like to create – endlessly – while taking short breaks from ‘their eternal self damnation’ for swimming and chatting, but also for those who love them (collectors, curators, art lovers).

Everyone might know everyone on the island. Everyone can walk to each other’s houses, at all times; even so, the



conversations on the island are far from parochial. This is what makes Hydra both lovable and familiar as well as a private oasis at the same time.

Contrary to assumptions, the island did not really attract the international art world because of important Greek artists like Nikos Hadjikyriakos-Ghika who used to live there a century or so ago. It might be true that Henry Miller, who came as guest to Ghika in 1939, wrote about Hydra in his book *The Colossus of Maroussi*, but it was not what made Hydra an international art scene destination either.

Hydra Workshop 1996

What really put Hydra on the international contemporary art map was the foundation of the Hydra Workshop and its summer events. The London-based collector Pauline Karpidas, who has lived in Greece for over thirty-five years, founded this space sixteen years ago, as a way for her to continue the legacy of her late husband Constantine Karpidas, with whom she had shared a major collection and a love of the arts. Since 1996, and through the leadership of the London art dealer Sadie Coles, Hydra Workshop has brought to this small island, every year, important exhibitions and over sixty guests.



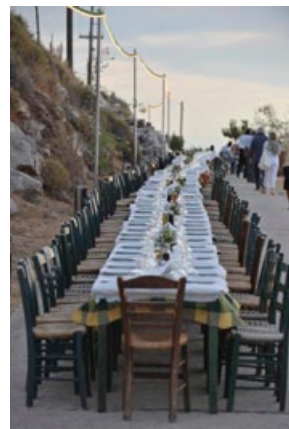
Frank Benson, Mark Grotjahn, Matt Johnson
Hydra Workshop, Hydra, Greece, 23 July to September 2010
Courtesy of Sadie Coles HQ, London

Major artists, including Grayson Perry in 1996, Christopher Wool in 1998, Gillian Wearing in 1999, Richard Prince in 2003, Wilhelm Sasnal in 2004 and Urs Fischer in 2005, have exhibited their work in its humble and cosy space. Meanwhile, an international mix of important curators, institution and museum directors, dealers, artists and writers keep coming back every year to spend a week celebrating, thinking and making friends. What is really the unique aspect of this event – unlike other activities on the island – is that this art week has been feeding the international art scene with significant art collaborations and plans that have their genesis on the island. The kind of bonding that happens between guests as they discuss plans and dreams with each other – for once – in a non-hierarchical environment, that is, in the intimate environment of the little streets, the tavernas, or on the beach, has resulted in great synergies within the international art world, and this is unique. Of course, there are many anecdotes, from the early hours of the morning, that could be told – and which have escaped the camera of Johnnie Shand Kydd, who has documented (artistically) the event for all these years – but that is beyond the scope of this magazine!

Hydra School Projects (written by Yannis Malavakis)

In 2000, the Greek artist and curator Dimitrios Antonitsis, who had worked for some time for the Hydra Workshop, keeping the exhibition open throughout the summer, occupied a historical high school building, the Sachtourion, and founded the Hydra School Projects. Since then, the Hydra School Projects has staged, every summer, significant group exhibitions that include a mix of Greek and foreign artists, both upcoming and established, varying in working styles and modes of expression. As a group, they often represent clashing artistic trends; however, their work cleverly ties in with Antonitsis's creative methods of unification. The ideas and the narratives upon which the shows are based are usually very inventive and spot on in terms of ephemera. The posters and the publications – which are designed to look like a typical elementary school notebook – are an absolute 'must have'. "The Hydra School Projects gave me the opportunity to access my own inner magic and thus establish a local link between traditional and contemporary aesthetics," admits Antonitsis.

Artists like Brice Marden, Juergen Teller, Nate Lowman, Francesco Vezzoli, Ghada Amer, Assume Vivid Astro Focus, Ugo Rondinone, Josh Smith, Dionisis Kavallieratos, Cosima Von Bonin and Tony Oursler are among the impressive lists of participants in Antonitsis's project. Hydra School Projects is a lively addition to the island's artistic activities..



DESTE Slaughterhouse Project Dinner table
DESTE Slaughterhouse Project:
Matthew Barney & Elizabeth Peyton, *Blood of Two*, 2009
performance, Photo by Hugo Glendinning

