

— ESCAPE FROM THE ATTIC. ESCAPE FROM THE CRISIS —

«ΥΠΕΡΟΧΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΣΩΤΕΡΙΚΗΣ ΟΡΑΣΗΣ»

ESCAPE FROM THE ATTIC. ESCAPE FROM THE CRISIS

“THE SUPERIORITY OF INNER VISION”

Petros Vrellis • Πέτρος Βρέλλης

Babis Venetopoulos • Μπάμπης Βενετόπουλος

Kyriakos Katzourakis • Κυριάκος Κατζουράκης

Harris Kondosphyris • Χάρης Κοντοσφύρης

Kyriakos Mortarakos • Κυριάκος Μορταράκος

Stella Baraklianou • Στέλλα Μπαρακλιάνου

Xenis Saxinis • Ξενίς Σακίνης

Giorgos Tsakiris • Γιώργος Τσακίρης

Yiannis Fokas • Γιάννης Φωκάς

Επιμελήτρια: Μαρία Κενανίδου

Curator: Maria Kenanidou





## "THE SUPERIORITY OF INNER VISION"<sup>1</sup>

Even though in the contemporary art of the postmodern, or however contemporary art has settled in calling itself, the understanding of art history and the creation of new ways of perceiving it through terms of severance has started to wear out, postmodernism is confined in the shape of techniques, quite often very marketable, and shows a lack of knowledge and perspective that renders us insecure and meteor in the face of the future.

The main features of this art, set against the financial crisis, are vague and indistinguishable and certainly imply an equation with gestures of denial, challenge, withdrawal, fragmentation, annihilation, alienation, discontent or release from rules, movement away from cliché situations, without imposing a retrospection, or necessarily a liberation comparison from the "introspective" modernism of *Donald Kuspit*<sup>5</sup> or that of *R. L. Jones, Jr.*<sup>6</sup>. The "progressive denial of meaning" of Adorno became a "gigantic process of loss of meaning" of Jean Beaudrillard and a "multiplicity of competing small narratives" of Lyotard and the "de-definition of Rosenberg not only of art, but also the artist's who"<sup>7</sup> or "an object of denial" by Richard Wolin, apart from classifications.

The whole structure of art history in the journey through space and time is based on this very model of acceptance-challenge-overthrow, and here lies the role of art, the challenge and overthrow of anything that attempts to become granted, a part of the status quo, a stereotype. The creatively deconstructive role of art, that always brings reversal in new ways, so as to preserve what keeps the human alive, the quest for its completion, the quest for the

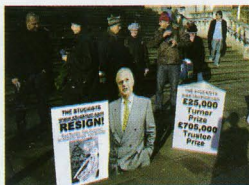
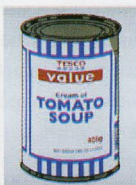
essence that has not been tainted by the established order, has led to yet another reinterpretation of postmodern art, *YBAs, Post-YBAs, Stuckism kai Anti Stuckism «Post-Painterly Abstraction and Painterly Abstraction etc.*

Even though it is too early and we don't have the necessary temporal distance which will allow us to penetrate and enter into interpretations of the flow of progress of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the present century, what we discern are displacements in a geo-cultural mapping, since on the map things constantly move, centres and markets emerge, black holes are erased and come into being in the cultural firmament, redistributions occur, movements, alterations, ruptures, gaps, discontinuities, stirring ups and returns that will end up somewhere when the time comes, as long as we sustain a critical attitude.

It can all be epitomized then to the indiscernible, and with the term "indiscernibilia" do we signify the entropy, or the Hegelian end of an era and of the art history?<sup>8</sup> Or simply with a turn to what Beckett calls superiority of the inner vision<sup>9</sup> and what Auguste Rodin phrases as "art that only begins with the inner truth"<sup>10</sup> do we manage to find the end of the thread?

The financial crisis is the opportunity to reevaluate certain things. The pop postmodern era, with the media's contribution, having the capacity to create art idols, that from the beginning of their student course realized more exhibitions during their short-lived careers than other, much better painters that had been rejected, perhaps now these artists will have the opportunity to claim the position they deserve in the world of visual arts.

