

NEON

space of togetherness

Public Programme

9 September – 20 October

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During the six weeks of *space of togetherness* NEON presents a parallel program, open to all, which will unfold in the spaces of the Drama School of the National Theatre. It will bring together various contributors, including artists, scholars, collectives, scholars, social actors, and policy makers, with the aim to discuss and propose a shared imagined future.

This versatile programme of talks and conversations, thematic tours, educational programmes for families with children, concerts, readings and performances will take place in the space inside and outside the exhibition.

Wishing to include all the members of the communities that comprise the map of our communities, NEON extended an invitation to non-profit organizations, local communities, artist-run and curator-led spaces providing them space to present their programme and join their voices and activities with ours.

These organizations are diaNEOsis, Dipylon, Døcumatism, Drama School of the National Theatre of Greece, EIGHT / ΤΟ ΟΧΤΩ, Fulbright Greece, Hellenic Children's Museum, Melissa Network, Papigion project, TAVROS

The first week is dedicated to the artists featured in the exhibition and the public programme kickstarts with Artist's conversations between NEON Director & exhibition curator Elina Kountouri:

Tuesday 10 September	18:30 Maria Loizidou & Achilleas Chariskos founder, Papigion project
	19:00 Kalliopi Lemos
	19:30 Grada Kilomba
Wednesday 11 September	18:00 Bouchra Khalili
Thursday 12 September	18:30 Igshaan Adams

Organizations Information

diaNEOsis (dianeosis.org) is an independent, non-profit think-tank based in Athens, Greece operating since 2016. The institute publishes academic research and policy proposals as well as extensive, original articles. At the same time, it communicates its research findings in an accessible manner, thereby contributing to the public discourse with well-grounded proposals, comprehensive information, and good practices. diaNEOsis' research work seeks to answer the principal question of finding ways to make the country's production model more efficient, more extroverted, and fair, while leveraging sustainable growth opportunities and adapting to important challenges, such as demographics and climate change. The organization's activities concern not only those directly or indirectly involved in shaping and implementing policy but also the public.
→ For the Public Programme diaNEOsis will present two discussions, open to the public, on inclusion and belonging.

Dipylon (dipylon.org) is a non-profit organization for the study of ancient topography. It was established in Athens in 2014 to promote interdisciplinary research in Archaeology, History, Informatics and Cartography. The organization's main goal is to collect, organize, and share archaeological knowledge by making the most of state-of-the-art technology in digital humanities. The aim is to support academic research and education on the historical topography of ancient cities and cultural landscapes. To achieve this, the team develops open-access cartographic platforms and web apps (including audio walks tours), conducts educational activities, and participates in national and European funding programs.
→ For the Public Programme they will organize two walks in the area around the Drama School of the National Theatre. Participants will follow an archaeological, educational and architectural tour of the Moschato area following selected points of interest and exploring both the ancient and modern past of Moschato.

Døcumatism (documatism.com) is a collective that consists of filmmakers, artists, curators, historians, social workers, journalists, researchers and educators active since 2009 in the multicultural neighbourhood of Kypseli. Starting with the moving image and document (documentum) the collective organizes art actions and public dialogues on critical social issues with the aim of exploring invisible and inaccessible landscapes and

launching possible solutions to crucial social issues. Their goal is to initiate dialogue and make the “invisible” visible. Through art actions, films starring real-life heroes, and stories that break barriers and stereotypes, the Døcumatism team makes film art a functional tool for those living on the margins of society. The collective’s collaborations foster the interaction of artists, protagonists, and viewers; these figures work together to design art actions that focus on key social issues. Each issue functions as an “apparatus” throughout a given action’s preparation, production, and distribution, mobilizing broader debates and making the recipient and eyewitness in situ. The archive of Døcumatism which is in progress is openly accessible to the wider public in situ and digitally on the collective’s website.

the AfroGreeks, a collective community project about the African Diaspora, was initiated in Greece in 2015 by Døcumatism. It consists of video installations, interviews, social interactions, research, public actions, and an archive – laboratory. The term Afro-Greek is a self-proclamation that the protagonists of the work use in a critical way. It was first used publicly in 2019 as the title of a video installation by Døcumatism, during a public dialogue at the Kypseli Agora. It launched the artistic movement documented here, doing much to stimulate a public discussion about the African diasporic communities in Athens and beyond.

