

Sociable Landscapes



Documentation from the performance of *Sociable Landscapes* at *Skaftfell Center for Visual Arts* (August 2014)

Sociable Landscapes is a platform for collaboration with the aim of creating a space of dialogue on the age old distinction between nature and culture. The motivation of the project is the construction of a utopia, where human intervention in nature will be an act of participation, struggle and co-evolution with the environment. Following Thoreau's *Walden*, the project understands the relation to nature as a moral one. We aim at a new aesthetic at the same time as we try to reinvent the political by going back to the most elementary human relationship. In this context artistic practice or theoretical contemplation is not only an attempt to represent and overcome the tension between *natura* and *cultura*, but rather a praxis of cultivating new sensibilities that can allow new possibilities of immersion. *Sociable Landscapes* tries to re-enact the state of affairs before the distinction was invented, a culture without the egocentricity of human civilization and a nature that is not indifferent to human presence.

Project Participants:

Suzanna Asp (b. 1976 in Sweden) is educated at The Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki and Slade School of Fine Arts, London. She graduated with a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, in 2009. She works with site-specific interventions, mixed media installations, performance and text. Her recent projects build on queer feminist and post-colonial theory. Asp has held a number of solo exhibitions, most recently *Secret Garden Verönd* at Skaftfell Center for Visual Arts, Seydisfjörður, Iceland, 2014 and *Given*, 1. Opening, 2. Closure at Forum Box, Helsinki (2012). Group exhibitions include; *Artistic Research* at Konstfack, Stockholm (2013), *Dimensions of Sharing* at Overgaden Institute of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen (2013/2012), *Rummaging* at Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm (2009) and *Lost in Translation* at Antrepo #5, 9th Istanbul Biennial (2005). She has an upcoming solo exhibition at Gallery Box in Gothenburg, 2015. www.suzannaasp.com

Maria Glyka was born in Athens in 1973. She has studied painting (MFA) at the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL (2006) with a scholarship by the greek state scholarships foundation, painting (BA) at the Athens School of Fine Arts (2002) and graphic design at the Vakalo College of Art and Design (1993). She is currently teaching visual communication on the MA and BA at the Vakalo College of Art and Design, Athens. In her work she brings together external and internal spaces using large scale prints and projections, playing with the boundaries of painting and large site specific structures of paper and cardboard. She has won numerous awards including the Jerwood Contemporary Painters (2007), the Germaine Muse (2005) for “Young artist in European Museums”, the Celeste Prize in London (2006). She has participated in residencies and exhibitions internationally (Greece, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, Usa etc). She has been one of the main coordinators of Utopia Project workshops hosted by ASFA in Rethymno, Crete, Greece.

Georgios Papadopoulos (b. 1975) combines economics and philosophical analysis with an exploratory artistic practice. His research gravitates around money and its socioeconomic functions. He holds a Master in Philosophy of the Social Sciences from the London School of Economics and is pursuing a PhD at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam. Between 2008 and 2009 Papadopoulos was a researcher at the theory department of the Jan Van Eyck Academy, in Maastricht, and in 2012 he was awarded the Vilém Flusser Residency for Artistic Research by the transmediale festival and the University of the Arts (UdK) in Berlin. He has published in scientific journals, art reviews, and edited volumes in English, Greek and Spanish. His last book, entitled *Grexit*, assembles an archeology of the current financial crisis in Greece and the European Union.

Vassilis Vlastaras (b 1963) lives and works in Athens. He is a visual artist and an Assistant Professor at the Athens School of Fine Art. He creates large-scale site-specific installations and he experiments with various media in painting, drawing, photography, video, real time video and sound performances and computer interactive installations. His artistic practice examines the relationship between artwork and urban space, the notion of the ephemeral, and the interrelation between spatial movement, material and sound. Currently his work investigates the personal and social implications of loss, oblivion, history, memory and the subsequent acts of remembrance/memorialization and the relationships between the appetite for life and the frenzy of death. He has been a member of ΠΛΑΤΦΟΡΜΕΣ since 2002, a collective of art professionals ranging from visual artists to art theorists, musicians and film makers in Athens. He has been the main coordinator of Utopia Project an annual summer residency program for artists who intend to collaborate with experienced artists, theorists and political scientists, that is hosted by ASFA every July since 2006 in the annex of ASFA in Rethymno, Crete, where he performed a series of lectures and seminars about each year's utopia's subject. He has taken part in many exhibition projects, solo and group shows in Greece and abroad.