Optimistically, perhaps these financial difficulties will



/ Charles Thomson, *Sir Nicholas Serota Makes an Acquisitions Decision*<sup>3</sup>

/ Tesco Value Tomato Soup, Banksy<sup>4</sup>

/ Outside the Turner Prize, Tate Britain, 2005: Stuckists demonstrate against the purchase of Chris Ofili's *The Upper Room*. The cutout is Tate Chairman Paul Myners<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Samuel Beckett, *Le monde et le pantalon*, 1989, Les Editions de Minuit, trans. Maria Papadima, pub. Epsilon, 2005, pg.33

<sup>2</sup>[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8d/Charles Thomson, Sir Nicholas Serota Makes an Acquisitions Decision.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8d/Charles_Thomson_Sir_Nicholas_Serota_Makes_an_Acquisitions_Decision.jpg)

<sup>3</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2005\\_Stuckist Turner demo \(2\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2005_Stuckist_Turner_demo_(2).jpg)

<sup>4</sup>[www.woostercollective.com/images2/banksysym4.jpg](http://www.woostercollective.com/images2/banksysym4.jpg)

<sup>5</sup>Donald Kuspit, *The New Subjectivism: Art in the 1980s*, Umi Research Press, 1988, p.82

<sup>6</sup>R. L. Jones, Jr. "Modern and Postmodern: Questioning Contemporary Pedagogy in the Visual Arts," In J. Hutchins & M. Suggs (eds.), *Art Education: Content and Practices in a Postmodern Era*, 1997, pp.91-102

<sup>7</sup>Harold Rosenberg, *The de-definition of Art*, University of Chicago Press, 1983

<sup>8</sup>Arthur Danto, *After the End of the Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, Princeton 1997

<sup>9</sup>Samuel Beckett, *Le monde et le pantalon*, 1989, Les Editions de Minuit, trans. Maria Papadima, pub. Epsilon, 2005, pg.33

<sup>10</sup>Auguste Rodin, *Testament*, trans. Alexandros Adamopoulos, pub. Agra, pg.15



ωθητικού της συστήματος; Προβokaτόρικα, προκλητικά στις αισθήσεις, στην ηθική με πρόφαση να σοκάρουν το σύστημα, στο άλλοθι της ελευθερίας αυτής δημιουργούν συνήθως συντηρητικά και εννοσιολογικά παρωχημένα έργα, βανδαλίζοντας τον πραγματικό προβληματισμό της σύγχρονης σκέψης για την τέχνη, σε μια εποχή που ο μεταπολιτικός κυνισμός και η συναινετική λογική επιδρούν καταλυτικά στο πεδίο της κουλτούρας.

Οι καλλιτέχνες του συγκεκριμένου project μέσα από το εναπόθεμα της ωριμότητάς τους, στα έργα-απόσταγμα της εμπειρίας τους, προτείνουν την ανάγκη αναπροσδιορισμού-αναπροσανατολισμού με μία νέα ματιά μέσω της κοινής εμπειρίας, ώστε να διασωθεί το ουσιαστικό στην τέχνη χωρίς φορμαλιστικές, περιοριστικές αντιλήψεις θεώρησης παραγωγής, υποδοχής και ερμηνείας. Προτείνουν την παραγωγή έναντι της αναπαραγωγής, την υγιή αντίδραση και πρόκληση για την έξοδο-ESCAPE από την αποστείρωση, την αποχαύνωση και την αδράνεια.

Η μεταμοντέρνα τέχνη μετά το πέρας μιας μετακαπιταλιστικής, μετασοσιαλιστικής, μετακομμουνιστικής κοινωνίας ακόμη πονάει. Με τον συνδυασμό της αδηφάγου καλλιτεχνικής φιλόδοξης επιδίωξης αποδοχής και ανάδειξης άρα και οικονομικής ανταπόδοσης, με φαινόμενα του τύπου *pornomiseria*<sup>14</sup> και καταχρηστικές ευκαιριακές καλλιτεχνικές πρακτικές, που επιβάλουν πολιτιστικές πολιτικές, η αγορά της τέχνης διαμορφώνει την παραγωγή καλλιτεχνικού έργου περισσότερο από όσο θα έπρεπε, χειραγωγώντας την υποδοχή και ερμηνεία.

