



I Dreamt Cyprus was a Superpower [2007]

by Andreas Savva

The flag of Cyprus has been 'woven' into a gigantic banner, six meters wide and more than three-and-a-half meters high. The size matches the pompous and wishful title of the work. Yet the wished-for grandeur is greatly undermined upon closer inspection: the largeness of the 'flag' is reduced by the fragility of the material and the method of its making. It consists of yarn, with the separate threads at some distance from each other, creating a semi-transparent image. Additionally, the very process of its making, alludes to an age-long tradition of 'female' handicraft – that of spinning and weaving – that does not quite fit within the nationalist, patriarchal (even phallogocentric) discourse, within which such emblems and aspirations for 'greatness' would normally be encountered. Ultimately, and in view not only of the island's smallness, but especially, of the predicament of the 'Cyprus problem' with which Cypriots have been burdened almost from the very beginning of the country's independence, any dream of superpower grandeur looms even more absurd and, undoubtedly, self-sarcastic.



Art Is Justice [1992-2010]

by Marina Olympos

This installation, made up of photographs [c-prints] and video, is put together by fragments of a much larger project, which was created in 1992. It was first presented and performed in that year, at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.



...I quietly rested against these values, like the big fish that ate all the small ones, and laid its belly across the mountain with the five peaks, in order to rest.
 ...I knelt down and picked the stones that the sea nurtured for centuries in her womb, and in awe I discovered that they are real stones and rock. That they carry the strength which peels time away, and that the fetus is planted between their legs.
 ...My name is Marina and I died in Cyprus, when I was six years old.
 ...This is a love story; a little boy and a 17-year old soldier were playing in the yellow fields, at strange hours. They walked together, on days, nights and mornings, and the child had a jewel on his shoulder, so that he could play. And this is where the orchestration of war begins: the jewel on the shoulder turned into a shield and the naked feet turned into red hands.
 ...Life and Death are Art. The artists I asked, told me that they had to die in order to live their art. In other words, they went through exactly what I had gone through. Thus, the orchestrators of wars, through the death they bring upon us, give us the power of creation. The power possessed by the fetus of authority, as it exists between her legs. The Art that is beautiful. Beautiful like Aphrodite, born out of salt and blood.

Looking Awry at the 50 Years of the Republic of Cyprus

BY ANTONIS DANOS

...
**Like perspectives, which rightly gaz'd upon
 Show nothing but confusion; ey'd awry
 Distinguish form ...**

[William Shakespeare, Richard II, Act II, Scene 4]

The above excerpt is derived from a short dialogue between the queen and Bushy, the king's servant, in William Shakespeare's *Richard II*. Bushy is trying to console the queen and to take her mind off the bad premonitions she is having, after the king's departure on a war expedition. At first, he points out to her that sorrow tends to exaggerate things, and keeps us from seeing them for what they are: "For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears / Divides one thing entire to many objects..." And he proceeds by making perhaps an unexpected analogy to perspective, by telling her that when looking straightforward at something, we see confusion, and only when looking at it 'sideways' [from an angle], does it assume a clear distinct form. What Shakespeare seems to be incorporating here, is his knowledge of "anamorphosis" [perspectival disfiguration], such as when employed in painting, even though the term itself had not yet been invented.¹

This seems, at first, a rather peculiar metaphor; we are used to thinking that a 'clear' view is normally offered by the straightforward, head-on look at things, rather than by a sideways one. Back in the early Renaissance, the invention and extensive use of mathematical perspective was making a claim that it was creating rational, 'accurate' views of the world – it was one of the major tools in the process whereby a two-dimensional image was functioning as a window to the world [or as its mirror]. Mathematical, particularly, one-point perspective is of course an artificial construct, utilised for creating ordered views, but never 'true' ones, despite appearances to the contrary. Essentially, perspective offers ideologically-laden views of the world.

According to Hanneke Grootenboer in *The Rhetoric of Perspective*, "we are unable to observe perspective



directly because our position is always implicated in its configuration [...]. Therefore, we need to find an alternative position from which we can 'see' the ways in which perspective operates as a system that manipulates our vision."² Interestingly enough, this

"alternative position" [one that will allow us to look at perspective, rather than through it] may well be offered by anamorphosis. "Anamorphosis" is an ancient Greek word that means distortion. An anamorphic image is one that lacks a proper shape – something that cannot be readily recognised for what it is. In modern Greek, however, anamorphosis also signifies the "restoring of that which has been out of shape."³ Perhaps most importantly, anamorphic art "possesses the rare quality of being able to disrupt or even shock our accustomed ways of looking and laying bare the prejudices such looking involves."⁴

