

NEON

Αμαρουσίου Χαλανδρίου 89
Χαλάνδρι, 152 33, Αθήνα

Amaroussiou Halandriou 89
Halandri, 152 33, Athens, GR

T +30 213 0187 700

F +30 210 6853 011

neon.org.gr

PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 21 January 2016

NEON: Exhibitions, educational initiatives, international collaborations

NEON is pleased to announce an extensive program of exhibitions, educational initiatives and institutional collaborations for 2016. This year's activities include exhibitions by renowned Greek and international artists organised in partnership with other cultural institutions, educational programs, funding for the creation of new works, and initiatives to encourage dialogue across the city of Athens.

During its first three years in the world of contemporary culture, since its launch in 2013, NEON has presented 13 exhibitions and supported over 80 projects through its grants scheme, and over 3,000 pupils in 75 schools across Athens who have taken part in its educational programs.

NEON PATHS | EXHIBITIONS

NEON does not restrict itself to just one space,
it activates public spaces in Athens and the periphery

Athens | Benaki Museum – Pireos St. Annexe | NEON in collaboration with the Marina Abramović Institute
10 March – 24 April 2016

NEON Greece and Marina Abramović Institute (MAI) are pleased to announce a major collaboration taking place in Athens this March. The six-week program will comprise a participatory project for the public based on the Abramović Method, in conjunction with a parallel program of Performance and Immaterial Art called NEON-MAI Lab. The Abramović Method is a series of exercises designed by the artist over the course of 40 years to explore and push the boundaries of body and mind. In this project the public becomes inextricably woven with the art. The Lab will present durational works, conversations, workshops and lectures together with emerging Greek performance artists who were personally selected by Abramović. Through this collaboration, NEON's biggest and most ambitious project to date, it seeks to help foster a new generation of performance artists in Greece, whilst providing a unique interactive cultural experience for the Greek public.

Athens – Larissa – Syros – Nafplion | Touring Exhibition 2016-2017
Flying over the Abyss

The exhibition *Flying Over the Abyss*, which NEON presented in Rethymnon and Thessaloniki in 2015, is set to continue its iteration around Greece, travelling in **Athens** and **Larissa** in 2016, as well as **Syros** and **Nafplion** in 2017.

In Athens, the exhibition will include works by additional artists, and will be presented in the **Athens Conservatory**, a space that the public is not familiar with.

The exhibition will run from May through July 2016.

The choice of works by Greek and international artists is inspired by the writings of the great Cretan thinker Nikos Kazantzakis, and in particular by his series of spiritual exercises titled *Ascesis*. The exhibition aims to bring the art works into dialogue both with each other and with the text of the *Ascesis* in order to shed light on the path of human life, from birth to death. NEON is working with Nikos Kazantzakis Museum to put the original, hand-written text of *Ascesis* on display at the exhibition, offering visitors a more rounded experience.

As part of the exhibition's accompanying educational program, a special learning kit will also be produced in collaboration with the Hellenic Children's Museum.

Community Projects 2016 | Attica

Community Projects is an initiative NEON established in 2014, with two such projects to be realized annually. Their aim is to implement contemporary art programs in Athenian neighbourhoods that rely on the participation of local inhabitants, independent groups and artists. These Community Projects form a living field of artistic activities in which artists give prominence, along with citizens, to issues that concern specific local communities. Staying true to these efforts for a third year, NEON will be organising two Community Projects as part of its ongoing mission to contribute to the broader effort of the city's gentrification, the inhabitant's every day routine, and, their relationship with the city.

COMMUNITY PROJECT | KYPSELI

Melissa Network

NEON is supporting the work of the Melissa Network, which reaches out to immigrant women living in Greece, specifically in the area around Victoria Square. Melissa Network was founded in 2014 and operates with the active participation of local immigrant women, undertaking a wide variety of activities within their communities and in collaboration with women's charity groups. Its various initiatives seek to create links between disparate groups, to highlight the varied skills of these women, and to promote their integration into society while respecting their diversity. Melissa Network functions as a day centre for these women – a social space for individual and group activities, that encourages them to be active in their communities, and to promote social cohesion.

