



ΔΕΣΤΕ

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Ίδρυμα ΔΕΣΤΕ
Εμ. Παππά & Φιλελλήνων 11.
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December, 2013

ANDRO WEKUA – PINK WAVE HUNTER

Benaki Museum
Main Building
1 Koubari & Vas. Sofias Ave.
Athens

Opening: January 29, 2014 at 20:00
Duration: January 30, 2014 – March 23, 2014

Opening Hours,
Wednesday, Friday 09:00-17:00
Thursday, Saturday 09:00-24:00
Sunday 09:00-15:00
Monday, Tuesday Closed

High Resolution Images:
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/nr7dwixhc0e9si/g_2ITm8Xx0

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Andro Wekua - Pink Wave Hunter will open at the Benaki Museum, Main Building on January 29, 2014 and will be on view through March 23, 2014.

The exhibition is part of a new collaboration between the Benaki Museum and the DESTE Foundation, which aims to bring a series of solo and group contemporary art exhibitions to the museum. This collaboration between the two institutions aims to promote new and radical developments in contemporary art practice, introduce upcoming artists and important artwork to a wider public, and help inspire novel curatorial approaches.

Pink Wave Hunter marks the beginning of this collaboration and will be followed by a group show scheduled to open at the Benaki Museum, Pireos Street Annexe in the summer of 2014.

The upcoming exhibition will feature a series of sculptural models of buildings drawn from memories of Wekua's childhood in Sukhumi, Georgia. Wekua was born in the popular seaside town of Sukhumi, where he lived until his family was forced to flee during the Abkhazian conflict of the 1990's. The town was subsequently devastated by civil war, leaving the artist and his family part of the Georgian diaspora unable to return to home.

Drawing on this experience, Wekua conjures images of his childhood town from memory and, supplemented by online research, creates sculptural representations of the city's buildings. Paralleling the experience of memory and its inevitable faults, the buildings contain blank spaces that correspond to what Wekua refers to as "memory gaps." Grappling with the notion of a cityscape in flux – real in the sense of continued deterioration of historic buildings alongside reports of developing new construction – this shifting actuality runs concurrently with Wekua's interest in his own psychological connection to the city and its architecture as an impetus for recollection and re-construction. The artist describes this as a kind of subjective depth of field exercise, as elements in his cerebral cityscape come in and out of focus.

"I am more invested in the architecture of this city, and how its nature is being conserved and untouched while being allowed to deteriorate," Wekua said. "For me this city is constantly unreachable, a mirage of sorts ... maybe this city does not and has never existed."



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Constructing a subjective vocabulary based on boyhood recollections, augmented by online images and photos circulated by friends and recent visitors to the region, Wekua creates intimate architectural sculptures of Sukhumi hotels, houses, cafes, and government buildings that act as a guide to the city from his unique, and yet collective, perspective. Starting with “Pink Wave Hunter” in 2011 (and ongoing) the buildings are constructed from a variety of materials - cast concrete, plaster, wax, aluminium, bronze - and almost always rendered monochromatically - a stark contrast to the artist’s paintings, collages, films and figures. Often presented on simple tables or risers, the moderately scaled architectural forms offer a melancholic presence synonymous with empty stage sets and movie facades, invoking an enigmatic tableaux that question the intersections of history, memory, and fantasy - the basic formal grammar of Wekua’s visual world.

Andro Wekua was born in 1977 in Georgia, and studied visual arts there and in Basel, Switzerland. Throughout the course of his career, he has developed a visual language grounded in the exploration of human experience, translating fragmented abstractions of memory into the narrative cues that inform his work. Looking to genres such as fantasy, science fiction, and horror, Wekua creates fantastical and often macabre tableaux, revealing the complex processes of reconstruction and fragmentation that continually inform the personal, social, and fictive experience of remembrance.

His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at several museums including Kunsthalle Wien, Austria; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany; Castello di Rivoli, Torino, Italy; Wiels, Brussels, Belgium, Neue Kunst Halle, St. Gallen, Switzerland; Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Camden Arts Center, London; the De Haalen Haarlem, Netherlands; and Le Magasin, Grenoble, France. He has participated in numerous prestigious group shows including “ILLUMInations” at the 54th Venice Biennale (2011), “Contemplating the Void” at the Guggenheim Museum in New York (2010), “10,000 Lives,” 8th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea (2010), “Life on Mars: 55th Carnegie International”, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, and the 4th Berlin Biennial (2006).



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Organized by the DESTE Foundation and the Benaki Museum

The exhibition has been designed by the artist himself.

Coordination: Regina Alivisatos, Polina Kosmadaki



Andro Wekua, *Pink Wave Hunter*, 2010-2011
Installation View
Photo: Nils Klinger
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