The *Looking Awry* exhibition, sets off from such an analysis concerning modes of picturing and looking, in order to create and, hopefully, justify its own metaphors. Using as its pretext the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, it aims at excluding the seemingly straightforward, orthodox perspectival depiction and perception of the world. This mode of portraying and of perceiving ourselves is what has essentially been the official, dominant rhetoric of the institutions and the mechanisms that have been defining us, ever since the establishment of the Cypriot state. Just as "proper perspective may be a form of distortion," [anamorphic] disfiguration may be a form of correction.⁵ The works in the exhibition do not literally contain anamorphic distortions; instead, they metaphorically constitute 'awry looks,' that is, they themselves are 'sideway glances,' which may produce true[r] images of ourselves, our recent past, our present and our possible futures. They gaze in critical, examining, subversive, thoughtful and humorous ways, so as to reveal our true shapes and forms, and present us in our proper dimensions, in contrast to the dominant, seemingly direct [yet, greatly distorted] view that has been [re]produced and consumed over the past fifty years.

¹ See Slavoj Žižek, "Looking Awry," *October*, vol. 50 (Autumn 1989), pp. 32-35; and Hanneke Grootenboer, *The Rhetoric of Perspective: realism and illusionism in seventeenth-century Dutch still-life painting* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 101.
^{2, 3, 4, 5} Grootenboer, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

Aphrodite, ancient and modern woman as cultural archetype and as agent of history



Three women artists have created works that altogether span four decades, in which the mythical image of Aphrodite has been fragmented, has been imbued with contemporary tragedies and symbolisms, and has been humanised, turned into tormented, trapped, disintegrating or mourning human figure. In **Lost Aphrodites** [1975-76] by **Stella Michaelidou**, the Hellenistic statue of the goddess has been deconstructed into amputated limbs, that become bearers as well as witnesses of the tragic events of 1974. French art critic Denis Roger wrote in 1976: "Under the title *Lost Aphrodites*, the exhibition of the Cypriot artist Stella Michaelidou, invokes the heavy toll of 1974. Through her art, she makes a political stance of protest, but at the same time, she knows how to present, succinctly and movingly, the desperation of the enslaved and desecrated culture. These *Lost Aphrodites* are ancient statues that are overturned, broken or tied with barbed wire, against a mournful, bearing bloody cuts, background."

In the following decade, another – in this case, late classical – head of either Aphrodite or the goddess of Health (*Ygeia*) appears in a series of works by **Katy Stephanidou**, under the overall title of **Compositions** – the four canvases in the *Looking Awry* exhibition date from 1981-84. In these works, there is an integration of symbols and semiotic codes, concepts and metaphors, all alluding to fragmentation, prohibition and the lack of – as much as the need for – communication. "I am affected by the state of things, the sad recent events in our country, especially, by the place of women. I want to allude to the perseverance of woman in the face of the conditions in which she finds herself trapped, which is why I place women in squares [boxes]," Stephanidou commented, in an interview at the time.

Twenty-five years later, in **Yioula Hatzigeorgiou's Aphrodite's Bath** [2009], female heads, sculpted from salt, are lying on the floor. The suspended drip – normally, a life saver – lets drops of water fall on the heads, causing their slow disintegration. This drip-water torture has spectators: the heads are facing each other, witnessing each other's disappearance. Next to the canvases and the sculptures, Hatzigeorgiou's **Denial** [2010] is shown on a TV monitor. Covering one's head with ashes, constitutes an age-old tradition of

mourning the dead. In this filmed performance, while the artist repeatedly covers her body with ashes, she gradually turns into a statue... It is as if things have come to full circle: the goddess's statue was fractured,

tormented and exposed in fragments. It bore tragedies and allegories, it was humanized in the process, and the woman who replaced it – in a ritual of ultimate grief – turned [back] into a statue.

Vulture Wreck [2010]

by Antonis Antoniou

The artist comments that this composition was entirely created out of archival, sound material, mostly of public speeches by leading figures, who were or are still involved in the Cypriot political arena of the past fifty years. Using various sound-exploration techniques, a relatively abstract soundscape has been created, which at times breaks through its fuzzy and abstract form, revealing, either momentarily or for longer intervals, its original sources. There is thus an oscillation in the listener's perception between two levels – the realistic one (probably relating to the present) and the "oneiric" (connected to an understanding of history, blurred by time). The piece develops a political stance, apparently critical of the "vulture-like" politics that has been dominating the public arena of the island: a form of politics that turns the country (that is, the people inhabiting the land) into wreckage, especially, cultural wreckage. Big words, promises, grandiose entrances, threats and alibi are by now intertwined, in people's understanding, with fire and ashes, echoing like the sweat caused by a long nightmare.