COMMUNITY PROJECT | KYPSELI

NEON is activated in the Athenian neighbourhood of Kypseli in order to promote contemporary art. Under the supervision of Helena Papadopoulos (Founder of the Radio Athènes Institute), an abandoned space in Kypseli will be transformed into an arts society for the months of May to June 2016. Local residents, artists, children, musicians, directors, writers and many more are invited to step into the ring and connect with one other, to take part in the activities (or just watch), and exchange information and materials in an exercise that aims to develop a model for a future Arts Education Centre.

Notably, in 2015, Loukas Bartatilas charted and mapped out this area; his documentation will serve as a study paper for the project.

COMMUNITY PROJECT | AIGALEO CITY 2 | 2015 -2016 | In collaboration with locus athens

Aigaleo City Community Project, launched in 2014, is continuing its conceptual approach of drawing together multiple narrative strands that, when combined, tell the overarching story of both the Egaleo neighbourhood and the wider area of the western suburbs of Athens. The initiative is currently in full swing, and will continue its work throughout 2016.

For 2016, the new addition to Aigaleo City 2 consists of participatory activities for children of all ages. A theatrical production of Shakespeare for teenagers, a photography workshop for children and teenagers, an architectural project with AREA architects in collaboration with students and teachers of the 6th High School of Egaleo and the students of architecture from the University of Volos, as well as the creation of a playground from the architectural team Point Supreme.

A publication will contain all the research, activities and materials created during Aigaleo City's first two years of operation. Finally, a short film titled "at the City", about the social make-up of Aigaleo, will be presented in Aigaleo and later screened at various film festivals. Aigaleo City is implemented in collaboration with locus athens and curated by Maria-Thalia Carras and Olga Hatzidaki.

Athens | City Project 2016 | Commission for the creation of a temporary public installation

NEON commissions an artist every year to create a new public installation. For the third year running, NEON is offering Greek artists the opportunity to present their work in the public sphere.

In 2016, NEON is working with the artist Zafos Xagoraris, who will create a temporary public sound installation in-situ at an archaeological site in the city centre. To date, as part of the City Project initiative, NEON has presented two artists at archaeological sites in Athens: Maria Loizidou at the Kerameikos Archaeological site and Museum in 2015, and Aemilia Papaphilippou at the Ancient Agora of Athens in 2014.

Zafos Xagoraris (born in Athens in 1963) studied at the Athens School of Fine Arts and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and received his Ph.D. from the Department of Architecture at the National Technical University of Athens. His artistic practice consists, among other things, of drawings, devices that obstruct visual or other signals, and public installations of sound amplification mechanisms. He has participated in numerous exhibitions, including: Sotto quale Cielo? (Museo Riso, Palermo, 2011), ETICO_F (Termini Imerese, 2010), Manifesta 7 (2008), 1st Bienal Fin del Mundo (2007), 1st Thessaloniki Biennale (2007), and the 27th São Paulo Bienal (2006). He currently teaches at the Athens School of Fine Arts.

Athens | IDEAS CITY | In collaboration with the New Museum 19-25 September 2016

IDEAS CITY explores the future of cities with culture as a driving force. In 2016-2017, IDEAS CITY will present a program of events designed under the supervision of IDEAS CITY Director Joseph Grima, and held across two continents in three cities: Athens, New York and Detroit.

IDEAS CITY is a collaboration with the New Museum, New York. It will consist of a series of five-day workshops, site visits, talks and discussions with specialists and professionals, including artists, researchers, designers, and leading practitioners and members of the cultural scene, who will develop ideas and strategies to overcome the pressing challenges facing urban centres today.

Participants will be selected via an open call, and will work together in order to find solutions to issues specific to Athens.

Art Initiative for AB | In collaboration with the Athens Biennale

NEON is working with the Athens Biennale on the 'Art Initiative for AB', which will form part of its 2015-2017 program. This joint endeavour, funded by NEON, will commission the production of new works by individual artists or art groups, from Greece or abroad, to be presented in various spaces across Athens as part of a two-year program titled OMONOIA. All artists are selected by the curator of the Athens Biennale, Massimiliano Molona.

