

ΔΕΣΤΕ

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March, 2013

THE SYSTEM OF OBJECTS – The Dakis Joannou Collection Reloaded by Andreas Angelidakis

Curated by Andreas Angelidakis and Maria Cristina Didero

DESTE Foundation
Nea Ionia, Athens

May 15, 2013 —
November 30, 2013

Opening Hours,
Wednesday 12:00-20:00
Saturday 10:00-14:00

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Inspired by Jean Baudrillard's seminal 1968 book *The System of Objects*, Greek architect and writer Andreas Angelidakis takes a look at the various collections Dakis Joannou has put together over the years, and enters the headquarters of the DESTE Foundation in Athens with the purpose of "reloading" them.

The DESTE building takes priority while being seen from a new perspective: *The System of Objects* looks at Joannou's collections and the vessel within which they are held as a chaotic and misleading path along which the audience's perception of art is challenged at the same time that information is offered them. Over the last decades white walls and white cubes have become the standard typology for art spaces: this exhibition is an investigation of alternative spatial experiences to be had within those white walls, behind them, or in spite of them; an attempt to reconfigure the Foundation as an exhibition device informed by the spirit of the collections it holds; a spatial experience attuned to the works in the collection itself. Dark, provocative, sexual, and uplifting, the spirit of the works guides the visitor through a complex journey across the spaces of DESTE: "We enter in the presence of work, without ever inhabiting their own space, we pass through dark and narrow corridors wondering, perhaps even worried about where the path is taking us, we arrive at sunlit empty spaces, we ascend through sections of the building never visited before, each transition a set of shifting emotions", points out Andreas Angelidakis.

In *The System of Objects* no artwork is put merely on display: they either have their own private spaces or are part of a vibrant dialogue that involves both space and visitor. The latter unconsciously embarks on a journey through the complex emotions invested in the collection, inhabiting the space of this journey as a work in itself, always questioning what it means to view and experience art and design. Most of the time, a real distance has been created between visitor and artwork, a space of inaccessibility left to subjective interpretations. As one navigates through the spaces of DESTE, which are at times complicated, at others pretty straightforward, one begins to treat the experience of space as an integral part of the project.

In the exhibition, major contemporary artworks and Cypriot antiquities, objects of radical design from the late 60s and early 70s, models for brand new buildings and marginal paraphernalia are treated as finds of a manic Google search on the collector himself. It is the emotional currency of desire that determines the value of each piece: they are "liked" as if posted on a Facebook timeline, though they are real and close enough to touch. Searches and expectations are thwarted in room



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after room of the exhibition through the accurate mapping of this rich patrimony of emotions, which tells the story of DESTE and of Dakis Joannou's passion for collecting. When finally out of this maze, visitors will have hopefully gained a vision of the collector's many worlds, here reviewed by Andreas Angelidakis, one of the most distinct creative voices on the international art scene.

“*The System of Objects* is a project about telling stories, about displacement and order, surprise and expectation. It is a revolutionary approach of one of the most fascinating collections of contemporary art. Joannou's passions comprise a universe in its own right, an intriguing, astonishing object. The myth of the collection becomes here a mythology of a world forged through specific choices, in a flame burning within”, adds Maria Cristina Didero.

The show is accompanied by a book: a 3D tour of the exhibition is overlaid on a page by page scan of Baudrillard's *The System of Objects*. The layout of images featuring works from the collection follows the exhibition's actual floor plan. In-between these layers of Baudrillard text, architectural representation of the exhibition's spaces, and images of the artworks, a text by Maria Cristina Didero introduces the project and is followed by a discussion between Dakis Joannou and Andreas Angelidakis. These different objects appear on the pages of the book like windows simultaneously open on a screen. As texts and images randomly find themselves in new proximities, relations are formed between the Baudrillard text, the space and the works in the collection, forming what could be described as an on-screen cohabitation, a system of coincidence.

Andreas Angelidakis: His experimental studio, based in Athens, Greece, is involved in building, designing and speculating the contemporary ecosystem of screen and landscape. Angelidakis' practice thrives at the intersection of opposite or collaborative systems: Art and Architecture, Online and Offline, Building and Nature, Ruin and Construction.

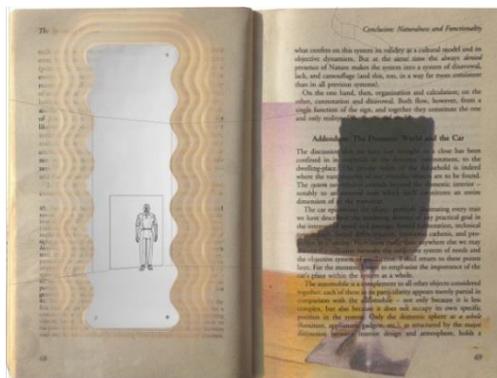
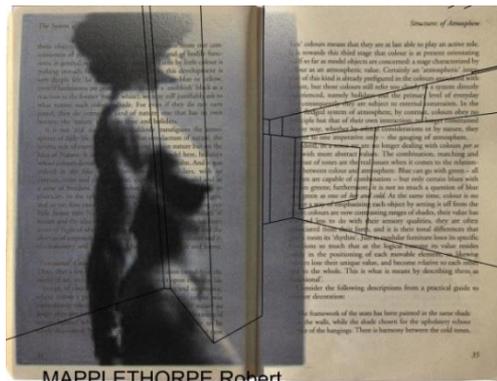
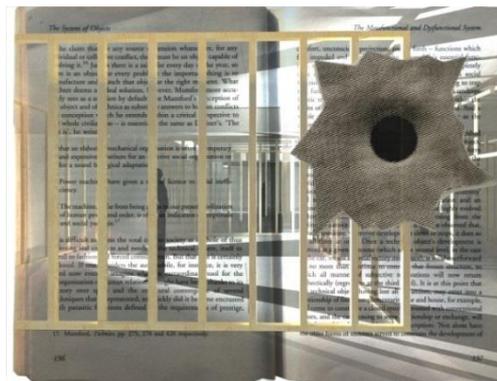
Maria Cristina Didero: She is a design professional who has been collaborating with the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany, for more than a decade. In 2011 she was appointed Director of the Fondazione Bisazza in Vicenza, Italy. As an independent curator she has carried out numerous projects for various institutions worldwide. She is a contributor to a number of international design and lifestyle magazines.



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Renderings of the publication that will accompany the show *The System of Objects*