The Reluctant Metropolis [2007]

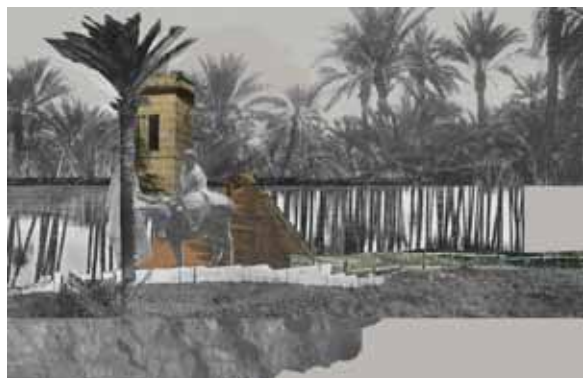
by Yiannos Economou

The artist writes about the work: "the small town found inspiration for its emancipation in the ideal of ancient Athens. Its city centre is a provincial pastiche of classical architecture, paying homage to the ideals of Classical Hellenism – noted for its multiculturalism and *philoxenia*, as opposed to xenophobia. Yet, unwittingly and simultaneously, this same town also pays homage to reactionary colonial ideology, aiming to provide a pretext for Western cultural superiority – by nature, exclusive and supremacist. Herein lies the contradiction. It is thus illogical, yet not surprising, that ever since the small town became a metropolitan centre, a multicultural magnet, the locals feel discomfort and confusion. The pseudo-classical facades stand insular and aloof, as the roaming foreigners float nearby every Sunday, setting up their makeshift market place, shops and restaurants. With their plastic shopping bags and chairs, and Styrofoam cups, they seem powerless, invisible and transitory, and detached from the small metropolis, just as the architecture around them seems ephemeral and fake."

Mapping Landscapes Anew [2009-10]

by Marianna Christofides

An installation of twelve collages comprised of old postcards dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. These postcards originated from all over the



world except Cyprus, and depict landscapes with trees and plants in different physical environments. The same flora can be found in Cyprus as well, and it determines what is believed to be a typical Cypriot landscape. In the extended context of the collages, the depicted landscapes transform into imaginary new sceneries that could, however, appear to be indigenous to the island. The result is a heterogeneous collection, where the factual and the fictional flow together, similar to the principle of the collections which made up the curiosity cabinets of the past. The work reflects the process of re-composition of finds on a specific location, thus forming a new context for the vision. Disparate geographical locations are brought together under a common denominator, unifying in this way diverse locales and trespassing bounding national borderlines, resulting in a collage of moments both in space and time. Because of their relatively small format, which corresponds to the actual format of a postcard, the spectator needs to get closer – to stimulate the *vita contemplativa* – in order for the different parts that compose them to be revealed to him/her.



The Dogma of the Emperors #2 [2010]

by Helene Black

On layers of white cloth – metaphors for flags or other national emblems – images of the main protagonists of the 'Cyprus problem' are being projected – Archbishop Makarios, General Grivas and Rauf Denktaş, in scenes of adoration by their respective followers. Helene Black mentions that, "The *Dogma of the Emperors* makes direct reference to the early Church, which, at the time of Emperor Constantine, was a scene of bitter internal strife over obscure points of doctrine in order to impose its dogmas, and thus establish itself as dominant political power. In our own times, many politicians and religious leaders still perceive themselves as 'emperors', and their dogma continues to be imposed."



CMYK Colour Separation [2009]

by Tatiana Ferahian

The artist comments: "this drawing installation deals with social and cultural prototypes; manifestations of forces and counter-forces within the multicultural Cypriot society and their psyche, where the dynamics of power appear in a range of social situations and conflicting architectural landmarks. In order to persuade the viewer to relate to an image and its deliberate message,

the drawings, which almost have a cartoonish feel to them, frame phenomena by situating the problem in question within the context of everyday life. They are defined in such a way, as to reflect that of professional offset printing, which involves the splitting of a full-colour image into four separate, basic ink colour plates: cyan, magenta, yellow and black (CMYK). Ordinarily, each single-colour layer is printed in turn, one on top of the other, to give the impression of infinite colours. In this case, however, each sketch has been hand-drawn separately (with pen and ink on aluminium plates) making a direct reference to alienation, racism and prejudice, which unfortunately still exists within our society, where there is no concern for unity, and there is the perception that only individual gain matters."



Tester [2010]

by GRUP 102 [Ozge Ertanin, Oya Silbery, Evren Erkut]

Aligned on shelves, such as of a perfumery, are bottles labelled with flags and emblems, and with the portraits of the main personae associated with the Cypriot political events of the last decades, as well as, inevitably, with our dominant, collective identities. But after decades of recycling the hegemonic discourses, time has come [?] for taking the proper distance, for deconstructing and de-mythologizing all of the above. Which 'perfume' shall we try on next? The artists comment on the work as follows: "the degree of sensitivity to our environment varies from person to person; it is something that affects our psychology. Perfumes are interventions to our natural aroma, but at most times, they are essential in helping to boost our self confidence. Under the strong influence of politics in our era, the actions of a person for survival and social existence may not be understood or be accepted. *Tester* is about questioning our identities and beliefs, and about the influence of external forces on our existence."