Όμως αν και μια οικονομική κρίση μπορεί να επηρεάσει τόσο έντονα την αγορά της τέχνης, την ίδια την τέχνη αισιόδοξα μπορεί να την οδηγήσει σε διέξοδο μέσα από μια υγιή «εσωτερική εξωστρέφεια», που συνοψίζεται σ' αυτό που ο Κ. Αζελός υπογραμμίζει: «Η Τέχνη δεν είναι, δεν υπάρχει ως στοιχείο μιας συνεχούς παρουσίας και αναπαράστασης. Δεν αποτελεί γεγονός το οποίο είναι, υπάρχει αλλά ξετυλίγεται στο χωροχρόνο με ιδιάζοντα τρόπο, στον δικό της κόσμο που μας κάνει διαθέσιμους για τον κόσμο [...] απαιτώντας να ξεπεράσουμε το δικό μας κλείσιμο.»<sup>15</sup> Γιατί όπως ο Καστοριάδης, αναφέρει:

«...ζούμε στο χείλος μιας διπλής αβύσσου. Από τη μια μεριά είναι η αβύσσος που υπάρχει εντός μας, η αβύσσος που είμαστε εμείς οι ίδιοι, και από την άλλη είναι το χάος που ενεδρεύει πίσω από τα εύθραυστα φαινόμενα, πίσω από τον οργανωμένο κόσμο στον οποίο ζούμε».<sup>16</sup>

Η σύγχρονη τέχνη, μέσα στη δίνη της φαυλότητας των πολιτικοοικονομικών συμφερόντων και της πλουτοκρατίας, αδυνατεί να διατηρήσει μια ουσιαστική σχέση τόσο με τη μνήμη του παρελθόντος όσο και με το όραμα για το μέλλον. Ίσως αυτό επιτευχθεί τόσο σε ατομικό όσο σε συλλογικό επίπεδο, όταν μια ριζική μεταβολή των αξιών ανασυνθέσει την κοινωνική, ψυχική και νοητική δομή του προσώπου, οξύνει την εσωτερική του όραση αναδεικνύοντας την υπεροχή της και υπενθυμίζοντας τη θέση του Rainer Maria Rilke: «...από τη δημιουργία κρατείται η γενιά εκείνων που δεν ζουν ακόμη και περιμένουν την εποχή τους...»<sup>17</sup> αρκεί εμείς να είμαστε «...διαθέσιμοι σ' αυτό που επέρχεται...».<sup>18</sup>

*Μια οικονομική κρίση λοιπόν που να μας υπενθυμίζει ότι «Μάλλον έτσι ήταν πάντοτε. Μάλλον υπήρχε εξαρχής μεγάλη απόσταση μεταξύ κάποιας εποχής και της μεγάλης τέχνης που γεννιόταν σε αυτήν. Μάλλον τα έργα τέχνης ήταν πάντοτε εξίσου μοναχικά όπως και σήμερα μάλλον η δόξα δεν ήταν παρά η προσωποποίηση όλων των παρεξηγήσεων που συγκεντρώνονταν γύρω από ένα καινούριο όνομα. Δεν υπάρχει λόγος να θεωρήσουμε ότι κάποτε η κατάσταση ήταν διαφορετική. Αφού η διαφορά των έργων τέχνης από όλα τα άλλα αντικείμενα έγκειται στην μελλοντική τους φύση, τα έργα τέχνης είναι τα πράγματα που ακόμα περιμένουν την εποχή τους να έρθει...»*<sup>19</sup>

Μαρία Κενανίδου

Ιστορικός Τέχνης

Γενικά εισηγήτρια Π.Δ.Κ.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5VMVT5ZqeM> «pornomiseria» από μια ομάδα κινηματογραφιστών στην Κολομβία, τους Louis Ospina και Carlos Mayolo. Η κριτική τους αποσκοπούσε στην αποκάλυψη της ηδονοβλεπτικής και φετιχιστικής χροιάς του ενδιαφέροντος των ευρωπαίων καταναλωτών αλλά, κυρίως, στην έλλειψη εμπρίθειας από τους δημιουργούς, σε σχέση με τα θέματα που παρουσίαζαν, και τον οπιορτυνισμό τους μέσω της εκμετάλλευσης και εμπορευματοποίησης των κοινωνικών προβλημάτων.

<sup>15</sup> Κώστας Αζελός, Το άνοιγμα στο επερχόμενο και το αίνιγμα της τέχνης, εκδ.

Νεφέλη, Αθήνα 2009, σελ.31

<sup>16</sup> Κορνήλιος Καστοριάδης εκδ. Ψυφλον, 2008

<sup>17</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, Von Kunst und Leben Schriften, «Περί Τέχνης», 1898, μπη. Ιωάννα Παρασκευίδη, εκδ. Πρίντα, 2010, σελ. 84

<sup>18</sup> Κώστας Αζελός, Το άνοιγμα στο επερχόμενο και το αίνιγμα της τέχνης, εκδ. Νεφέλη, Αθήνα 2009, σελ.44

<sup>19</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, Von Kunst und Leben Schriften, «Έργα Τέχνης», 1902, μπη. Ιωάννα Παρασκευίδη, εκδ. Πρίντα, 2010, σελ. 109



play a decisive role in eliminating this artistic corruption and will reinstate the quality which was suppressed by the postmodern intuition, as well as by the insatiable appetites of the purchasing public. Maybe this crisis will challenge the self-sufficiency of the star system and re-instate the real value of the art work of art. Maybe this way the quality-price of the art work will no longer be identified with its buying price. Perhaps this was the opportunity, the starting point of questioning the previous choices of the plutocracy and the trustees of fabricated bonds who wished invest in art.

Perhaps the evaluation of artists worthy of a collection would not be defined by the percentages of art dealers and the ignorance and lack of learning of collectors, located in their fear of taking a risk on a new artist. Perhaps a financial crisis will lead to redefinitions and through the effort to reconstruct, maybe realizations will occur, along with maturity in the manner of production, viewing, reception, promotion, organization, administration, management, cooperation and equality, instead of discriminations in the public relations network, erasing the bitterness of the worthless and the silent acceptance of inevitability and utopia.

Re-approaching the cultural product that the society of show and spectacle exalts or bulimically devours, depending on the economic and commercial commands. What Axelos mentions about the theatre and the cinema metaphorically takes place: "theatricality and anti-theatricality" – as a theoretical postmodern context – "move indisputably on a problematic stage [...] despite the production of certain important works, [...] the cheap industry of individual and collective fantasies dominates, rendering it void of content and overflowing with individual and mass psychological and sociological banalities."<sup>11</sup>

The sad thing is, as Rosenberg notes, that these efforts to commercialize art, the cultural industries and strategies, within a frame of promotion, disposal and diffusion of the cultural product, constitute efforts to commercialize the authentic experience, through the techniques of psychological manipulation that the mass of media producers have at their disposal.<sup>12</sup> They absorb and

mutilate originality and the ideological framework that this eternal search for the essence of Being and Logos would produce, the real goal of art, not the commercialized art, but this internal primitive need of humans.

Each historical period produces and shapes values, and it is to our advantage to understand that. The observation of a work of art, the criticism of it, the perception of this particular articulation is of value when the work of art refers to reality, and doesn't merely confirm it, and when it controls and not simply contains the economic, social, ideological, political, cultural context, through which it was born and exists.

What are the intentional, representational or not, semiotic, symbolic, expressive qualities of the contemporary work? Where do the constant notional changes in practices, in the interpretational-critical-explanatory viewing and reception of a work of art, in the critical interpretation and cultural history, philosophy and aesthetics finally lead to? The changes in these areas signify an imminent alteration in our notional orientation for the beginning of the new millennium. It is too early to determine how superficial or fundamental these changes will be. What they constitute though is of utmost importance: perhaps a permanent violation of the dominant philosophy of the first half of the century.<sup>13</sup>

But how, in the context of this avant guard art, is shock and the vulgarization and oppression of values and morals in the name of freedom of expression employed, in the context of a realism-manipulation of reality with socio-politico-cultural practices according to the demands of the market and its promotional system? Provocatively, tempting to the senses, to morality under the pretext of shocking the system, with the alibi of this freedom, they usually create conservative and notionally outdated works, vandalizing the true questioning of contemporary thought about art, in an age when post-political cynicism and consensual logic have a catalytic effect in the cultural field.

The artists of this specific project, through the deposit of their maturity, in their works that are the distillation of their experience, put forth the need to redefine and re-orientate with a new vision through the collective

<sup>11</sup>Kostas Axelos, *To anoigma sto eperhomeno kai to ainigma tis tehnis*, pub. Nefeli, Athens 2009, pg.41-42

<sup>12</sup>Harold Rosenberg, *Discovering the Present*, "The Herd of Independent Minds", University of Chicago Press 1973, ISBN 0-226-72680-0, pp15-16.