NEON LEARNING | EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Using art as an educational leverage, NEON cultivates the relationship between young people and their awareness of contemporary art

Educational Program “Is this Art?” | Developed in collaboration with the Hellenic Children’s Museum

2014–2015 in review

In 2014 and 2015, the “Is It Art?” educational program was warmly received by schools and pupils alike, with around 2,100 teenagers taking part in over 180 educational programs in schools across Attica, such as Artemida, Paleo Faliro, Marathon, Ilion, Ilioupoli, Elefsina, Aghia Varvara, Aspropyrgos, Piraeus, Petroupoli, Lykovryssi, Nikea, Halkidona, Nea Smyrni and Egaleo.

Plans for 2016

By the end of the current academic year, around 2,000 pupils and 80 teachers are expected to take part in 180 more educational programs conducted in both all schools that have expressed their interest, and as part of the NEON exhibition program.

“Is this Art?” is the first educational program of its kind to be realized in Greece. It is a NEON initiative, which has been designed and accomplished in total synergy with the Hellenic Children’s Museum. It aims to bring 15-year-old pupils in contact with various forms of contemporary art and their creators.

The program focuses on significant artists who have redefined the ways in which we see and define art today, including Marina Abramović, Marcel Duchamp, Joseph Beuys, Louise Bourgeois, Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, Martin Kippenberger, William Kentridge, the Greek artist Jannis Kounellis, and Mario Merz. The program consists of a digital platform that includes short videos on the life and work of each of the artists, along with additional information about contemporary art and its major movements. The teaching pack also includes educational games and hands-on materials that strengthen students’ relationship with art in an experiential way. The artist Katerina Zacharopoulou collaborated with the Hellenic Children’s Museum and NEON as an academic consultant for the content.

Curatorial Exchange Program and Award

 | In collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery

These two initiatives will run in collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery in London for the fifth consecutive year. Over 88 Greek and international curators have taken part to date. The program and award are aimed at young curators based in Greece and the UK, with a view to bringing them in contact with their peers from other countries in order to exchange ideas and experiences. In Greece, participants are selected via an open call.

Participants from the UK are students at London Metropolitan University and the Whitechapel Gallery (*Curating the Contemporary*), the Courtauld Institute of Art (*Curating the Art Museum*), the Royal College of Art (*Curating Contemporary Art*), and Goldsmith’s College (*Curating*). The Curatorial Award is given each year to the best proposal for a virtual exhibition of works from the D.Daskalopoulos Collection.

NEON CONNECT

NEON partners with cultural institutions to implement common-ground activities with the aim of making contemporary art accessible to the public

NEON and the National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST)

NEON has supported the National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST) since 2012, and is committed to making further contributions to facilitate its operation and sustainability.

The program announced last year – which included exhibitions and educational initiatives – was dependent upon the Museum being fully operational; NEON will re-assess how these can be implemented once EMST opens to the public.

NEON's support for EMST consists of the following:

Enrichment of EMST's permanent collection

From 2012 to 2015, NEON supported EMST with two annual programs for enriching the Museum's permanent collection with new acquisitions.

First, NEON provided an annual sum of 50,000 euros for the Museum to acquire works of its own choosing at the international Frieze Art Fair. In 2015, the Museum purchased works by Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige (*I stared at beauty so much, 2013. Waiting for the Barbarians*), and Francis Alÿs (from the 2008 *Camgun* series).

And second, a new work selected by the Museum is donated each year to its collections in collaboration with Outset. Greece and the International Production Fund.

Exhibitions & Learning

The exhibition program includes the realisation of an annual event where international artists will be invited to create a work to be exhibited in the open-air roof gallery of the Museum building, curated by EMST. And the organisation and funding of regular temporary exhibitions at the Museum of major works from the collections of international museums and the D.Daskalopoulos Collection.

The educational program includes: funding for two new curatorial positions (the NEON Exhibitions Program Curator and the NEON Educational Program Curator) and the NEON "Mentor a Curator" Educational Program, funding for new Museum library acquisitions, and the co-creation of EMST Educational Programs for schools.