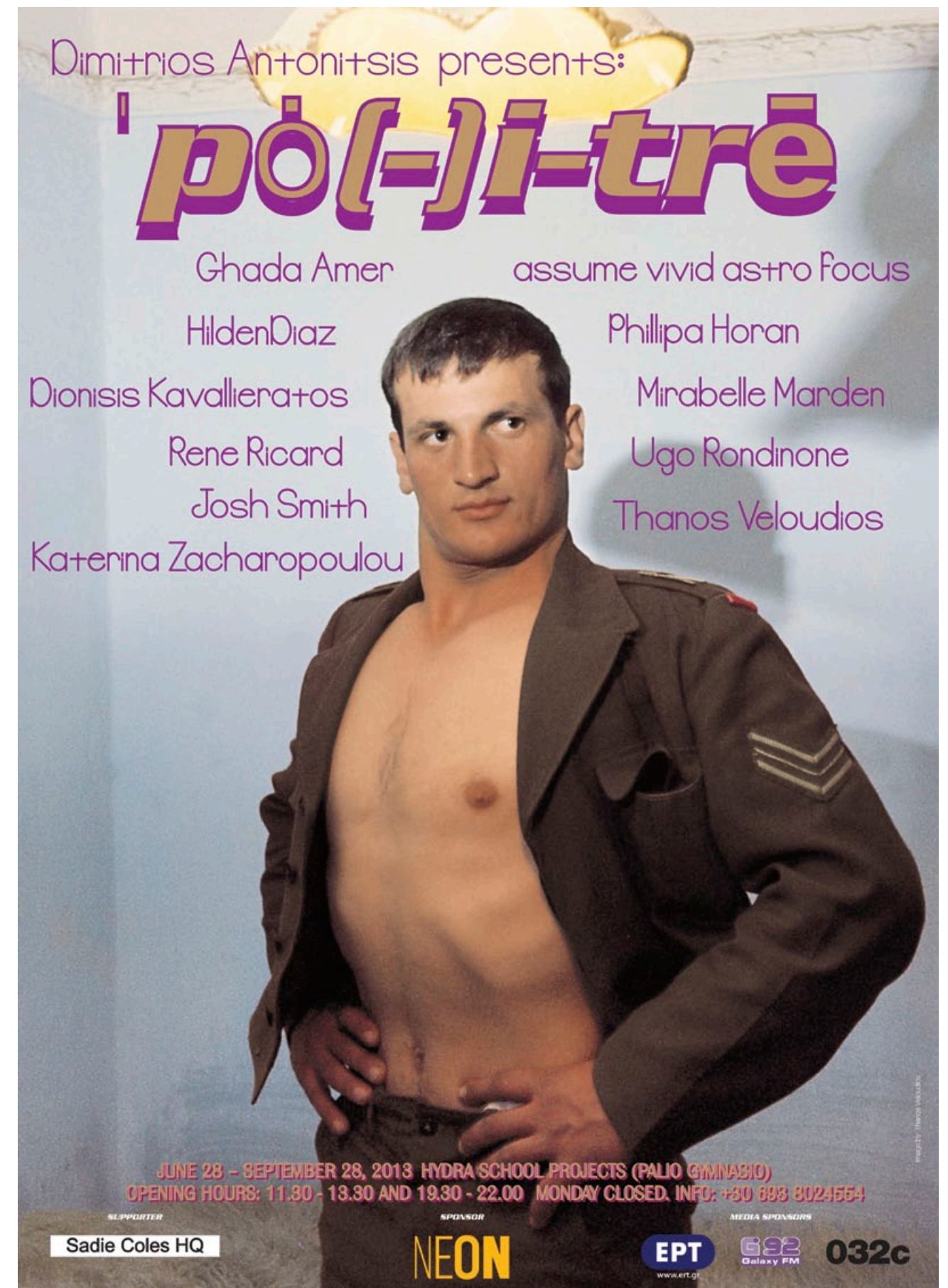
DESTE Project Space Slaughterhouse

And then the big guns arrived...

In 2008, the Municipality of the Island of Hydra granted to the DESTE Foundation of mega collector Dakis Joannou – or Dakis as everyone calls him (with his acceptance) in Greece – the island's old slaughterhouse. A modest stone 'Greek Bauhaus' style building balanced on a slope, just above the water, is now DESTE's Project Space Slaughterhouse. The

location is amazing: just ten minutes walk from the town's noise, where you find yourself on a deserted country road surrounded by the Aegean Sea. The building itself has its own ghosts. As a slaughterhouse in use until recently, it carries the mark of death; yet the surroundings are so magical that despite the atrocity of the killing of animals one can only think of a peaceful death in harmony with nature.

Every year a new show is commissioned



Poster of Hydra School Projects 'pó(-)i-trē', 2013
Curated by Dimitrios Antonitsis



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:
DESTE Foundation Project Space, Slaughterhouse, Hydra
DESTE Slaughterhouse Project: Urs Fischer, *Yes*, 2013
Installation view
DESTE Slaughterhouse Project: Doug Aitken, *Black Mirror*, 2011
performance



ALL PHOTOS IN THIS PAGE
by Spyros Staveris



DESTE Slaughterhouse Project:
Maurizio Cattelan, *WE*, 2010
Installation view, Photo by Pierpaolo Ferrari

especially to suit the peculiar premises and the Hydra locality. In June – and usually just after the Art Basel – over two hundred guests arrive on Hydra for the opening, which is now one of the leading social events on the international art calendar. People parade between different venues: Dakis’s house perched on a hill, overlooking the town; his distinctive yacht, *Guilty*, designed by Jeff Koons, which dominates the little port; and the Slaughterhouse. On the night of the opening, guests sit together around a beautiful Greek village wedding-style table (one for two hundred people) which is set out on the narrow road above the Slaughterhouse.

The space was aptly inaugurated by the exhibition *Blood Of Two* by Matthew Barney and Elizabeth Peyton who, in order to commemorate the dead animals, staged a ceremonial procession related to the Epitaphios Greek Easter tradition, in which the dead Christ is carried around the island while people follow, singing a mourning hymn. At 6.30am, around dawn, in the presence of all the art world guests, local fishermen hauled up a vessel that had been submerged in the sea for three months and it was adorned with drawings of animals and mythical gods. The vessel was then carried into the exhibition as part of a procession that included people and local animals.

This, which to my mind was one of the most successful editions, was followed by others such as *WE*, 2010, Maurizio

Cattelan’s tribute to death in his own trickster manner and Urs Fischer’s project *Yes*, which gave the local community the opportunity to produce ceramic sculptures throughout the summer and be part of the exhibition. And this worked in Hydra despite the fact that this kind of intentional project usually fails – lethally – in conventional institutions. Pavel Althamer will be challenging the space this June.

Maybe Hydra has become the playground of contemporary art leisure, as some will argue; it might even have become overpopulated by wealthy art professionals and fashionistas (if such a thing is possible on a sparsely populate island), but who cares. Among this crowd, as in any crowd, there are people that, like Cohen, love the place and are thirsty to learn and adopt its peculiarities and embrace ‘the Greek way of living’ and ‘the South State of Mind’. Perhaps this is an important sentiment regarding Greece these days?

So maybe the cliché: “thank you art for bringing these nice people here once more...” is accurate? Let us assure the doubtful that Hydra will stay as it is always was, if it can manage to hold itself together, in the face of the terrible Greek crisis, with the help of its own people, old and new, and its international friends.

Besides, the central square of the port is still empty on summer afternoons, as are some beautiful beaches that are a bit further away.

[los angeles]

A Destination Not a Place

by Dimitris Politakis

The new ten-year anniversary HD version of Los Angeles Plays Itself, Thom Andersen’s “symphony in reverse”, commemorates a uniquely brilliant filmic essay that looks at how representations of cities in movies inform both our understanding of and relationship to these places



This is the city: Los Angeles, California. They make movies here. I live here. Sometimes I think that gives me the right to criticise the way movies depict my city. I know it’s not easy. The city is big. The image is small. Movies are vertical. At least when they’re projected on a screen. The city is horizontal, except for what we call downtown. Maybe that’s why the movies love downtown more than we do... But movies have some advantages over us. They can fly through the air. We must travel by land. They exist in space. We live and die in time. So why should I be generous?

The droll, sardonic, almost-noir voice of the narrator (kind of like a ‘hardboiled’ first person voiceover of a Raymond Chandler story) you listen to throughout a parade of extracts from over 200 movies (from the super famous to the virtually unknown) shot (but not always set) in Los Angeles, gets you straight into the mood and the mindset of Thom Andersen, the researcher, writer, producer, and creator of *Los Angeles Plays Itself*. This extraordinary film essay grew out of a lecture the seventy-year-old filmmaker (responsible for the extraordinary *Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer* among other works) and teacher (of film studies at the California Institute of the Arts), gave about

his objections to director Curtis Hanson’s 1997 adaptation of James Ellroy’s *L.A. Confidential*. Premiering to great acclaim at the 2003 Toronto Film Festival and playing extensively on the festival circuit for the next year, the film has maintained a largely ‘clandestine’ existence ever since, circulated among cinephiles and architecture buffs on bootleg DVDs and YouTube links, and periodically revived by the American Cinematheque (where it had its first local screenings back in 2004). Due to copyright concerns over the unlicensed film clips, commercial distributors were understandably wary of Andersen’s magnum opus. The nearly three-hour “city symphony in reverse” was originally intended “for locals” only. But when it was first shown to audiences ten years ago, it became obvious that its scope was much broader than the depiction of Los Angeles (a place “where the relation between reality and representation gets muddled”) in the movies...

