

# NEON + MAI

## AS ONE

### PERFORMANCE INTERVENTIONS

12-13 April 2016

**Rafael Abdala**

(1981), Goiana, Brazil

**Jessica Goes**

(1977), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

*Protovoulía*

*Protovoulía* is a call to action. Inviting the “self” to become as many as we are. An adventure through the otherness in a multitudinal order. Rafael Abdala and Jessica Goes come together to enable a creative process through collaboration, opening spaces for other artists to join in on-site. Performers, igniters, with a desire to wander through the otherness. Art through life, in a shared momentum of images and actions. Once the project is over, *Protovoulía* does not come. Traces and trails in our bodies (of everyone involved) will entice us all to seek further collaborative and multiple experiences between art and life.

15-20 March | 19-23 April 2016

**Yannis Adoniou**, dance artist

(1968), Athens, Greece

**Stavros Apostolatos**, dance artist

(1975), Chania, Greece

*Portrait of the Unknown Man*

Taking movement as their tool, Yannis Adoniou and Stavros Apostolatos flirt with the idea of disappearance. The two performers seek to dissolve their forms — taking as their mainsprings walking, standing and immobility, leaps, collapses and micro-movements — to the point where they disappear completely from view. As their forms retreat, various everyday objects remain in the space to remind us of their prior existence. While they never touch, the two bodies remain connected, in visual contact, mutually dependent, and seeking — over the course of eight hours — their own private reality beyond the abilities of the body. The work is not rehearsed; the movements are created each time out of nothing, instinctually, in the split second of each moment.

10-13 March 2016

**Thanassis Akokkalidis**, actor and dance artist

(1975), Athens, Greece

*Don't Look Down*

Thought and the imagination are affected every day by acquired fears that distort our perspectives on life. Thanassis Akokkalidis faces his fears and sets them apart from his phobias, adopting a different reality for his mind. Sat on the highest point of the building opposite the Benaki Museum, he is brought face to face with his biggest fear. While his fear of heights may seize control of his mind and body, it also opens up a new, more lucid outlook over the city.

12-17 April 2016

**Elena Antoniou, dance artist**

(1980), Limassol, Cyprus

*An Eight-Hour Journey*

In this relentless exploration of human limits, Elena Antoniou makes a journey through space that is linked conceptually to the journeys undertaken by millions of people across the globe in our day and age, who are risking their lives in the search of a new start. A route delineated by a twenty-centimetre-wide white line that runs throughout the spaces of the Benaki Museum forms the predetermined path followed by the artist for eight hours. Moments of exhaustion, failure, repetition, movement, deconstruction, silence, immobility, great pause, waiting, action and emotion provide her with the time and space she needs to experience this internal journey with no final destination.

5-9 April 2016

**Spyros Charalampopoulos, visual artist**

(1985), Kalavryta, Greece

*I Justify My Existence*

Loneliness and repetition, wild nature and tranquillity thread through the work of Spyros Charalampopoulos. Physical labour struggles with nature. The environment, both as a concept and as a material, has an effect on the loneliness people feel, provoking violent actions and a need for connection. For eight hours, the artist will labour over hunks of wood, battling to sculpt them with human-made tools, to bring them down to his scale, to reshape them. The movements and sounds made may be repetitive, but the dimensions and forms of the sculptures are in constant flux.

22-24 March 2016

**Dimitris Chimonas, performance artist**

(1993), Larnaca, Cyprus

*Birthday*

An excited young boy spends all day helping his mother prepare for his birthday party. When the time comes, he falls asleep and misses his moment. This boy, now grown, sits before you and behind a cake set with many candles. He sings "happy birthday" to himself, over and over again, endlessly. Compulsive repetition creates the opportunity for a new outcome. This universal song, perhaps the best known in the world, becomes a personal elegy to a lost innocence.

9-10 April 2016

**Amanda Coogan, performer**

(1971), Dublin, Ireland

Amanda Coogan will be performing a newly commissioned work for two days as part of AS ONE. The as yet untitled piece is currently in development.

29-31 March | 19-21 April 2016

**Thomas Diafas, writer and performer**

(1987), Thessaloniki, Greece

*Dance With Me*

Thomas Diafas engages visitors in a metaphorical verbal "dance" of speech, expression and creation. Sat in a chair, the artist opens each conversation with visitors using the phrase "That is inhumane". Jumbled words, responses, emotions — all are set down on paper, to be decoded later, transmuted into a structured work, transformed into poems, texts, songs that give meaning and form to ideas and thought.