Five Untitled photographic collages [2010]

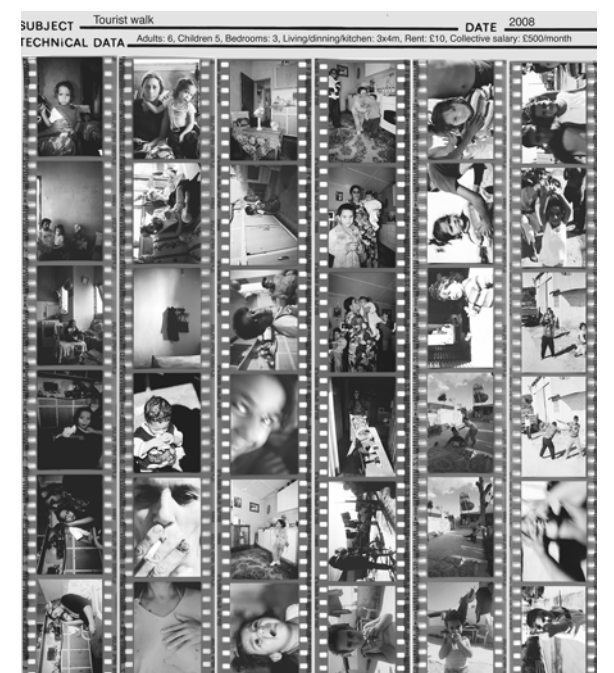
by Mustafa Erkan



The artist writes: "As with all repeated tragedies, yours has ultimately turned into a comedy. The bridges that are placed at places where tragedies turn into comedies are not for passing but are for not passing; they are not for going, but for staying. Your identity has turned into a problematic one, because of the compulsory identities. The compulsory identities are in your briefcase and your



problematic identity remains in your heart and in your mind. ... Your voyages turn into 'hullity', because when your total number of identities is multiplied by zero, you are nothing but a 'no one'. And naturally, 'no one' can go 'nowhere'. But the suitcase will nevertheless be in the picture as the burden of the emptiness, because the emptiness is a wound, and you will have to show your wound to those who ask for your identity."



Tourist Walk [2007-08]

by Christiana Solomou

The artist comments on her work: "this ongoing project investigates the social condition of the periphery so easily camouflaged in our society. The integrity of the captured moment becomes a fixed image in our history."

Ancient Whispers [2010]

six-part video installation

The *Ancient Whispers* project is presented, at the Evagoras Lanitis Centre, in parallel to the exhibition *Looking Awry: Views of an Anniversary*. Six contemporary video artists deal with the ancient myths of Prometheus and Pandora. The focus of this project is an exploration of the idea that everything is based on the interpretation and rearrangement of historic myths in order to make new connections and translations, which bear relevance to contemporary reality. The ancient whisper of these powerful myths becomes a tool for the exploration of the understanding that human behaviour is a continuous entanglement of interaction, where present social consciousness can not be isolated from historical heritage.

The participating artists are Natalie Demetriou, Yiannos Economou, Giorgos Ioannou, Nicolas Iordanou, Nesrine Khodr, and Guli Silberstein. *Ancient Whispers* is a NeMe project presented by the Independent Museum of Contemporary Art (IMCA), initiated by Yiannos Economou and coordinated by Helene Black, Yiannis Colakides and Yiannos Economou.

Forget Not [2003]

by Vicky Pericleous

The artists comments: "The work focuses on the dynamics of personal experiences and, by extension, with my responses/concerns in relation to the political and social means of expressing and dealing with a collectively traumatic experience through time. The 'I Do Not Forget' slogan marked, on many levels and in various forms, the psyche of the Greek-Cypriot population after the tragic events of 1974, with it sounding like a call to arms. The years which followed found my own generation in an ambivalent position. On the one hand, the heritage, the past, the roots, the sense of 'homeland' and its identity, and the language with which all of these are being communicated. Over these decades, one's candid reflection with respect to such meanings vis-à-vis social realities would, until recently, most likely bring about internal conflict and a guilt complex. On the other hand, the inevitable movement towards the future, calls for this legacy to be re-negotiated and adopted towards current realities and priorities, both within a collective and an individual framework. Out of such processes and needs, the 'I Do Not Forget' design has been transformed into a blaring, shining badge. The new composition takes over the entire surface, in a provocative and guiltless manner, aiming neither to accuse or propagandise nor to stand as a distant 'museum exhibit'. It could probably be dealt with as an 'experience' or a 'meeting place', which may function as the motive so that each one of us may bring to the surface his or her personal and sincere way of dealing with our recent past."





This work includes three parts: a) a doormat that bears the (unwelcoming) inscription, "there will be no homecoming", b) an installation consisting of a table laid with hand-painted plates, cutlery, drinking glasses and candlesticks, and c) a three-channel video – here playing on a single monitor – at the side of the installation. The elegant setting invites the audience to dinner, which will be served in plates bearing sketches of the Pentadakylos mountain range, in the Turkish-controlled area of Cyprus. The official political rhetoric is being served, with all the necessary pomposity and decorum. Yet the places at the table are empty. At the side of the installation, a video is playing on a TV monitor: someone is dancing to the rhythm of a *rembetico* song, accompanied by the clapping of a companion.