Los Angeles may be the most photographed city in the world, but it’s one of the least photogenic. It’s not Paris or New York. In New York, everything is sharp and in-focus, as if seen through a wide-angle lens. In smoggy cities like Los Angeles, everything dissolves into the distance, and even stuff that’s close-up seems far off.

The true theme of *Los Angeles Plays Itself* is the city: built and lived-in. Andersen is interested not only in the way in which cities are represented in the cinema, but perhaps more significantly the way in which these representations inform our ongoing understanding of and relationship to the places themselves. Films, Andersen argues, may not be so benign (therefore, “why should we be generous?”); they not only reflect the world, but contribute to our perception of it. *Los Angeles Plays Itself* is concerned with public space, discrimination, institutional corruption. It’s concerned with issues of class and race. It’s concerned, in other words, with the realities of life. And life courses through the movies. “We might wonder if the movies ever really depicted Los Angeles,” the voice (that does not belong to Andersen, but to Encke King, a close friend and fellow filmmaker) tells us, and the same doubts could be expressed about any film depiction of big cities around the world, even if they don’t feature the eclectic architecture of Los Angeles, with such landmarks (that often served as movie settings from *Rebel Without a Cause* to *Blade Runner* and beyond) as the Bradbury Building, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Ennis House, Richard Neutra’s Lovell House, John Lautner’s Chemosphere, the Pan Pacific Auditorium or the Griffith Observatory. But, as the *Village Voice* pointed out in its review of the film a decade ago, “*Los Angeles Plays Itself* is far more than an architectural survey or illustrated walking tour. It’s Andersen’s highly quotable, fiercely political attempt to reconcile the multiple cinematic identities of the world’s most frequently filmed metropolis.”

One of the glories of Los Angeles is its modernist residential architecture, but Hollywood movies have almost systematically denigrated this heritage by casting many of these houses as the residences of movie villains.

“The situation has improved somewhat in the last decade,” Andersen joked during one of the post-screening Q&A sessions that took place last autumn, during the ten-year anniversary tour when the film was shown again

(re-mastered in HD) in various prestigious cinemas in the United States and the world-wide film festival circuit. “Now the rule is that gay men live in modernist houses and lesbians live in craftsman houses”. On a more sombre tone, he also pointed out that “the way movies foreclose the possibility of emancipatory politics has not changed, and the gulf between an impoverished working class and a wealthy one percent – another running theme of Andersen’s film – is “even more of a truism now” than it was in 2003.

Who knows the city? Only those who walk, only those who ride the bus. Forget the mystical blatherings of Joan Didion and company about the automobile and the freeways. They say, nobody walks; they mean no rich white people like us walk. They claimed nobody takes the bus, until one day we all discovered that Los Angeles has the most crowded buses in the United States. The white men who run the transit authority responded to the news not by improving service, but by discouraging bus travellers. They raised fares. They stopped printing maps of the bus system. They refused to post route maps or schedules at bus stops. They put their money into more glamorous subways and light rail projects. Sued for discrimination, they accepted a consent decree and then rejected its provisions.

The voice that reads the text and connects the succession of movie clips (arranged brilliantly by editor Yoo Seung Hyun) is nothing if wilfully cranky, making loud and clear that above all other grudges, nothing irritates Andersen quite like the acronym ‘L.A.’

People blame all sorts of things on the movies. For me, it’s their betrayal of their native city. Maybe I’m wrong, but I blame them for the custom of abbreviating the city’s name to L.A. The acronym functions here as a slightly derisive diminutive. Now it’s become second nature, even to people who live here. Maybe we adopted it as a way of immunising ourselves against the implicit scorn, but it still makes me cringe. Only a city with an inferiority complex would allow it... When people say ‘L.A.’, they often mean ‘show business’.

He also hates geographic licence in movies, though he grudgingly acknowledges that: “it’s hard to make a theoretical argument against it”.

After all, in a fiction film, a real space becomes fictional. Why shouldn’t a car chase jump from the Venice canals to the Los Angeles harbour thirty miles away? Why shouldn’t the exit from a skating rink in Westwood open directly onto Fletcher Bowron Square in downtown Los Angeles, fifteen miles east? But one fiction is not always as good as another, and like dramatic license, geographic license is usually an alibi for laziness. Silly geography makes for silly movies.

The Hollywood Walk of Fame is also excoriated for including supporters and enforcers of the McCarthy-era Blacklist but none of its victims. Clearly, Andersen prefers back lots and obscure (sometimes haunted) backdrops to the oppressive artificiality of the studio set.

A movie studio is a cruel court where everyone is subject to the most wayward whim of its mogul, but the back lot is an enchanted village of accidental surrealism.

Andersen obliterates the idea that “movies aren’t about places, they’re about stories”. Instead of focusing on the action and characters in films with Los Angeles as a setting, he examines the back-grounds – like a private investigator, or a cultural archaeologist. Instead of allowing himself to be swept away by the dialogue, movement, and characters’ faces and bodies, he looks around the frame to see where we are at that moment. What’s visible through the car windows? What can be seen from this hotel room?

What buildings are visible in street scenes? He is an experienced miner diligently searching for “documentary revelations in feature films”, and he finds a wealth of material depicting “the most photographed city in the world”. It is impossible to drive around the city any day of the year and not find crew signs pointing to a film location. At times it seems that Los Angeles is one huge studio back lot. But the films that emphasise this ghostly aspect of the city tend to be the more obscure ones. One of the most remarkable side effects of the impact of *Los Angeles Plays Itself* is that it helped to spur the restoration and revival of several films cited by

Andersen at length, including Jacques Demy’s *Model Shop* (1969), Charles Burnett’s *Killer of Sheep* (1979) and Kent MacKenzie’s *The Exiles* (1961), a docudrama about a day in the life of Native Americans living on Bunker Hill that had entirely fallen out of circulation.



