



Press Release

Deste Prize 2007

25th May – 3rd November 2007

The opening of the **Deste Prize 2007 Exhibition** will take place on **Thursday, 24th May 2007** at the Deste Foundation's Centre for Contemporary Art. The Deste Prize was established in 1999 as an inseparable part of the Foundation's overall policy of supporting and promoting contemporary Greek art and is awarded every two years to a young Greek artist living in Greece or abroad.

The exhibition, which will run until **Saturday, 3rd November 2007**, will feature works of the six (6) artists, namely **Loukia Alavanou, Nikos Arvanitis, Savvas Christodoulides, Socrates Fatouros, Yiannis Grigoriadis** and **Eleni Kamma**, who were shortlisted for the Prize by this year's Selection Committee. The Committee convened especially for this purpose on 12th February and reached its decision after thoroughly examining all submitted material, which proved rich in both morphological and ideological diversity.

The six artists are currently in the last stages of preparation as they will all present new works on this occasion.

Loukia Alavanou's double video-installation, titled *Chop Chop* is a pastiche of images taken from horror films and animated cartoons that conflates the boundaries between reality and fantasy. The work attempts to comment on the process of passively experiencing the reality of spectacle: especially that of the spectacle of horror channeled through the movie industry and the Mass Media.

Nikos Arvanitis' installation *Gimmie, Gimmie, Gimmie* probes the extent of our dependence upon the power of authority and control, focusing on electrical power both as a necessary condition for the advancement of technology and as a formative factor for the individual's mental and psychological being.

In **Savvas Christodoulides'** construction titled *A Place in a Garden*, two wooden beams converge in order to support the frame of an armchair on whose arms are perched birds of the same material. The work's central part, the armchair, evokes the image of a "place-receptacle" for the living body that is hospitable par excellence, allowing the individual to perceive and contemplate space, time and the notion of continuity and to form a clear concept of such conditions. The birds (in this case, eagles) appear to be an organic feature of the garden, lending the work a subtle quality of political dissonance.

Socrates Fatouros' *Royal Couple* is a sculptural installation consisting of two forms with pronounced pictorial qualities, which develop vertically in space to create a new shape. The relationship of dialogue and interdependence between these two parts is not a forced or compulsory one, but rather one in which both are mutually complemented. It thus gives rise to a new "whole", which stands at once as a "boundary-obstacle" and as a reminder of the notion of unified, unbreakable form.

Yiannis Gregoriades takes on the role of the contemporary flâneur, so that he may continue to explore and document built space through a new series of works that bears the general title *Yugo Panoramic*. The series consists of photographs and videos focusing on the new monuments and scenes of everyday life in the cities of former Yugoslavia. The works serve as a tool in the search for those notional devices that will enable us to interpret the wider region of the Balkans.

Eleni Kamma uses the dual identity of the common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) – a plant possessing medicinal properties yet considered a weed by gardeners – as a starting point for her work. Her drawings and models are parts of a system marked by discontinuity, rupture and the intersection of binary structures. Through her work the artist calls upon the viewer to ponder issues of order, hierarchy and identity.

An international Jury will select and announce the winner of the Prize in a special ceremony that is to be held on 24th September 2007.

The Deste Prize 2007 includes a grant of €10.000.

Deste Prize 2007 Selection Committee:

Nadja Argyropoulou – Independent Curator, **Harry David** – Collector, **Elpida Karaba** – Art Critic / Curator, **Margarita Pournara** – Journalist, Kathimerini newspaper, **Kostis Velonis** – Artist, **Despina Zefkili** – Art Critic, Athinorama magazine.

Deste Prize 2007 Jury:

Dakis Joannou – President, Deste Foundation, **Pawel Althamer** – Artist, **Laura Hoptman** – Curator, New Museum of Contemporary Art , **Hans Ulrich Obrist** – Co-director of Exhibitions & Programmes and Director of International Projects, Serpentine Gallery, **Amanda Sharp** – Co-publisher, Frieze magazine.

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