There Will Be No Homecomings [2010]

by Lia Lapithi

During the dance, plates – the same ones that are on the table – are being smashed. Lia Lapithi comments that, "*Rembetico*, is a term used

today to designate originally disparate kinds of urban Greek folk music. Its lyrics reflect the harsher realities of a marginalised subculture's lifestyle. Breaking plates is



an ancient Greek tradition. It was a way of mourning the deceased. After the commemorative feast, the guests would smash their plates as a way of breaking curses and scaring away evil spirits. Today, breaking plates is most commonly thought of in a celebratory way, with the Greek concept of *kefi* (high spirits and fun), but at the same time, it is an effort to 'exorcise' and forget the daily troubles. Each plate has an image of Pentadakylos mountain range in Cyprus – with each peak's name and height – along with the slogan 'Do Not Forget!'. There will be no guests at the dinner table; they are elsewhere dancing and singing, having appropriated and subverted the hegemonic political discourse, which is drowning in the cacophony of breaking plates mixed with music. Eventually, there will be no homecomings!

CINEMATIC VIEWS



The *Looking Awry* exhibition includes continuous screening of five short films, which amount to insightful looks on contemporary Cypriot reality, without any clichés or the superficial rhetoric of the dominant ideology, and without any widespread (often, hypocritical) social pretensions that keeps us from acquiring self-knowledge. Instead, they utilise humour, humanism, critical attitude, idealistic passion and poetic imagination.

Rifts [2003] by Vicki Psarias

It's been 30 years since the political events of 1974 in Cyprus, but for two London kebab shop owners, a Turkish Cypriot and a Greek Cypriot, the war has only just begun. But this time it's a price war. The forbidden romance between their children adds fuel to the fire, and it's only when one man is forced to save the other's life that the two men finally realise their fighting is futile.

Lullaby [2009] by Yianna Amerikanou

Inessa locks herself in the toilet of the cabaret where she is working. She just needs a few minutes alone to talk to her daughter back in Russia. A few minutes later her ordeal will begin: she is up for sale! If she is lucky, she will not be raped or beaten up by the cabaret owner or his clients. If she is even luckier, she might return home alive.

"The snowstorm has stopped and it took away all the snow, all the worries are now gone, so sleep in your little bed... All around you it is warm and safe, lie down and only think that in the whole world is just you and I..." Cyprus is accused of having the worst record for human trafficking in Europe. As many as 4,000 women a year



are lured to the island by false promises of employment, and are then forced to work as prostitutes...



Shushu [2007] by Diomedes Koufteros

"I like dressing as a woman, because I get more sexy." At night, Ozkan transforms with glitter, wigs and make-up. He becomes Shushu, the famous professional drag queen of Kyrenia. Ozkan is also gay and is open about his sexuality. But what is the price for openness



and uniqueness in a small society? This documentary scratches the surface of gender and sexuality issues in Cyprus.

Peace at war [2007] by Omer Yetkinel and Talat Gökdemri

After peace talks fail miserably, the optimistic atmosphere for re-unification of Cyprus turns to hopelessness. But nobody could have guessed that war would break out. Cenk, a young peace activist, sets into motion events that will change the future of Cyprus forever.



Helmets [2009] by Georgios Koukoumas

An anti-war film, in which an army postman delivers letters and messages between the world of the living and that of soldiers who are heading toward death. He thus becomes both a participant as well as a witness to the tragic absurdity of war, where all that is left for those trapped in it, are the memories of happy, peaceful times long gone.



In the exhibition *Looking Awry*, Ateş Kozal is presenting three videos: *Wish You Were Not Here* [2004], *The Never Ending Game* [2009] and the *Drinking Game* [2010]. They all utilise a direct, unpolished visual language, with generous portions of humour – at times, subversive or even 'blasphemous' – to comment on the absurdity of Cyprus' continuous division, and on the clichés and rhetoric that are continuously reproduced and consumed, thus perpetuating the status quo.



Dowry #2 [2007]

by Elina Theodorou

The artist comments on her work: "the institution of marriage is both a social and political act as it entitles married people to certain benefits denied to single people or same-sex partners. The ritual of marriage in Cyprus has been developed into a high consumer event, embellished with a lavish public display of simulated social positioning."