Double Indemnity by Billy Wilder, 1944



Killer of Sheep by Charles Burnett, 1979



Detour by Edgar G. Ulmer, 1945

word of mouth

SPRING/SUMMER 2014

by Klea Charitou, Marina Maniadaki, Eleanna Papathanasiadi, Angeliki Roussou, Jorgina Stamogianni

[australia]

Sydney

ANNETTE MESSEAGER [1]

Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA)

July 24 - October 26, 2014

Using stuffed animals, photographs, words and fabrics, Annette Messenger seeks to trace the most intimate aspects of human nature. Balancing between tragedy and an often-humorous approach towards everyday life, she creates spaces drawn from our most intriguing fantasies and deepest fears, challenging the viewer to accept and praise their multiplicity as a human being. Assessing the reoccurring matters of life and death and our ever-changing identities, this retrospective exhibition provides the viewer with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of this major artist's work, while comprehending the complexities of being a human being. (www.mca.com.au) MM



[1]



[2]

[cyprus]

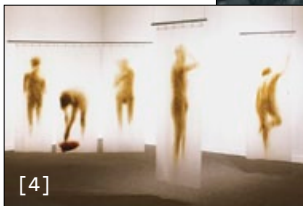
Nicosia

ROSA BARBA [2]

Point Centre for Contemporary Art

October - November, 2014

Point Centre for Contemporary Art presents a solo exhibition by Rosa Barba, an artist who works with analogue film as part of her installation and sculptural work. Exploring environments and notions of time, Barba's work approaches and presents space in a very distinct way. With the use of aerial photography or shots from above of places that interest her, Barba often focuses on communities where disaster has taken place or is about to happen. The Berlin-based artist wishes to create a distance between the viewers and the depicted location whether the place is familiar or unknown to them. Through this unique approach, she weaves stories of people and place into fictitious narratives. By "reinterpreting reality" she makes alternative readings of place possible. For this exhibition, Point invited Barba to explore the history and culture of Cyprus through her own creative process and methodological approach. The result investigates the potential of film as a medium of social extension. (www.pointcentre.org) EP



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[france]

Paris

BILL VIOLA [3]

Grand Palais

March 5 - July 28, 2014

Bill Viola is a pioneer of video art. Having used image and sound technology since the 1970s, he has created monumental video installations, which evoke moving paintings, sound environments and music performances inspired by the great works of art history. For the first time, the Grand Palais will present one of the largest retrospectives dedicated to the artist, and the first exhibition in the history of

National Galleries dedicated to video art. From the *Reflecting Pool* (1977) to *Dreamers* (2013), the show will include twenty of Viola's masterpieces and hours of video on over thirty screens, sound pieces and video sculptures. Focusing on both intimate and universal experiences, the artist expresses his emotional and spiritual journey through great metaphysical themes - life, death, transfiguration and the unfolding of consciousness - and we are invited to discover his insight into these fundamental questions of human existence. (www.grandpalais.fr) KC

PROTOGRAPHS - ÓSCAR MUÑOZ [4]

Jeu de Paume

June 3 - September 21, 2014

Óscar Muñoz is one of most important contemporary artists in Colombia, whose work spans four decades and covers a number of different media (ranging from photography, printmaking and drawing to installations, video and sculpture). Having captured the attention of the international art scene, Muñoz is now being presented at Jeu de Paume in co-production with Museo de Arte - Banco de la República of Bogotá. Under the title *Protographs*, the exhibition shows Muñoz's major series grouped by theme. The dissolution, disintegration and transformation of the image is combined with the inherent fragility of memory, the impossibility of making time stand still and the tension between rationality and the chaos in our urban societies. He creates ephemeral images that, as they disappear, invite the spectator to share in an experience that is simultaneously rational and sensual. (www.jeudepaume.org) KC

L'ÉTAT DU CIEL (THE STATE OF THE SKY)

[5]

Palais de Tokyo

February 14 - September 7, 2014

The new season *L'État du ciel* (*The State of the Sky*) at Palais de Tokyo invites us to discover, through over ten proposals and exhibitions, the reflections of various artists, poets and philosophers on the physical, moral and political factors that shape our world. *L'État du ciel* - a title borrowed from Victor Hugo's *Promontoire du songe*, in which the author wrote that "the sky's normal state is at night" - aims to lead to new and innovative exhibition formats in which seeing is already a means of action, and which render the word 'exhibition' inapplicable. Works on view include ten fictions conceived by Hiroshi Sugimoto on the theme of humanity's disappearance, *Stories of Ghosts* by

Georges Didi-Huberman and Arno Gisinger, Angelika Markul's scrupulous exploration of the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters, David Douard's viral hybrids of bodies and machines and Ed Atkins's digital variations, among others. (www.palaisdetokyo.com) KC

word of mouth

SPRING/SUMMER 2014

Reims

EXPÉRIENCE POMMERY #11, UNE ODYSÉE:

LES 30 ANS DU FRAC CHAMPAGNE-ARDENNE [6]

FRAC Champagne-Ardenne

November 15, 2013 - June 30, 2014

For the celebration of its 30th anniversary, the permanent collection of FRAC Champagne-Ardenne has been put on display in three previously unseen areas of the spectacular Pommery Estate. The show, curated by Florence Derieux, begins in the reception area, with neon scenography by Matali Crasset, historical pieces of the collection and a great tribute to Raymond Hains. This prepares the visitors for a parcours that takes place thirty metres underground, where on-site installations by contemporary French and international artists are on display in the cellars and on the walls of the dark and endless corridors. This is a real odyssey - or a journey that opens our eyes to the history of an institution, leading us to a lost 'Calypso's Island'. (www.frac-champagneardenne.org) KC



[6]

[greece]

Athens

NEON PATHS - DISCOVERING

THE NATIONAL GARDEN [7]

National Garden

May - June, 2014

Organised by the NEON initiative, *Neon Paths - Discovering the National Garden* aims to re-introduce the National Garden to the citizens and visitors of Athens through a curated contemporary art exhibition programme. The first exhibition, curated by Iwona Blazwick OBE, takes place from May to June and presents around twenty works by local and international artists. Some pieces are new productions, created especially for this open-air show, which aims to demonstrate to its audience how public art could enhance a city's quality of life. The programme is also supported by a propitious study on landscape design, which breathes new life into eight specific locations in the National Garden. This is a fresh approach towards the city of Athens that has been long overdue. (neonpaths.gr) EP



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Born in Turkey, Aladağ has gained international attention for her installations, video works and performances. Many of her projects explore issues of origin, tradition and modernity as well as cultural and social identity, while re-introducing the notion of boundaries through a very distinct approach.

This exhibition comprises both old and new works especially created for the show. (www.art-space-pythagorion.com) EP

Thessaloniki

ART IN EUROPE SINCE 1945: BEYOND

BOUNDARIES

THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM [9]

Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art

February 8 - May 6, 2014

The Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki presents *Art in Europe Since 1945: Beyond Boundaries*. With more than 200 works by renowned Greek and international artists, the show is part of the 30th exhibition of the Council of Europe titled *The Desire for Freedom* - a project that promotes viewing art after 1945 in a pan-European context. *Beyond Boundaries* attempts to present the European artistic reality through the presence of Greek artists who were dispersed throughout Europe. It focuses on the relationships that developed with artists from other European countries or with social groups who had also been expatriated, exiled, were immigrants or simply existed as travelers along the European cultural horizon. MMCA visitors have the chance to see historical works including pieces by Francis Picabia, Nikos Engonopoulos, Man Ray, Lucio Fontana, Nikos Kessanlis, Vlassis Caniaris, Danil, Jean Tinguely, Yves Klein, Dimitris Alithinos, Leda Papaconstantinou, Martin Kippenberger, Thomas Schütte, Annette Messager and Helmut Middendorf, among many others. (www.mmca.org.gr) EP

