



ΙΔΡΥΜΑ
ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ Π. ΓΟΥΛΑΝΔΡΗ
ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟ
ΚΥΚΛΑΔΙΚΗΣ ΤΕΧΝΗΣ

NICHOLAS P. GOULANDRIS
FOUNDATION
MUSEUM
OF CYCLADIC ART



February, 2009

Press Release

DESTE Prize 2009

Museum of Cycladic Art, 14th May – 30th September 2009

The DESTE Prize was established in 1999 and is awarded every two years to a Greek artist living in Greece or abroad. The Prize aims to showcase the work of a new and emerging generation of artists and it is an integral part of the Foundation's policy for supporting and promoting contemporary art in Greece.

The six shortlisted artists for the **DESTE Prize 2009 – Athanasios Argianas, Eirene Efstathiou, Haris Epaminonda, Rallou Panagiotou, Yorgos Sapountzis and Vangelis Vlachos** – will show their work in an exhibition that is to be presented this year in the spaces of the Museum of Cycladic Art and is scheduled to run from 14th March until 30th September 2009. This collaboration between the DESTE Foundation and the Museum of Cycladic Art is part of the latter's "Young Views" program, which aims at launching a dialogue with a younger generation, at keeping the public up to date with the latest developments in contemporary cultural production and at ensuring the dynamic presence of a space for the exchange of ideas.

An international jury of five will select and announce the winner of this year's DESTE Prize on **14th September 2009**. The Prize is accompanied by a grant of €10.000.

The DESTE Prize 2009 shortlist:

The work of **Athanasios Argianas** combines sculpture with an idiosyncratic, experimental approach of music, while it attempts new readings of a series of modern myths. Aesthetic and cultural references, the past and the present, folk art and constructivism, utopian contraptions and views originating in the realm of mathematics or astronomy make up the privileged field of the artist's investigations. A resounding echo seems to issue from the works

of Argianas, despite their being silent for the most part. The artist himself encourages a play of multiple readings in his works, though one may readily notice in his exhibitions recurring patterns of well orchestrated associations: a repetition in terms of his compositions, 'braids' fixed in circles upon his paintings, a host of modernist references.

Eirene Efstathiou explores found images, treating them at times as historical annotations or interpretations of History, at others as documents that serve to refute it. Her painting practice is inspired by her many sources, which include amateur videos, photographic images from the media, private archives, movie stills, etc. Efstathiou is interested in the possibility of mediation offered by the act of mimicking the style of such material. She perceives the decay and dissolution of the image, an inevitable result of the changes to which it is subjected, as a vehicle for describing the mediated character of memory itself and of nostalgia. By selecting, altering and finally painting these images, she creates a subjective space where the boundaries between these practices are blurred.

In the work of **Haris Epaminonda** the video and the collage often coexist, creating an array of new narratives. Drawing on archival material, her work uses free association to establish unusual mental links in what resembles a multi-faceted mnemonic atlas. It is a work that probes a universe where time seems to stand still and where bits and pieces of history recombine to compose new worlds. Her photographic collages and videos do not array images with the clarity of traditional editing methods, but rather allow their various incongruous fragments to come scattered to the surface through innumerable minute incisions and openings. Her collages are constantly in motion, suggesting a new sense of symmetry and irregularity, new gestures and rituals, all of which remain vague.

Rallou Panagiotou's work may be seen as a sculptural process producing spaces where various situations are played out; a series of 'stages' in other words. Her practice is concerned with creating a stage upon which states of mind are articulated and organized in the form of a spectacle. The scenes enacted on these stages deal with the notion of isolation, with loss of power or comforts; above all with visualizing the idea of mental tension. This tension seems to turn the material substance of things into a substance of fiction; to turn things themselves into points of personal reference, imparting unified structure to the fragmentary narrative of individual scenes.

The work of **Yorgos Sapountzis** is concerned with the notion of 'intermediate space', with the result, that is, of the reciprocal relation between the public and private domains. His performances, videos and ephemeral ('parasitic') sculptures, which often resemble stage props, create the atmosphere of an urban limbo, where everything, including the works' surroundings, is being re-determined. By turning his attention to the process of appropriating the city and to a new charting of urban space, Sapountzis renders the mundane monumental

and the monumental commonplace. At the same time, through this strategy of abolishing conventional boundaries, the personal universe exposed becomes a representation of a social and historical space whose experience recalls that of a spectacle. Public space and its limitations, as well as a practice of building personal heterotopias, are at the heart of his works.

Vangelis Vlachos employs the methodology of research and collects archival material to compose a series of open-ended narratives on recent historical experience, which re-examine official versions of history, or encourage a new approach of its dominant narrative. His recent work focuses on different experiences in modern history, mainly through archival material culled from various sources. It seems to be concerned with the extent to which such material may be used as a tool in our attempt to rethink notions of the past that continue to influence and shape our perception of the present. An equally important aspect of his research is the juxtaposition of the language of architecture and that of political and economic power and the comparisons drawn between them.

DESTE Prize 2009 Selection Committee:

Sandra Marinopoulou – Selection Committee Coordinator, President of the N. P. Goulandris Foundation; **Xenia Kalpaktoglou** – Curator, Co-director of the Athens Biennial, **Alexandra Koroxenidi** – Art Historian, Regular Contributor to *Kathimerini* newspaper (English edition), *Highlights* magazine and *Vogue*; **Sotiris Bachtsetzis** – Curator, Art Historian; **Stefanos Tsivopoulos** – Visual Artist (DESTE Prize 2005 shortlist).

DESTE Prize 2009 Jury:

Dakis Joannou – President, The DESTE Foundation; **Lisa Phillips** – Director, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; **Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo** – President, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Per L' Arte, Turin; **Jeffrey Deitch** - Deitch Projects, New York; **Thomas Struth** – Artist.

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