Regina [2004]

Klitsa Antoniou



Artemis Eleftheriadou writes: "As though abandoned in the mist of a working place, the work negates a highly staged exhibiting character. A photograph of a naked woman as seen from behind lies plainly on two wooden tripod legs, offered to the gaze of the viewer. Her hands are folded behind, in a shy gesture to hide her nakedness, emphasized by the harsh, natural light. What is rather difficult to notice is that under the table-like construction, a historical map of the Mediterranean is placed. Surprisingly, the island of Cyprus assumes the same position as the woman's sexual organs. ... The two-dimensional depiction of the island is surrounded by the powerful presence of seaweed, a common natural element of the island's sea coast, suggesting pubic hair shown from the lying figure. Constant political turmoil and successive occupations by a series of foreign states has marked, to the present, the island's history and identity. Beside the search for the belonging and position of Cyprus in geographical maps of Western origin, Antoniou juxtaposes the understanding of the female body – or better, her own body – as a cultural sign searching for its own parameters of sexuality and identity. The female body – her body – becomes the battleground of desire and rejection, in the same way as the island becomes the territory in which Cypriots are still struggling to comprehend and define their multiple roles and identities."

Fear is a Man's Best Friend [2010]

by Yiannos Economou

The work suggests that fear paralyses reason and prevents people and societies from moving forward into freedom. The apparently obsolete, by modern warfare standards, fortifications scattered around the island create a claustrophobic labyrinth. The sounds of nearby fauna disintegrate slowly into white noise, as the only outlet appears to be the nonsensical and threatening images from TV sets, the chaos of unformed data, which is impossible to become information, knowledge and ultimately enlightenment. But as



Michael Serres says, it is through the white noise and chaos, that genesis can materialise.

Capsule: Pain and Therapy [2010 version]

by Andreas Savva



School books are wrapped in bandages making an unusual sculptural piece. Books, as bearers of the official discourse that has raised generations and generations of schoolchildren, who go on to become the adult citizens of the country. Much of it amounts to ideological constructs of which collective myths are made – myths of inclusion and exclusion, of 'us' and 'them', of (our) good and (their) evil. But, as with every ailment, therapy can be painful and, for a time, disorienting. But it is necessary, if the healing of the wounds is to be achieved...



This how I will remember You [2009]

by Vicky Pericleous

The artist comments: "The work uses as a reference point an image from a series of paintings, all portraits of tearful young boys and girls in alternating versions, most probably done by Italian painter Bruno Amadio, also known as Bragolin. The paintings were widely distributed from the 1950s onwards, as mass-produced prints in post-war Europe. Intriguingly enough, they had circulated widely, although they neither were the product of political propaganda, nor did they have any intrinsic artistic value. These images have been decorating a large number of houses in post-1974 war Cyprus, an emotionally charged period due to the political and social conditions. The present installation reflects on this post-war era, which reproduced a kind of quiet and habitual depression, and a melancholy, the sensed presence of which did not really seem to bother anyone. It wishes to reproduce and circulate the spectre of an era, as well as enforce a kind of neurotic and mocking feeling of happiness; thus opening up a dialogue on issues relating to the memory of the era, along with a new Oliver Twist sense of adventure. All of these are softly lit, with the unresolved issues of the past and the uncertainty of the present."



Turkish Coffee [2009]

by Tatiana Ferahian

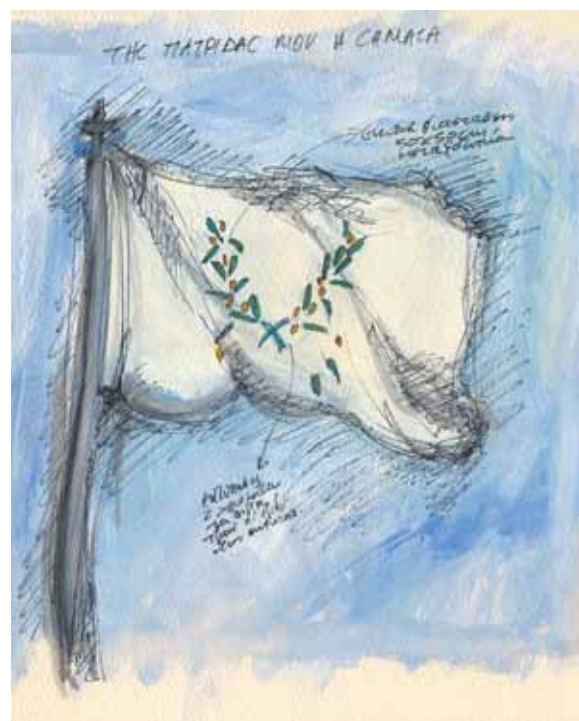
The artists comments: "This work is meant to mimic the Middle Eastern art of Turkish-coffee cup reading, the origins of which stem from the ancient Chinese art of tea leaf reading. Ordinarily, the patterns formed on the inside of the cup left by coffee residue are considered to hold visual symbols deriving from our immediate culture and our ancestry. The interpretation of these psychic insights is done according to what they mean to the reader, and is usually based on part knowledge and part intuition. The art is still practiced and adopted by various seers in Greece, Cyprus, Persia, Turkey, Armenia, Serbia and elsewhere. The cups, in the present work, hold miniature drawings of conflicting images of Cyprus and are meant to add a narrative character to this work, as they document panoramas from 'occupied' and 'non-occupied' parts of the island. At the same time the work makes a mockery of the ongoing dilemma of the local political situation, as the only place left to look for answers to the 'Cyprus question', is the bottom of the Turkish-coffee cup!"