[israel]

Jerusalem

THE JERUSALEM SHOW VII [10]

AL-Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art

October 24 - November 7, 2014

Jerusalem is an aporia of faiths, ethnicities and cultures. The unacknowledged and insufferable multiplicity of the city has cost a lot of lives. Yet, what's perplexing is that this is the 'means to an end' that lies at the heart of the conflict. The 'means' - as in the physical entity, the symbols, the shrines, the monuments, the walls - is what people and governments kill and die for. The Jerusalem Show is neither a biennial nor a one-time event. It is neither a large-scale show nor an international grand exhibition. In a way it can be perceived as a political action. It presents works, performances and interventions throughout the Old City as unique actions that promote a re-reading of the town in a creatively open, accessible and interactive manner. The show is organised within the framework of the Qalandiya International Biennial, an art and cultural event that takes place in various towns and villages in Palestine. (www.almamalfoundation.org) JS

Tel Aviv

BODY TRACES - ALINA SZAPOCZNIKOW [11]

Tel Aviv Museum of Art

February 7 – May 31, 2014

Jewish sculptor and proto-feminist, Alina Szapocznikow, was one of Poland's outstanding post-World War II artists. Within two decades, she exchanged the language of classical sculpture for an idiosyncratic lexicon of new shapes, unusual materials, processes and themes that held a dialogue with the contemporary art scene and her own biography. Szapocznikow expands the definition of sculpture in a deconstructive process of trial and error, while casting parts of her own body directly: an indexical imprint that testifies to the body's deterioration. The exhibition at Tel Aviv Museum of Art features sixty-five works – sculptures and drawings – on loan from the artist's estate, from leading Polish museums and from private collectors. (www.tamuseum.org.il) JS

PROVENANCE - AMI SIEGEL [12]

The Center for Contemporary Art

May 8 – July 5, 2014

A film work on a cinematic scale, *Provenance* traces, in reverse, the global trade of furniture from the Indian city of Chandigarh, designed in the 1950s by architects Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret. Chandigarh's controversial modernist architecture includes original pieces of furniture – tables, chairs, settees, desks – created specifically for the buildings' interiors. Recently, these pieces have appeared at auction houses around the world, commanding record prices. Juxtaposing contemplative tracking shots, precise framing and recurrent tableaux, the film enacts a subtly disjunctive cinematic space, peeling back time to make visible the furniture's movement around the globe. This accumulative montage exposes the circuits of ownership and history that made an impact on the furniture's fluctuating value. (www.cca.org.il) JS

[italy]

Milan

PEDRO PAIVA AND JOÃO MARIA

GUSMÃO [13]

HangarBicocca

June – September, 2014

This summer, Pedro Paiva and João Maria Gusmão will present a show in Milan that will give the Italian audience a chance to view the duo's work in a different setting than the overabundance of the Venice Biennale. The focus will be placed on the artists' filmic work and their use of camera obscura without, however, excluding installation pieces. After a handful of solo exhibitions in institutions of global importance, this is probably one show that will reaffirm their established practice and hopefully reveal hidden sides to

it. In this much awaited exhibition, the artists will highlight the criticality of their work, which goes hand in hand with their humour, using a mixture of formal and conceptual elements. (hangarbicocca.org) AR

Rome

REMEMBERING IS NOT ENOUGH.

MAXXI COLLECTION [14]

MAXXI, the National Museum of XXI Century Arts

December 20, 2013 – September 28, 2014

Remembering is Not Enough. Maxxi Collection is a bold gesture on behalf of the museum as it reflects upon its role as an institution and as an owner of a significant collection (comprising names such as Gilbert & George, Gerhard Richter and Maurizio Cattelan). What is attempted is a quest for current and up-to-date connections between the public and the collection, the space of the museum and the city, and also between the historical threads running through the displayed art and current social conditions. To that end, the artistic and architecture collections that spread across all the spaces of the museum have been merged together, with a clear emphasis on learning activities and initiatives. Interaction with the public has therefore been enhanced, with the aim of encouraging innovative engagement with cultural debates through a more participatory approach. (fondazionemaxxi.it) AR

[lebanon]

Beirut

HITO STEYERL [15]

Ashkal Alwan, The Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts

April 16 – May 30, 2014

The very moment that an image appears on screen, a net of political relationships is not only reflected, but also actively produced. This places the forces that shape images at the centre of an ethics of production and reception. Hito Steyerl's works and essays are much more than critical tools for explaining and decoding images. They serve the release of the image, suspending it momentarily from political or economic imperatives in order to use it as the structural element, content, and departure point for artistic subjectivity. (www.ashkalalwan.org) JS

[mexico]

Mexico City

VISIÓN. PRODUCCIÓN. OPRESIÓN - HARUN

FAROCKI [16]

MUAC (The Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo)

February 2 – June 15, 2014

Harun Farocki's long career in film, video art and film criticism suggests a powerful conjunction between film and contemporary art with an emphasis on the ideological consequences of the image. By using a wide range of media, his work constitutes a critical vision that addresses political questions and analyses war, economics and politics as a



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consequence within the social space. Under the title *Vision. Production. Oppression* this exhibition will present an overview of Farocki's installations. It aims to be not only a retrospective of his work, but also a way to explore his artistic strategies and the conditions around the production of the audiovisual image as a cultural artefact interwoven with power. In parallel, the project *Labour in a Single Shot* by Antje Ehmann and Harun Farocki, which was carried out in eight cities around the world between 2011 and 2014, will reach a conclusion as part of the exhibition. This conclusion will comprise a presentation and a workshop by the artists in an attempt to document contemporary working conditions in a range of different contexts through a series of videos. (www.muac.unam.mx) KC

[palestine]

QALANDIYA INTERNATIONAL

BIENNIAL 2014 [17]

Various towns and villages in Palestine

October 22 – November 15, 2014

Qalandiya International 2014, a contemporary art event, comprises a series of exhibitions, performances, lectures and other activities. It will take place for the second time in Palestine under the theme of 'Archives'. Eight of the most prominent cultural institutions in Palestine focusing on Contemporary Art are collaborating and pooling resources to showcase the contemporary culture in the region. Various activities and events will take place in a number of cities and villages: Jerusalem, Haifa, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Gaza, Jericho and Hebron, with the participation of a number of international artists and curators. So book your flight to Palestine now, to experience one of the most daring and promising cultural statements of this year. This event is an absolute must. (www.qalandiyainternational.org) JS

[portugal]

Lisbon

DA CAUDA À CABEÇA (FROM TAIL

TO HEAD) - CARLA FILIPE [18]