NEON and OUTSET.Greece

NEON funds, for the third consecutive year, the activities of Outset.Greece, an annex of the international cultural organization Outset Contemporary Art Fund in England. This aims to support Greek artists, new producers and artistic initiatives, both in Greece and abroad.

In 2016, NEON will be supporting the following projects:

Radio Athènes: an independent NGO for contemporary art. Radio Athènes will continue its work, expanding the network and program it has developed through its projects at the Nice and Fit Gallery in Berlin, and the Andreas Melas & Helena Papadopoulos Gallery in Athens since 2004. In 2016, Radio Athènes will present works by the artist Vangelis Vlahos, as well as a series of talks. | www.radioathenes.org

State of Concept: this non-profit gallery based in Athens promotes the work of Greek and international artists within Greece, and has been supported by NEON since it was founded in 2013. For 2016, State of Concept will host the artists Jessica Warboys, Laure Prouvost, Jonas Staal and Alexander Tovborg, as well as a program of parallel events. | www.stateofconcept.org

Don't Kill Bambi: the Studio 54 phenomenon repositioned at times of crisis: This exhibition, conceived and curated by Stavros Kavalaris, consists of large-scale prints of photographs taken at Studio 54 alongside the work of the artists Dimitris Bamboulis and Thanos Klonaris, who will explore a variety of issues concerning society, gender, human rights, the rise of drug culture, and civil partnership.

Assemblies Inc.: An arts project by the artists Jenny Marketou and Zafos Xagoraris, to be presented as part of the Athens Biennale (AB5to6). Assemblies Inc. consists of a series of projections and sound materials that concern themselves with the general notion of assembly. A series of discussion groups will also be set up, overseen by the curator and writer Yasmina Reggad and the anthropologist Nena Panourgia, with a view to bringing independent institutes and initiatives, social anthropologists and artist collectives into dialogue.

NEON CREATIVITY

NEON supports artists working today through a program of scholarships and grants, providing them with access to education, research and production resources.

Scholarships Scheme | Applications accepted from 28 December 2015 – Final deadline for submissions: 29 April 2016

NEON scholarships are given to young arts practitioners and students in the following areas:

- Postgraduate studies abroad (Masters) in a) History of Art, b) Curatorial Studies and c) MFA creative programs. Four (4) scholarships of €10,000 will be awarded.
- Completion of doctoral studies in a) History/Philosophy of Art and b) Curatorial Studies. Two (2) scholarships of €10,000 each will be awarded for travel and fieldwork expenses.

Grants Scheme | Applications accepted from 28 December 2015 – Final deadline for submissions: 29 February 2016

Through its grants scheme, NEON is a steadfast supporter of contemporary Greek artistic production, in Athens, across Greece, and internationally. In 2015, projects funded with the support of NEON were presented in Athens, Thessaloniki, Amfissa, Anafi, Nisyros, Tinos and Munich.

NEON grants are available to public and private non-profit arts institutions and organisations for the production and presentation of the following projects:

- Contemporary art exhibitions (solo or group) of Greek artists, presented in Greece or abroad. Ten grants of €5,000 each will be awarded.
- Performances and dance productions. Four grants of €8,000 each will be awarded.

Further information about all these programs is available now on the NEON website (neon.org.gr) and Facebook page (facebook.com/NEONGREECE).

Note to editors:

NEON, founded in 2013 by collector and entrepreneur Dimitris Daskalopoulos, works to bring contemporary culture closer to everyone, in the firm belief in the ability of contemporary artistic creativity to rouse, emotionally move and motivate.

It also aims to contribute to the wider efforts being made to revitalise the city and inspire the daily lives of its citizens.

NEON does not restrict itself to just one space. It activates public spaces in Athens and the periphery. NEON advocates all institutions which are established in the field of learning, new productions and the dialogue with the city.

NEON seeks to expose the ability contemporary art has to stimulate, inspire and affect the individual and society at large. NEON aims to highlight culture as a key driver of progress and development.

For more information, please contact:

Melissa Emery, SUTTON

melissa@suttonpr.com or +44 (0)20 7183 3577