Pyrkos [2003-06]

by Yiannos Economou

Pyrkos is about a small Greek Cypriot community near the north coast of the island, isolated in space and time because of the particularities of its recent history. Caught, as one of the inhabitants says, between the sea, the mountain and, now, two borders – the Turkish Army and the Green Line to the East, and the enclave of Kokkina to the West – they have been making a living by producing wood coal, for centuries. "... it's our job, we have no other work to live on ... my father, for eighty-five years, he burnt coal ... I was raised in the kilts, with my dad and my mum ... I'm fifty-two, and this is my job – I know no other ... a lit chunk of coal may remain in the pit, and the wind may carry it and it burn it all down..." Their work, like a ritual of some ancient alchemists, carries both the secret hope for regeneration and the futility of such belief – producing coal was never the aim of the alchemists after all...



My Fatherland's Flag [2010]

by Evgenia Vasiloude

About a year ago, a stencil graffiti appeared on several walls in the old Nicosia area. It showed an interesting variation on the emblem of the Republic of Cyprus: the dove that is normally shown on the escutcheon [shield] bearing an olive branch in its mouth, was now portrayed – without the branch-symbol of peace – to be ... flying away from the rest of the composition! Immediately underneath, the phrase, "ΤΟ ΠΟΥΛΛΙΝ ΕΠΕΤΑΣΕΝ"

["the bird has flown"] was written. This anonymous graffiti (which was soon photographed and circulated on the Internet and through e-mail), with a brilliant, humorous use of text and image, expressed the wide-spread feeling of recent years in Cyprus, especially after the failure of the effort (that culminated in the referendum on the UN sponsored Annan Plan) for reunification of the island. Utilising a familiar and readily communicable – in the Greek-Cypriot dialect – expression, in order to point out that what was probably the last chance of solving the decades-long political problem has been missed, this graffiti constituted a brave, public declaration of a thought, a fear or belief that many of us share, but few express publicly.

With her work *My Fatherland's Flag*, Vasiloude further develops the 'heretical' character of the above graffiti, by setting up a flag-bearing pole, where the Cypriot Republic escutcheon is even more deconstructed: the olive branches that frame the shield have been shedding their leaves, some of which are lying on the ground. After all, the republic's flag, for more than forty years existed as the disowned child among the collective symbols. It was never adopted by the Turkish Cypriots, while for a large portion of the Greek Cypriot population it was more of a technocratic symbol – unlike the Greek flag which as bestowed with the necessary emotional and ideological baggage proper of a national emblem. (Ironically, during the referendum for the Annan Plan – which, among other things, included provisions for a new flag of the proposed state – it was largely the ethnocentric segment of the Greek Cypriot population that rid the Cypriot flag of the disdain which it had suffered). After all, for several generations of Greek Cypriot schoolchildren, that little poem about "the flag of the fatherland" spoke neither of the yellow colour of the island's silhouette, nor the green of the olive branches, all of which make up the Cypriot flag. On the contrary, it spoke of the blue and of the all-while colour of the cross (of the flag of Greece)...



Experimental Story Telling [2009]

by Klitsa Antoniou

"The actual garment, a little flower-patterned dress that I was wearing during the 1974 war in Cyprus, is the keystone of *Experimental Storytelling*. As fortune-tellers attempt to tell the past and the fortune of the little dress – without the knowledge that this was my dress when I was a child – they construct the story of an unknown person who is me. Paradoxically it is about storytelling: a personal story, which in this context could be factual, partly incorrect or totally invented."



Freedom Square I, II III [1979-2010]

by Andreas Karayan

Urban point of reference, traffic juncture, continuous passage space for pedestrians and a meeting place, Nicosia's Freedom Square (Platia Eleftherias) is the 'setting' for Andreas Karayan's three paintings, *Young Man in Yellow T-shirt*, *Bus Stop* and *A Certain Look*. They were made in 1979-80, while the latter has been painted anew for the *Looking Awry* exhibition. The framework of the public, social sphere within which the scenes take place, is reinforced by the pasted political posters and leaflets, which make up the background against which several male figures are presented. These potentially banal excerpts of daily urban routine, contain hints of a more 'private' interaction or communication: erotic gazes are being exchanged between the figures (*A Certain Look*), are seeking response (*Bus Stop*), or are directed toward the viewer (*Young Man in Yellow T-shirt*). The forbidden and frowned-upon by the dominant, petite-bourgeois morality of Cypriot society, homoerotic character of the gaze, undermines the hegemonic, 'straight on' view of the social and political revolution that is referred to in the surrounding posters. The present works are looking 'awry', revealing the subversive power of an eroticism that may still not 'dare speak its name' within the wider political rhetoric, but its face appears and guiltlessly demands to be accepted, within a public space that itself alludes to freedom.