Museu Coleção Berardo

January 29 – May 4, 2014

Museu Coleção Berardo presents *da cauda à cabeça (from tail to head)*, an exhibition by Portuguese artist Carla Filipe. The project is a new large-scale work based on the artist's research into the Portuguese railway system. It comprises archival items, documents and objects taken from different sources, and art pieces. Filipe's earlier works, together with many new ones especially conceived for the show, share the museum's space with interrelated objects from the everyday workings of railway stations, as well as autobiographic traces. Removed from their ordinary use and displayed in a contemporary art institution, these objects create various narratives, while evoking the Portuguese railways' geography, architecture and sociopolitical context. (www.museuberardo.pt) EP

Porto

MIRA SCHENDEL [19]

Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art

February 28 – June 24, 2014

Not long after the major retrospective at London's Tate Modern (the first ever in Europe), the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art in Porto presents a full-scale survey of the work of Brazilian artist Mira Schendel. Visitors have the opportunity to see over three hundred works including paintings, drawings, sculptures and installations from across her entire career, many of which have never been exhibited before. Schendel's early experience of cultural, geographic and linguistic displacement is evident in her work, as is her interest in religion and philosophy. One of Latin America's greatest artists, Schendel reinvented the language of European Modernism in Brazil, alongside her contemporaries Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica. Her profound engagement with universal ideas of faith, self-understanding and existence, as well as her interest in issues of language and poetry, are reflected in her work. This is wonderful opportunity to discover Schendel's unique oeuvre. (www.serralves.pt) EP

[south korea]

Gwangju

10TH GWANGJU BIENNALE - BURNING

DOWN THE HOUSE [20]

Gwangju Biennale Foundation

September 5 – November 9, 2014

Under the title, *Burning Down the House*, the 10th Gwangju Biennale takes place this November. Curated by Jessica Morgan, the biennial explores the processes of burning, as well as the transformative powers of fire, in a symbolic way. The cycle of destruction and renewal, evident in aesthetics and historical events, but also in the prevailing culture of the present day, is central to the concept of this exhibition. Focusing on the efforts made by contemporary artists to address personal and public issues through individual and collective engagement, as well as showing how challenging these efforts and their impacts have become, the biennial underscores the capacity of art to critique the establishment while exploring the potential of art as movement. (www.gwangjubiennale.org) EP

[spain]

Barcelona

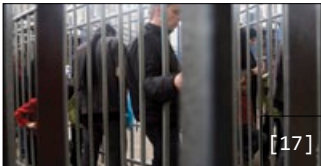
BEFORE OUR EYES – OTHER CARTOGRAPHIES OF

THE RIF [21]

MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona)

January 24 – May 18, 2014

Before Our Eyes – Other Cartographies of the Rif is the third part of the larger curatorial project *Before Our Eyes* organised in collaboration with La Kunsthalle (Mulhouse, France) and L'Appartement 22, (Rabat, Morocco). According to one of the two curators of the show, Abdellah Karroum, the participating artists constitute what he calls the "generation 00", rejecting the linearity of art history and responding artistically to the geography and history of the Rif Mountains. The exhibition also includes anonymous and



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collectively made objects relevant to the Rif's culture and history. It thus problematises the parameters that define an art object and its documentary aspects, as well as the conditions of its cultural visibility within an exhibition system. Viewers are also urged to question their own perception of history. The adopted curatorial model, labelled "Choose Your Own Adventure", surely points towards such a direction. (macba.cat) AR

Madrid

ES CAPITAL - CRISTINA LUCAS [22]

Matadero Madrid

February 1 – May 11, 2014

For her new solo exhibition at Matadero Madrid, Cristina Lucas has installed her works in the former cold room of the Legazpi slaughterhouse allowing for associations between the space and the themes she explores. As the title *Es Capital* hints, her work deals with issues of political economy and labour. Methodologically, Lucas's work is largely documentary. Her *Mountain of Gold* piece consists of two photographs portraying stored gold in the Bank of Spain. *Capitalismo filosófico* is a series of interviews addressing the attitude of professionals in certain business trades towards the philosophical concepts behind their practice. Issues of labour are obviously at play without, of course, excluding the issue of artistic labour. In *Plusvalía* she documents her own artistic research and efforts to internalise the value of Marx's Capital. (mataderomadrid.org) AR

SPLENDIDE HOTEL - DOMINIQUE GONZALEZ-FOERSTER [23]

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía

March 14 – August 31, 2014

In Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's new individual show *Splendide Hotel* in Palacio de Cristal, the French artist uses Madrid's landmark construction as her exhibition space by appropriating its character and magnitude. Gonzalez-Foerster pinpoints the key to her installation practice by arranging the space as a cinematic setting that invites the viewers to wander, observe and be observed. The exhibition is thematically concerned with literature on many levels, from the book as written text, physical object and structure to the relationship between the reader (or viewer) and the closure of the literary (or filmic) narrative. *Splendide Hotel* will hopefully live up to the artist's notable reputation. (museoreinasofia.es) AR

[turkey]

Istanbul

NEIGHBOURS – CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES FROM TURKEY AND BEYOND [24]

Istanbul Modern

January 9 – May 8, 2014

In its 10th year, Istanbul Modern has produced an exhibition featuring works by thirty-five artists from seventeen countries with historical, political and cultural ties to Turkey. A rich programme of events accompanies the exhibi-

tion, including screenings, performances, panels, talks and workshops dedicated to the region's art and culture. The exhibition focuses on two main topics: storytelling and travel. These two themes intertwine through concepts such as mobility, migration, nomadism, inner journeys, language, and cultural and oral transmission. By providing a thematic selection, the show examines common approaches and current dynamics in the region's visual culture, exploring how art practices engage with sociocultural contexts and deeply-rooted customs relating to social life in the public space. (www.istanbulmodern.org) KC

CHARLES ATLAS [25]

SALT Beyoğlu

March 7 – May 25, 2014

For over four decades, Charles Atlas has used various media to create works for the screen, the stage and the gallery space. He is, without a doubt, one of the premiere interpreters of dance, theatre and performance on video, and a pioneer in the development of media-dance. For this exhibition, Atlas presents an immense installation *MC9* (2012), which encompasses the entire forty-year working relationship the artist shared with the choreographer Merce Cunningham. It will occupy the SALT Beyoğlu space with a 9-channel synchronised video with sound, featuring clips from twenty-one collaborative works between these two visionary artists. Incorporating camera into live performances, Atlas engages in active choreography, whereby the audience is allowed to follow the overall experience of movement, sound and framing. (www.saltonline.org) KC

[usa]

Santa Fe

SITELINES.2014 - UNSETTLED

LANDSCAPES [26]

SITE Santa Fe

July 20, 2014 - January 2015

From its initiation in 1995, SITE Santa Fe has presented over seventy-five exhibitions, including eight biennials. After two years of extensive research and discussions between renowned American curators, artists and educators from various cultural backgrounds, and in accordance with its multi-layered history and geographical position, SITE's biennial is re-conceived under the title *SITELines*. Exploring the triptych of landscape, territory and trade, this biennial sets forth a series of concealed relations arising from the notion of the land: what derives from land, what moves across it and what represents it. (www.sitesantafe.org) MM

