

## Press Release

Athens, October 11, 2016

### Athens Biennale OMONOIA "HOW Assemblies Matter?"

The Athens Biennale OMONOIA launches in Athens the international participatory project by artist Jenny Marketou: **"HOW Assemblies Matter?"** at the National Technical University of Athens, on 21-22 **October 2016**.

**International Assembly** engages more than **50 participants** on social welfare, democracy, structures, actions, alliances and more.  
Free and open to the public.

**"HOW Assemblies Matter?"** explores notions on the apparatus of "assembly", a practice both ancient and contemporary as much as timely under the current political and social context. The project, initiated in **2014** by Jenny Marketou under the overall theme **"Assemblies: Acts of Social Urgency and Imagination"**, is an ongoing art project based on participatory action and research. The Athens chapter is a collaborative investigation with Zafos Xagoraris. The foremost discussion was demonstrated at Marketou's video installation **"The Assembly in NO Particular Order, (2016)"** and through Xagoraris' series of drawings featured in the traveling exhibition titled *PIGS (2016)* launched at ARTIUM Museum, Vitoria-Gasteiz in Spain. This initial artistic presentation led to an ongoing research and collaboration on public space and interaction with different technologies and social groups.

**"Assemblies: Acts of Social Urgency and Imagination"** offers a space for total intellectual liberty, free speech and free actions which will be constructed around the praxis of hosted assemblies, agora-style discussions, performative interventions and pop-up actions. A site where art, politics and imagination meet to contemplate **how, why and when** new forms of communication, actions, new technologies, musical moments and performance enable us to re-imagine new techniques and experimentation, which elude into new habits of **"assembly"** and social engagement.

Given the above conditions **"Assemblies: Acts of Social Urgency and Imagination"** brings together a number of friends, strangers as well as invited Greek and international artists, activists, thinkers, collectives, poets, architects, students from both secondary schools in Athens and international universities who share their time and knowledge. The process is focal to the execution and experience. This process will be documented while addressing themes close to Marketou's ongoing research and preoccupation such as *Public Utilities, Archaeologies of the Public, Voices of Inclusion and Exclusion, The Public Body, Future Publics, Performative Semiotics, Deschooling, Utopia and Imagination*.

Specific questions will seek an understanding, a potential of further exploration: *"What are the affective realities of an assembly? How can we connect assemblies to become alliances that generate larger and more significant trans local impact? Why should we think that the future should begin with democracy in such stressful times in Greece, Europe and elsewhere? What is the feminist presence in the assemblies? What are the disturbances that create newness?"*

Jenny Marketou says: *"The selection of the city of Athens as the first 'assembly engagement' is not only evident but close to my heart. Inside the Averof and MAX Amphitheaters we will co-exist with the ongoing university life, assembly, discussion and preoccupations. This project is about inclusion of the university's creative community, its students, professors and administrative staff. The amphitheater is not a stage for the project, it acts as a pre-existing public space of interaction and engagement."*

The project is expected to travel in different countries and initiate local collaborations. The discussions, experiences, performances, actions will be documented in a daily blog and eventually in a film installation, and a publication exploring the notion of "assembly" as a form of artistic engagement.

This project is organised in relation to the Athens Biennale OMONOIA.

**Participants:** Athena Athanasiou, Giorgos Anastasopoulos, Stephanie Bailey, Babis Baltas, Theodoros Chiotis, Petros Christidis, Angela Dimitrakaki, Foundland Collective, geheimagentur (i.e. the secret agency), Frederikke Hansen, Vana Kostoyola, Jenny Marketou, Yiannis Mitsis, Carima Neusser, Neni Panourgia, Makis Papadimitratos, Yiorgos Papadopoulos, Nuno Rodrigues, State-Citizen's and Children's Ombudsman, Stavros Stavridis, STEPS Collective, Kuba Szreder, Miranda Terzopoulou, Theater of the Oppressed, Penny Travlou, Gracia Trujillo, Zafos Xagoraris, among others to be announced.

**Participating Institutions:** Students and Faculty from the School of Art and Design Kassel, Germany; the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), Switzerland; the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm, Sweden; the Escola Superior Artística do Porto (ESAP), Portugal and the Athens School of Fine Arts, Greece.

**General Information:**

Friday, October 21 | 12:00 – 21:00

Saturday, October 22 | 12:00 – 21:00

**Venue:**

MAX Amphitheatre & Averof Amphitheatre,  
National Technological University of Athens

42, 28<sup>th</sup> Oktovriou (Patision) Avenue, Athens | entrance from 35 Stournari Str., Athens

**Special thanks to:**

Mr Dimitris Issaias, Dean of School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens  
Assistant Professor Dr .Stavros Stavridis and the Faculty of the National Technical University of Athens for kindly hosting the project.

This project is made possible with the support of Outset Contemporary Art Fund (Greece).

Athens School of Fine Arts (A.S.F.A.) for their kind support.

About Jenny Marketou(Athens/New York)

**Jenny Marketou** is an artist, arts educator and cultural producer who lives and works between Athens and New York. She has taught at Cooper Union School of Art in New York and most recently at the New Media and Photography Department at California Institute for the Arts, (CalArts) Valencia, California. She works across different media and platforms and defines herself as an initiator and often collaborates with multiple institutions as well as many individuals so that the full realisation of her artwork occurs when others adopt and perpetuate it.

Marketou's work has been widely exhibited internationally, in solo and group exhibitions such as Museum Tinguely in Basel, Switzerland; 1<sup>st</sup> International Biennial of Art of Cartagena de Indias, Colombia; the 4<sup>th</sup> Athens Biennale AGORA, 2013 and the Athens Biennale OMONOIA; ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany; the 3<sup>rd</sup> Biennial of Seville; the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, Reina Sofia Museum of Contemporary Art, Madrid; The Queens Museum, and Apex Art, New York; The National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST) in Athens. Artium Museum in Spain, Foundation Bouziol, Venice, MORE Art & High Line projects in New York, the Goethe Institute in Athens/Ankara/Berlin, Onassis Cultural Center, in Athens, Kumu Art Museum in Tallinn, Estonia, during its season as the European Capital of Culture, among others. She represented Greece at the Biennial of Sao Paolo in Brazil and in the Manifesta International European Biennial at Witte de With, Rotterdam.

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The Athens Biennale OMONOIA is Co-Organised by:

