

NEON

PRESS RELEASE

CITY PROJECT 2016

NEON presents *The Performance* by Zafos Xagoraris

Ipirou & 3rd September Str. 60

1 – 29 December 2016

The historic theatre performance *Our Great Circus* is the starting point for Zafos Xagoraris and his work *The Performance*, curated by Katerina Gregos and presented by the NEON Organisation for Culture & Development in December 2016.

The installation forms part of the **CITY PROJECT** initiative. CITY PROJECT is an initiative for public art and the city which is conceived and commissioned annually by NEON. NEON aims to activate public and historical places through contemporary art, contributing to the interaction of art, society and the city.

Zafos Xagoraris draws inspiration from the play *Our Great Circus* by poet, playwright and screenwriter Iakovos Kambanellis, performed in 1973 at the Athinaion Theatre on Patisision & Marni St.

The installation *The Performance* is the first part of a project which will be completed in the Spring of 2017 with a film and a book. The fruit of long research by the artist, the work studies the 1973 production of the play and its impact on the cultural history of Greece as seen with the benefit of hindsight. The reference to this historic play aims to revisit questions about the role of artists in times of crisis, the potential for cooperation among different artistic fields, the history of the theatre in our country and the readiness of its people to resist or influence social reality.

The project starts from a replica of the marquee for the play, mounted on a mobile structure and presented in a car park behind the now derelict Athinaion Theatre. Presented at that spot, the work is seen by passing pedestrians and drivers and triggers a moment of recognition followed by suspension of disbelief, unexpectedly bridging the past with the present. In this way, CITY PROJECT 2016 promotes NEON's cause and fits into the urban fabric to become an integral part of the everyday activities of the city and its inhabitants.

CITY PROJECT 2016

Zafos Xagoraris, *The Performance*

Duration: 1 December – 29 December 2016

Official Opening: 1 December 2016, 19.00

Opening hours: Thursday-Sunday 18.00-21.00 | Closed on 24-26 Dec 2016

Location | Car Park, Ipirou & 3rd September Str. 60

Free Entrance

Notes for Editors

NEON is a nonprofit organization that works to bring contemporary culture closer to everyone. It is committed to broadening the appreciation, understanding, and creation of contemporary art in Greece and to the firm belief that this is a key tool for growth and development.

NEON, founded in 2013 by collector and entrepreneur Dimitris Daskalopoulos, breaks with the convention that limits the contemporary art foundation of a collector to a single place. It acts on a multitude of initiatives, spaces, and civic and social contexts. It seeks to expose the ability contemporary art has to stimulate, inspire, and affect the individual and society at large. NEON constructively collaborates with cultural institutions and supports the programs of public and private institutions to enhance increased access and inventive interaction with contemporary art.

Zafos Xagoraris (Athens, 1963) studied at the Athens School of Fine Arts and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His Ph.D. from the department of Architecture of the National Technical University of Athens was on the construction of miracles by Hero of Alexandria. His work consists of drawings, participatory actions and public installations of sound amplification mechanisms. He has participated in exhibitions such as the 27th Sao Paulo Bienal (2006), Manifesta 7 (2008), 2nd Athens Biennale (2009) and the 1st Thessaloniki Biennale (2007), among others. He was a visiting scholar at the Michigan University, University of Sassari, Columbia University, on a Fulbright scholarship. He is currently the Head of the Visual Arts Department at the Athens School of Fine Arts, where he also teaches.

Katerina Gregos (born in Athens, Greece) is an art historian, curator, lecturer and writer, based in Brussels, Belgium. She has curated numerous large-scale exhibitions and biennials, including, more recently: the Belgian Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale; the 5th Thessaloniki Biennial (2015); *No Country for Young Men: Contemporary Greek Art in Times of Crisis*, BOZAR, Brussels 2014, (which was selected by the German art magazine *Monopol* as one of the best exhibitions of the year); *The Politics of Play* for the Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art in Sweden (2013), and *Liquid Assets: In the Aftermath of the Transformation of Capital* for the Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria (2013); *Newtopia: The State of Human Rights*, at several venues in Mechelen & Brussels (2012); and Manifesta 9 (as co-curator), in Genk, Belgium (2012). In 2011 she curated *Speech Matters* the critically acclaimed exhibition on freedom of speech for the Danish Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennial, and co-curated *The Eye is a Lonely Hunter*, the 4th Fotofestival Mannheim Ludwigsafen Heidelberg, Germany. Gregos is a visiting lecturer at several art academies, including the HISK Higher Institute of Arts in Ghent, and the Jan Van Eyck Academy, in Maastricht. She frequently serves as a member of numerous juries, including more recently: the juries for the Finnish and Irish Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale and the jury for the 2015 Hasselblad Prize. This year she was also on the jury of the Berlinale – the Berlin International Film Festival. Recently, Gregos was also a guest speaker at TEDx lecture series. Forthcoming projects include: the MAC International, Belfast (autumn 2016), *A World Not Ours*, Schwarz Foundation, Samos, Greece (summer 2016); *Uncertain States: Artistic Strategies in States of Emergency*, Akademie der Kunst, Berlin (autumn 2016);

More information on: neon.org.gr

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