22-24 & 26-27 March 2016

**Serafita Grigoriadou, actress**

(1972), Thessaloniki, Greece

*The Never-Ending Song*

Touching upon issues of immigration and emigration, Serafita Grigoriadou presents a work that references the voice and memory — that is, the voice as a special facet of the soul that is impressed in our memory. Emigration, which has left its indelible mark on Greek history and our collective childhood memories, is transformed into a traditional song, a common motif in her work. The artist traverses the space, repeating her song over and over for eight hours each day, changing positions and levels to transport her voice and her soul's memories throughout the Benaki Museum, with moments of intensity and silence, with whispers and melodies.

1-2 April 2016

**Maria Herranz**, actress

Bern, Switzerland

*Medea: Impulse & Ear*

In this piece, the viewer and actress will engage in a symbiotic relationship that will result in the actress' impulsive selection of a tract of text from Seneca's *Medea*. Chairs will be both secured to the floor and freely situated in such a way as to be most conducive to a natural engagement between the actress and the viewer. As, over the course of the day, Medea's various monologues are repeated in ever-changing scenarios, the nature of Medea's tragedy, the actress' interpretation and the exchange between actress and viewer will likely greatly morph, as will the depth of one of Medea's subtler plights: to be a stranger in a strange land.

22-24 & 26-27 March 2016

**Giannis Karounis**, dance artist

(1971), Laconia, Greece

*Orbital*

A body and a ball on an orbit delineated by the constant, tortured attempts of one person to find their balance. For eight hours, Giannis Karounis will bring his body into a mutually dependent relationship with a ball — another body, another being that he will try to understand and fall in step with, on which he will balance in order to come closer to his true self and his own self-actualisation. The ball is his polar opposite, his mirror, his other self: the essential element that leads to balance through antithesis.

12-19 April 2016

**Marianna Kavallieratos**, dance artist

(1969), Athens, Greece

*Skin*

Marianna Kavallieratos asks questions about the nature of appearances, masquerade and transformation in this work that concerns itself with the daily rituals that constantly change the outward aspect of our bodies. Surrounded by a pile of clothes, the artist dresses and undresses herself constantly, transforming herself over and again for eight hours, changing and reshaping herself to become a doll that tries on different characters and silent roles. She is seeking her "skin", the real thing beneath all these attempts — intentional or otherwise — to distort our own selves that lead to a loss of identity and an acceptance of appearances.

29 March - 3 April 2016

**Alexandros Michail**, performer

(1980), Thessaloniki, Greece

*The eternal fire which lights them up inside and makes them glow*

Paraphrasing a line from Dante's *Inferno* for his title, Alexandros Michail seeks meaning through a physically exhausting and spiritually demanding activity that is repetitious and, in itself, devoid of meaning. Free will, the search for root cause and for purpose, the achievement of progress — all are set against the futility of fruitless physical work. Labouring under the weight of time itself, the artist transfers tonnes of sand for eight hours using a punctured, leaking sack — an endless battle to understand an object in constant flux, his own self and, through himself, the world around him. His actions also transform the landscape around him, leaving traces of sand wherever he passes. A somatic exploration of the idea that labour and the need for meaning is the friction point of contact between humankind and the world.

22-23 April 2016

**Kira O'Reilly**, visual artist

(1967), Ireland

*I came to the sea and I was scared. My heart is broken*

Words of a fisherman who found the bodies of young refugees on the beaches of Greece flood this work by Kira O'Reilly, that speaks of loss, decay and despair. Words carried away by the sea to become inarticulate sounds, nonsense. The artist uses materials that spoil and decompose, such as copper that reacts with salt and water to become green — verdigris. The first version of this work was performed here in Athens last year at BIOS (as part of *Love Letter to a (Post)-Europe*, curated by Lisa Alexander), performed by Vassiliki Dimou, then by Kira O'Reilly at the Dublin Live Art Festival in November 2015; it now returns again to Athens.

15-16 March | 24 April 2016

**Katerina Oikonomou**, soprano  
(1981), Poros, Greece  
*And There Was Voice*

Classical music training, opera and aesthetics face deconstruction and denudation in this work by Katerina Oikonomou, who uses her voice to discover the limits of body and spirit. For eight hours, she will produce sounds — classical arias, contemporary songs, voices, screams — that reveal her inner self and the very limits of her vocal chords. Through these sounds, she will overturn and deconstruct the classical aesthetic, the decorum, beauty and stereotypes of the opera form, using her voice as a raw material for the creation of a new sound, stripped back, from scratch.