New York

ŠUILLAKKU CORRAL - ROBERTO CUOGHI [27]

New Museum

May 7 - June 29, 2014

Roberto Cuoghi is renowned for his astounding approach towards the notion of metamorphosis. Using film, sculpture and painting, he produces unconventional assemblages exploring the limits of identity. Mostly known for his extreme corporeal transformation into an old man, which he maintained for several years not as a performance but rather as a persona, the artist uses the idea of hybridity as his medium of choice. This exhibition at the New Museum includes a range of Cuoghi's most recent works, including an imposing sound piece based on his study on Assyrian language and rituals. (www.newmuseum.org) MM

HIGHLIGHTS



[switzerland]

Biel/Bienne

LE MOUVEMENT - PERFORMING THE CITY [28]

Various venues

Movement I: Sculptures on the Move,
July 4 – 5, 2014

Movement II: Performing the City,
August 26 – 31, 2014

Movement III: The City Performed,
August 30 – November 2, 2014 at the Art Centre
CentrePasquArt, Biel

Renowned for its groundbreaking approach, the Swiss Sculpture Exhibition presents its 12th and most profound edition of *Le Mouvement*, a public art exhibition with a sixty-year legacy. This year's exhibition has been curated by Gianni Jetzter and Chris Sharp, and comprises three independent parts supplementing one another. The initiating part, *Movement I*, revisits works from previous editions, whereas the second part, *Movement II*, encompasses Biel/Bienne's transformation into an intriguing performance space. The final part, *Movement III*, investigates and connects past and present public art through a survey conducted by the Kunsthaus CentrePasquArt. A provocative and vivid exploration of the human body in movement, *Le Mouvement* invites the viewer to reconceive the notion of space through public art. (lemouvement.ch) MM

[Brazil]

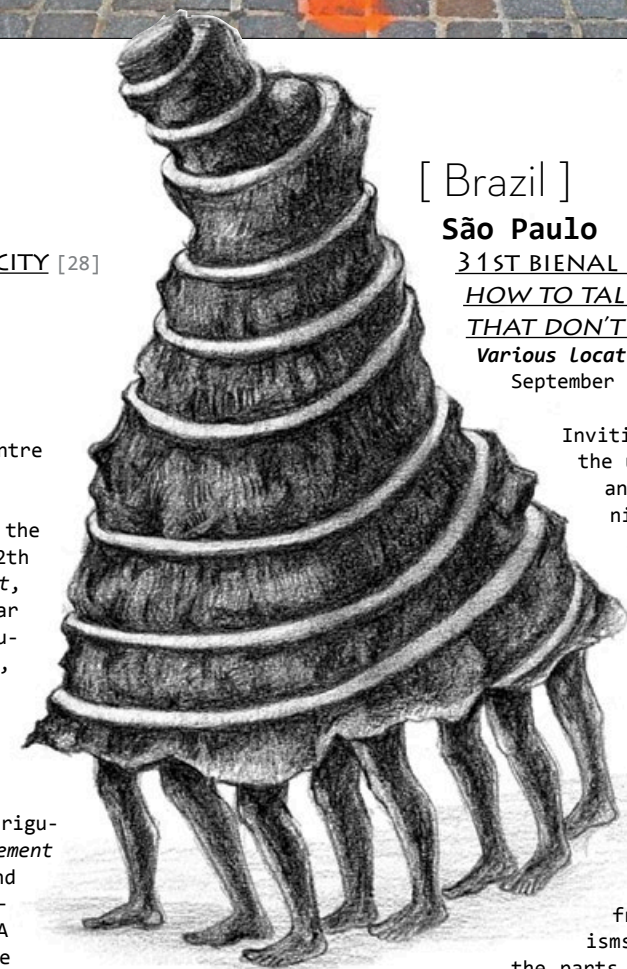
São Paulo

31ST BIENAL DE SAO PAULO - HOW TO TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST [29]