Reconstructing a Land[of]mine [2010]

by Nicos Synnos

The work is a new version of one of the videos that were included in the emblematic event for the celebration of the 50 years of the Republic of Cyprus, which took place on October 1st of this year. It was part of the second half of the arts performance, which focused on the present and on the (possible and/or wished-for) future of the country. Any kind of imaging or representation of the world – ever since the first such cases, in Palaeolithic times – amounts to a reconstruction of the world. The title of the present version of this audiovisual material admits and projects the inevitable nature of representation, making, at the same time, a wordplay, which includes both a humorous acceptance of the 'explosiveness' of our recent past and of our present, as well as a desire for a reconstruction of a/the land (of ours) into a more imaginative and substantial place and, thus, more our own.



Feminist Issues Still Not At Front Line [2007]

by the Washing-Up Ladies

In 1960, the newly-established Republic of Cyprus embarked on – what it was hoped for, in an overtly optimistic climate – a course to become a modernised state on the edge – but also part – of Europe. Soon the political turmoil of that decade, made it obvious that the road to modernity was not going to be easy. The tragic events of 1974 brought about a major setback to the island's progress, in financial, social and cultural terms. From around 1980 onwards, however, a new economic flourishing occurred, along with a certain, though of a lesser degree, process of cultural renewal. Yet, during all these years down to the present, social change and progress have been much slower – such as with regard to gender equality and the rights of women. What is most interesting is that the so-called 'Cyprus problem' (referring to the on-going division of the island following Turkey's military invasion 36 years ago) has greatly functioned as a kind of alibi that 'justifies' the island's slow pace with regard to human rights and other social issues. *Feminist Issues Still Not At Front Line*, by Marianna Kafaridou and Lia Lapithi [the Washing-Up Ladies] amounts to a caustic, as well as subversive, commentary on the above matters. 'Setting up camp' next to an army post along the 'line' that divides the town of Nicosia in two halves, they were photographed engaged in the popular, Cypriot pastimes of playing backgammon and drinking coffee, next to their colourful, flowery tent – one that is quite unlike the dark green, military tents that housed thousands of refugees, during the aftermath of the 1974 war. The photograph was turned into a huge banner, with added commentary, which succinctly and humorously summarises the limited progress regarding women's rights and gender issues in general, because, well dear, "the Cyprus problem is still not settled!"

Exoticisms and Other Acts. Act 1: circa 1960; Act 2: Cabana by the Beach [2007-2010]

by Vicky Pericleous



In this on-going project, film stills taken off the TV screen, have been printed directly and at random on newspaper sheets. The scenes are from Greek sex films ("blue

movies") shot around 1970, during the Junta period in Greece, while the newspapers date from 1960 to the present. Through the printing processes, as well as the additional drawings, new compositions are being created, altering at the same time the original identities of both the film scenes and the newspapers. The content of the photographs demonstrates a seeming indifference to the content of the newspapers (the original, specific content, as well as the historical, social and/or political 'value' acquired over time). The hard, black frame of the TV screen, printed on the newspaper, creates a sense of tension and anguish, that relates to the format used by the media, when presenting dramatic, 'front-line' news. This re-assembly of disparate parts, suggests a new reading/narrative, which concerns issues of 'hierarchy' within a frame, of constructing a story, identities and their multiple interpretations, and generally the construction of a 'reality' and its possible, multiple readings through time.

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Looking Awry: Views of an Anniversary

Design-Curation: Antonis Danos, Lecturer in Art History and Theory, Cyprus University of Technology.

Artists: Yianna Amerikanou, Antonis Antoniou, Klitsa Antoniou, Helene Black, Marianna Christofides, Yiannos Economou, Mustafa Erkan, Tatiana Ferahian, GRUP 102 [Özge Ertanin, Oya Silbery, Evren Erku], Yioula Hatzigeorgiou, Andreas Karayan, Diomedes Koufteros, Georgios Koukoumas, Ateş Kozal, Lia Lapithi, Stella Michaelidou, Marina Olympios, Vicky Pericleous, Vicki Psarias, Andreas Savva, Christiana Solomou, Katy Stephanidou, Nicos Synnos, Eina Theodotou, Evgenia Vasiloude, Washing-Up Ladies [Marianna Karafidou, Lia Lapithi], Omer Yetkinli-Talat Gökdemir.

Organising Assistant: Argyro Toumazou. Opening night performance directed by Ellada Evangelou.

Evagoras Lanitis Centre, Limassol [Entrance to the exhibition from the Lanitis Carob Mill parking space].

Duration: 17 November – 17 December 2010. Opening days and hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 12:00-20:00.

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