17-20 March | 5-8 April 2016

**Nikolaos**, performer  
(1986), Athens, Greece  
*Look at the Pain in the Eyes, and the Pain Passes*

This work by Nikolaos attempts to give manifest physicality to mental distress, and seeks ways to overcome it. The lack of freedom and prevailing enchainment of humankind today is only intensified by greater societal acceptance of the status quo, which brings, by extension, even greater societal constraints. The artist makes this lack of freedom literal, appearing bound, and hanging by a rope. This constriction of the body allows for the liberation of the mind, revealing a path to freedom through self-control, meditation, and a belief in the power of thought.

10-13 March 2016

**Anastasia Papatheodorou**, actress, director and performer  
(1976), Athens, Greece  
*A Woman in a State of Truth*

An impromptu contemporary “poem” is created by Anastasia Papatheodorou as she wonders about the lightness with which the human brain endures and accepts the most tragic and demeaning events of our times as presented through the media, while maintaining a detachment that is open to the act of forgetting. The artist walks the fine dividing line between information and experience, and sets off down the path of self-awareness. Over the course of eight hours, she acts as a nomad, taking in the sounds, music, and moving image of a projection showing moments taken from the natural world, large-scale events, and the minutiae of daily life; she responds to these stimuli with her body and voice, with poems, songs and prayers. A journey of self-exile into a vulnerability of an emotional, physical and conceptual nature.

10-13 March | 5-8 April 2016

**Yiannis Pappas**, visual artist  
(1978), Patmos, Greece  
*A Key*

This work tackles the issue of confinement as a form of personal, political, economic and religious conflict, and as a state of social exclusion and exploitation. The title *A Key* is a homophone of the Greek word “εκει” (pronounced “eki” — meaning “there”) and, as such, encapsulates both a fixation on making an escape, and an act of coercion into a state of subjugation. Yiannis Pappas will focus on self-imposed states of bodily museum-confinement for eight hours each day. Making his way through a sequence of “cells”, his only tool for escape is a key, which he uses to break through the walls. A lack of imagination — that is, a spiritual limitation — is offset by repetitious action and an insistence on escape. The final confinement cell opens only when a visitor takes the key from his hands and slips it into the lock.

26-27 March 2016

**PASHIAS**, visual artist  
(1988), Nicosia, Cyprus  
*Diagrama (Training for Performance #6)*

Centred on the body as a vehicle for the energy, skill, aesthetic ideals and ability seen in the world of sport and physical training, PASHIAS explores here the concept of contest. With an eye on completing a specific task, the body is brought in touch with the parameters of its own self, with its material and social dimensions. The artist will create a sporting ring — an arena set apart from the civic body — where the body, alone, trains for an upcoming competition in an attempt to push beyond its physical limits, and where the act of training to achieve the greatest possible performance is, in the end, equal to the contest itself.

19-24 April 2016

**Evgenia Tsanana**, visual artist  
(1964), Thessaloniki, Greece  
*Office for Public Unburdening*

Emotional relief in times of crisis — this is what's on offer in this work by Evgenia Tsanana, that springs from the acknowledgment that pain is eased when shared with others. The artist will create a participatory work, an office where visitors can relieve whatever is burdening them by describing their own nightmares. These nightmares are written down in pencil on paper, then wiped out with erasers. The rubbings left behind are then saved and stored. On the final day, the artist will walk down to Piraeus and throw the rubbings into the sea, before returning to close the Museum, both literally and figuratively. Through the repetition of the nightmare documentation and transformation process over the course of six days, *the Office for Public Unburdening* seeks to symbolically reduce the burden of collective misery brought on by the crisis that is weighing Greece down in a joint intervention undertaken with visitors that is founded upon mutual trust.

14-16 April 2016

**Christina Vasileiou**, dance artist  
(1978), Bucharest, Romania  
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Sound and the body, action and effect define this work by Christina Vasileiou. An eight-hour experiment exploring the body's reaction to constant, relentless sound. The artist freely submits to the biddings of the aural incitation channelled into her ears. She becomes isolated within the constant flow of music and sounds that are her only stimuli in the space, without engaging in interaction of any kind — not with objects, a set, or the public. And the body reacts in the only way it knows how: with movement, with dance. It becomes a temple in motion, filled with intensity and suspension, disjunction and pain.