Various Locations

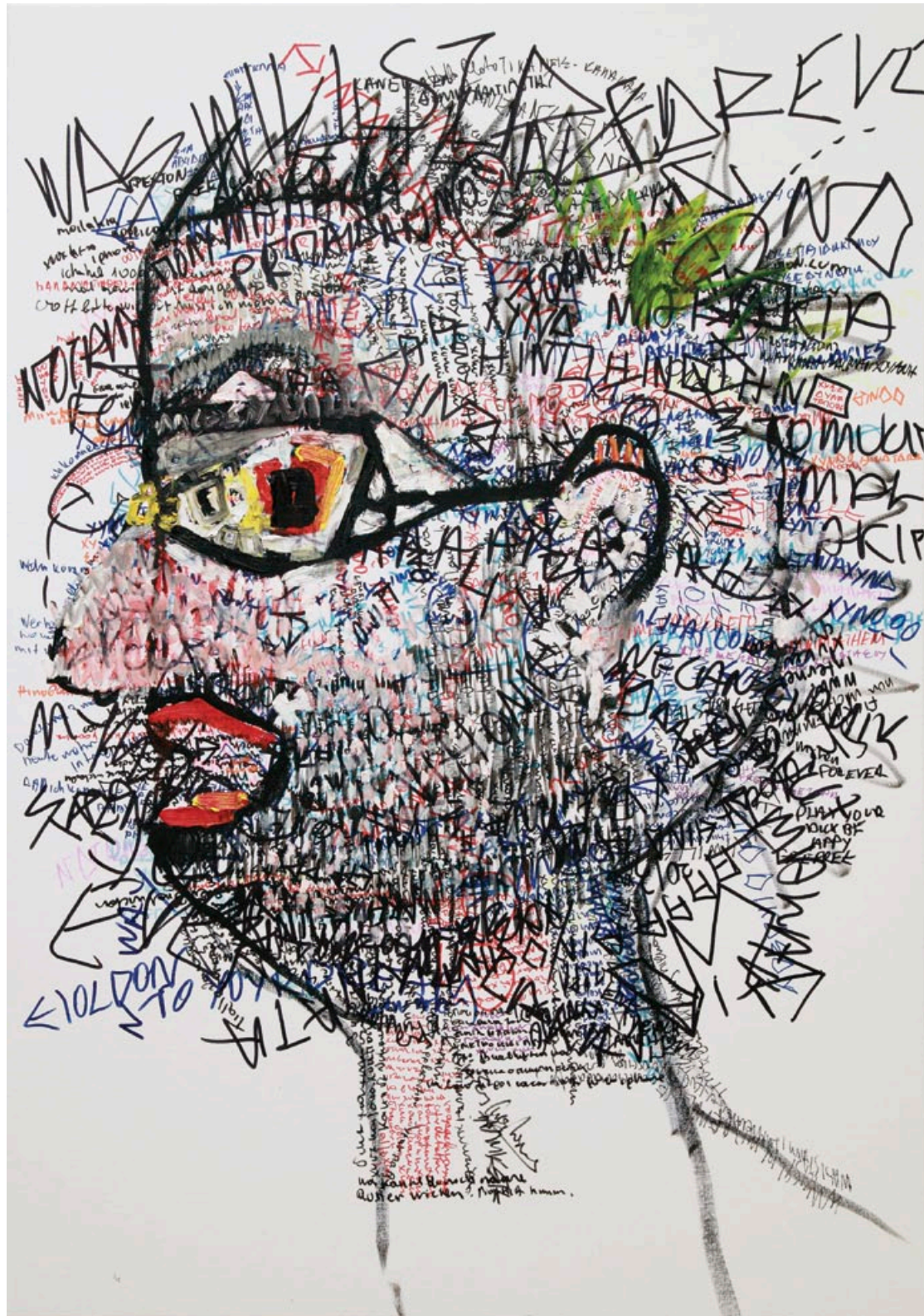
September 6 - December 7, 2014

Inviting the viewer to engage with the unseen part of every day life and decision-making, this biennial mirrors the ever-changing ideas that occur when the individual leaves 'common sense' behind. The confrontation between the viewer and the work of art is seen as an experience revealing the concealed parts of human life, and acts as a reminder of the mystifying power of art. The exhibition offers us a glimpse of things that don't exist, while exploring the boundaries emanating from social frames and mannerisms. Offering an insight into the parts of our capabilities as human beings we tend to forget, this biennial is not to be missed. (www.bienal.org.br) MM



shame

GUEST: PANOS PAPADOPOULOS



Panos Papadopoulos, *Idiot #8*, 2013, Courtesy of the artist

Idiot derives from the greek word 'Idiotis' (ιδιώτης - civilian), which was a derogatory term used by the ancient Athenians for those who were only concerned with their properties and not with the common good

A STREET PAPER CAN CHANGE A LIFE

"Shedia" is Greece's street paper. It is about providing employment opportunities and social support to people who are homeless and/or live under the poverty line. "Shedia" is not a charity but a self-help model to provide innovative solutions to homelessness and unemployment.

"Shedia" provides a dignified way to homeless people to make an income that will allow them to pay for their most basic needs. It also provides a way to rebuild their lives.

"Shedia" vendors -wearing their very characteristic red vests- are delivering the street paper, in tens of places around Thessaloniki and Athens.

Every encounter with one of our vendors is a new opportunity to meet a wonderful person and to be part of a great international social and publishing movement.



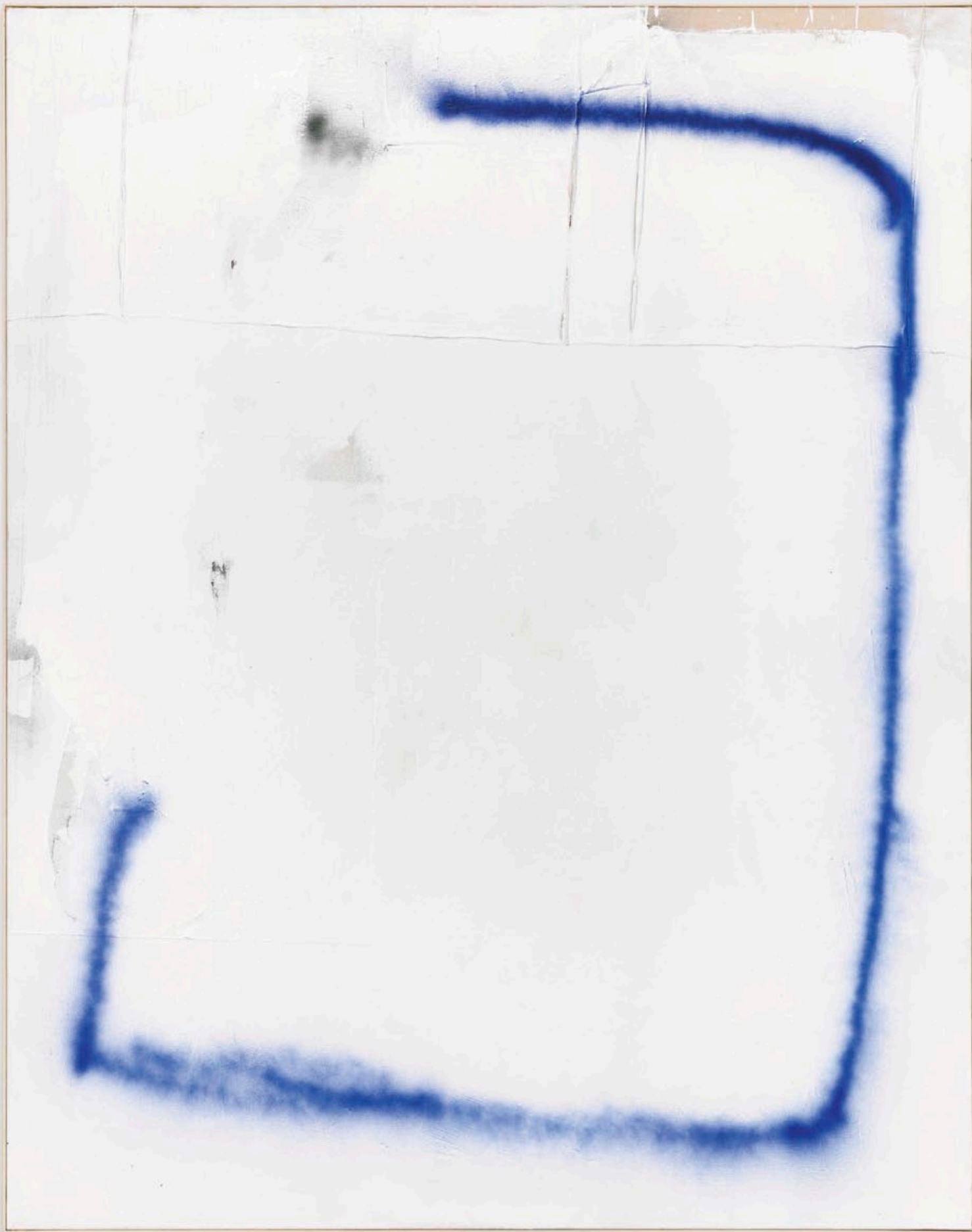
Shedia. It is about people.

www.shedia.gr • [f shedia.streetpaper](https://www.facebook.com/shedia.streetpaper) • [_shedia](https://www.instagram.com/_shedia)

ART WORK: George Pavlakes / Yotia Mazioli



This page is sponsored by The Breeder on the occasion of Andreas Lolis exhibition "Homeless" (June-September 2014).



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