<sup>13</sup>Joseph MARGOLIS, *Radical Changes in Aesthetics*, Interpretation Radical But Not Unruly: The New Puzzle of the Arts and History (University of California Press, 1995)



experience, so that the essential in art will be redeemed without the formalistic restrictive attitudes of regarding production, reception and interpretation. They suggest production instead of reproduction, a healthy reaction and challenge to escape from sterilization, indolence and inertia.

Postmodern art is still in pain after the end of a post-capitalist, post-socialist, post-communist society. Combined with the insatiable artistic ambitious pursuit for acceptance and elevation, therefore financial reciprocity, with phenomena like «pornomiseria»<sup>14</sup> and excessive opportunistic artistic practices, imposed by cultural politics, the art market defines the production of artistic work more than it should, thus manipulating acceptance and performance.

Although a financial crisis can influence the art market so heavily, art itself can optimistically be led through an outlet, via a healthy “internal extroversion”, summed up in what K. Axelos underlines: “Art is not, does not exist as an element of a continuous presence and representation. It is not a fact that is, exists, but it evolves in time and space in a distinctive manner, in its own world that makes us available to the world [...] demanding from us to overcome our own closure.”<sup>15</sup> Because, as Kastoriadis mentions, “we live in the edge of a double abyss. On the one side lies the abyss that exists within us, the abyss that is ourselves, while on the other side lies the chaos that lurks behind fragile phenomena, behind the organized world we live in.”<sup>16</sup>

Modern art, in the vortex of corrupt politico-economic interests and plutocracy, fails to preserve a substantial relationship not only with the memory of the past, but also with the vision of the future. Perhaps this will be accomplished on an individual and a collective level, when a radical transformation of values will reconstruct the social, psychic and mental fabric of humanity, sharpen its inner vision, demonstrating its superiority and remind us of Rainer Maria Rilke’s position: “the generation of those that are not yet alive and await for their time, hangs

from creation”<sup>17</sup>, as long as we are “available to what is about to come”.<sup>18</sup>

It’s a financial crisis then that will remind us that “probably it has been like that all along. There probably always existed a great distance between a particular age and the great art that was born in it. Probably works of art have always been just as lonely as they are today, maybe glory was nothing more but the personification of all the misunderstandings surrounding a new name. There is no reason why we should assume that things have sometime been different. Since the difference of works of art from all other objects lies in their future nature, works of art are those things that still await for their time to come.”<sup>19</sup>

**Maria Kenanidou**

*Art historian*

*General Coordination,*

*Action Field Kodra*

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5VMVT5ZqeM> «pornomiseria» from a team of Colombian filmmakers, Louis Ospina and Carlos Mayolo. Their criticism was aimed at revealing the voyeuristic and fetishistic nature of the European consumers’ interests, but mainly at the lack of profundity from the creators, in relation to the stories they presented and their opportunistic attitude through the exploitation and commercialization of social problems.

<sup>15</sup> Kostas Axelos, *To anoigma sto eperhomeno kai to ainigma tis tehnis*, pub. Nefeli, Athens 2009, pg. 31

<sup>16</sup> Kastoriadis Kornilios pub. Ypsilon, 2008

<sup>17</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *Von Kunst und Leben Schriften*, “Peri Tehnis”, 1898, trans. Ioanna Paraskelidi, pub. Printa, 2010, pg. 84

<sup>18</sup> Kostas Axelos, *To anoigma sto eperhomeno kai to ainigma tis tehnis*, pub. Nefeli, Athens 2009, pg.44

<sup>19</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *Von Kunst und Leben Schriften*, “Erga Tehnis”, 1902, trans. Ioanna Paraskelidi, pub. Printa, 2010, pg. 109.



Στέλλα Μπαρακλιάνου | Stella Baraklianou



*Let down your hair*, 2009-2010

Φωτογραφία, ψηφιακή εκτύπωση λάμδα, 125x125x125εκ. Συνθετικά μαλλιά (extensions) 5,30 μ.

*Let down your hair*, 2009-2010

Photograph, digital lamda print, 125x125x125cm. Hair extensions 5,30 m