

PRESS RELEASE

4th Desté Prize, 2005

Athens, 1st June, 2005

The 4th Desté Prize exhibition continues to run with success. The Desté Prize is awarded every two years to a Greek artist living in Greece or abroad. Its aim is to present the work of a new and emerging generation of artists and it constitutes an integral part of the Foundation's policy for the support and promotion of contemporary art in Greece.

The six (6) short-listed artists for the Prize – **Dora Economou, Dimitris Foutris, Christodoulos Panayiotou, Poka-Yio, Stefanos Tsivopoulos, Costis Velonis** – present their work in spaces that have specially been arranged for this occasion at the Desté Foundation's Centre for Contemporary Art.

Kostis Velonis presents three (3) sculptures made of materials such as wood, acrylic, felt, tree branches etc, expressing the artist's desire to allow himself to be drawn into the kind of fiction that highlights the nature of what is unfamiliar, untold of, and dark. He thus attempts to render himself tuned in to the immaterial, not necessarily in terms of metaphysics, but rather of feelings and emotions, even of belief systems, by means of the works' material condition.

Dora Economou presents an installation titled "Hong Kong Garden". However, the artist herself states that this is not an installation, but rather an occupation of the space in question, or else, a squat! She thus creates an environment, a space in transit, of a chiefly decorative character, using the materials themselves as a pattern, to the point where they seem to be shedding their potential autonomy and become perceived only as constituent elements of this space.

Christodoulos Panayiotou presents the sound and video installation 'Truly'. Colorful water fountains and fighter planes that are voluntarily turned back to draw the shape of a heart in the sky create an idiosyncratic space, seemingly hospitable at first, but at the same time also incredibly cruel. The work functions as an open invitation to dance, personifying encounters and dramas.

A life-size hovering garbage truck covered with praline chocolate makes up **Poka-Yio's** installation titled "DUMBO, Ectoplasm of my Childhood". DUMBO, like the dumb, pink boy-elephant that thought he could fly. DUMBO, like Bad-Kan that according to Tibetan philosophy is one of the three poisons of the soul, that of Delusion. Bad-Kan is sticky, sweet and idle, "like my childhood", the artist will claim.

In his two-screen video installation titled "Couple", **Stefanos Tsivopoulos** deals with what is fixed and settled on the one hand and with the possible deconstruction of this condition on the other. A room complete with all its furnishings (an IKEA-style display almost), lacking any specific identity, functions both as the space that contains the life of a couple and as a stage on which this life is enacted. On the far end lies a distorted space, a ground zero, where the couple is again seen to move and act in the absence, however, of a specific frame of reference.

Viewers are invited to imagine the missing parts and to compose their own narrative.

Dimitris Foutris presents an installation titled "Possible Stage for a Post-metal Guitar Solo Performance (after Mortician's "Obliteration"). With a mood of teenage nostalgia of the kind that follows us into adulthood, the artist attempts to explore various socio-political dimensions by means of combining elements of a more traditional art practice with the subculture of rock. Upon encountering the work, viewers find themselves at a moment in time charged with the feeling that something has just happened or is imminent, reminiscing perhaps about something familiar, like an imagined concert in which they were the ones performing on stage. The object of desire (the electric guitar) becomes an emblem of power... The tragic character of the empty stage plays with notions of the real and the artificial; with hints of the heroic and the fabricated.

The exhibition is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated color-print catalogue (23 x 22 cm, 103 p.) presenting the work of the six artists. Pages containing the artists' answers to a questionnaire composed by the Deste Foundation and supplied to them all are of particular interest. Answers offer a sketch of each artist's personality and outline his/her relationship with art, people and our times. It is also worth mentioning that each artist chose a color for these pages, briefly commenting on it in a small note.

In the context of the 4th Deste Prize exhibition the Deste Foundation has taken a novel initiative in inviting the artists themselves to make a presentation concerning their own work. Under the general title "**Artists of the 4th Deste Prize Present Themselves**", the Deste Foundation organizes three events, scheduled to take place in the evening of **Monday, 27th June** (Stefanos Tsivopoulos, Poka-Yio), **Wednesday, 29th June** (Kostis Velonis, Christodoulos Panayiotou) and **Monday, 4th July** (Dora Economou, Dimitris Foutris) in which artists will present their work through projections or performances, while they will also engage in a discussion with the public. Presentations are scheduled to start at **19:00**.

The 4th Deste Prize exhibition will run until Saturday, 29th October.

This year's Prize is sponsored by **Cosmoline**, a member of the INTERAMERICAN Group of Companies, which has, through its President, Mr. Dimitris Kontominas, offered continual support to this institution.

ALPHA Television Network, a member of the same Group, is the Prize's Communications Sponsor.

Opening hours:

Monday-Friday: 10:00 – 18:00, Saturday: 12:00 – 16:00

Deste Foundation

8 Omirou St., N. Psychico, 154 51, Athens

Tel: 210 67 29 460, Fax: 210 67 29 470, email: info@deste.gr

Press & Communication:

maria panayides artproductions

Margarita Grigorakis

Tel: 210 6912331, 210 6913943 Fax: 210 6980673

Email: panayides@ath.forthnet.gr

For more information:

Deste Foundation

Tel: 210 6729460 Fax: 210 6729470

Email: info@deste.gr

4th Deste Prize 2005 Committees

Organizing Committee:

Dakis Joannou - President, Deste Foundation, **Orestis Doumanis** – Publisher-Director, *Design & Art in Greece* and *Architecture in Greece*, **Xenia Kalpaksoglou** – Deste Foundation, **Yiorgos Tzirtzilakis** – Assistant Professor, University of Thessaly, Department of Architecture & Curator, **Ileana Tounta** - Director, Ileana Tounta Contemporary Art Center

Selection Committee:

Orestis Doumanis – Publisher-Director, *Design & Art in Greece* and *Architecture in Greece*, **Christoforos Marinos** – Art Critic-Curator, **Gregory Papadimitriou** – Collector, **Maria Papadimitriou** – Artist, **Yiannis Toumazis** – Director, The Nicosia Municipal Arts Center, **Augustine Zenakos** – Art Critic, *To Vima* Newspaper

Jury:

Dakis Joannou – President, Deste Foundation, **Nicolas Bourriaud** – Co-Director, Palais de Tokyo, **Urs Fischer** – Artist, **Pauline Karpidas** – Collector, **Scott Rothkopf** – Senior Editor, ARTFORUM Magazine.