→ For the public program of *space of togetherness*, they will present a series of open discussions on topics such as migration, identity, integration, work and a concert.

The Drama School of the National Theatre (dramaschool.n-t.gr) was founded at the same time as the National Theatre in May 1930 with the aim of the methodical and systematic raining of actors. From that date the School has been in continuous operation and has played an important role in the development of contemporary theatre.

The Drama School of the National Theatre offers a three-year study programme, offered free of charge. The School is based in Athens and is housed in the School of Athens – Irene Pappas, a restored complex, bridging early 20th century industrial architecture with a modern theatre facility, located on 52 Piraeus Street.

In the academic year 2018–2019 in addition to the Acting Department, the Department of Directing was established providing young directors with practical and theoretical training.

→ For *space of togetherness* the Drama School will present a lecture-performance focusing in the 1930s, a defining decade for the arts in Greece, with the participation of the School Director, Deo Kangelari, actor, director and acting professor, Akyllas Karazisis and the third-year students of the Directing Department of the School.

EIGHT / TO OXTΩ (8athens.wordpress.com) is the initiative of Gigi Argyropoulou, Vassilis Noulas, and Kostas Tzimoulis to institute a collective space in the centre of Athens. EIGHT / TO OXTΩ combines critical intervention with artistic practice – the search for the city with social action. It seeks, reveals, and creates new narratives to empower social practices in the city and its environment, focussing on matters of equality within the artistic community, as well as feminism, ecology, coexistence, inclusion, and visibility of the LGBTQ+ community. Its actions include curation, exhibitions, publications, learning programmes, events, conferences, and activities in the city. It has organised independent public events such as *Hills and Fields* (2022), and *DYI Performance Biennial* (2016, 2018). It has curated exhibitions such as *Systems, Organisms, Symbiosis* (2021); *Gay Love in Pictures* (2021); and *City in Pieces* (2019). It has collaborated with entities in Greece and Europe such as the HKW [New Alphabet School, *Instituting* (2021); *Commonings* (2022)] and Eleusis Capital of Culture 2023 [VA *Initiator* (2022); *Mystery 43 School of waves and weeds* (2023)].

→ For *space of togetherness* EIGHT / TO OXTΩ will present a two-day program in the open air space of the Drama School of the National Theatre | School of Athens – Irene Pappas. They will attempt to highlight the criticality of collective processes, public dialogue and, especially, improvisation as a means of social transformations and fermentations, collective and personal awareness on key issues of our time. Their activities will evolve and unfold under the prism of ecological, feminist and LGBTQ+ perspectives.

Fulbright (fulbright.gr) is the flagship international educational and cultural exchange program of the United States, operating in partnership with over 160 countries. It aims to enhance mutual understanding through the exchange of individuals, knowledge, and skills.

Founded in 1948, Fulbright Greece is a non-profit, non-political educational organization established through a bilateral agreement between the United States and Greece. It promotes academic and cultural exchange between the two countries through the Fulbright Scholarship Program and the Fulbright Greece Advising Center. Since its inception, Fulbright Greece has awarded over 6,000 scholarships to Greek and U.S. students, scholars, teachers, artists, and professionals. These scholarships enable participants to study, teach, and conduct research, addressing critical global challenges and creating a vibrant, diverse network of alumni.

Core funding for Fulbright Greece comes from the governments of the United States and the Hellenic Republic, with additional support from foundations, organizations, corporations and alumni in both countries.

→ NEON and Fulbright are collaborating for *space of togetherness* to bring together Fulbright fellows and contemporary artists for open discussions.

The Hellenic Children's Museum (hcm.gr) is a non-profit public welfare organisation established in Athens, Greece in 1987. Its purpose is to help children develop all aspects of their personality in order to become citizens who respect their own individuality and to obtain a social conscience. Educational activities constitute the core function of the HCM since its establishment. They are the result of multidisciplinary cooperation and are based on contemporary pedagogical learning methods. They are designed according to the developmental characteristics of each age group, the possibilities and limitations of the place that they are being implemented as well as the school curriculum.

NEON in partnership with the Hellenic Children's Museum co-designed and implemented '*Is this Art?*', the first educational program of its kind in Greece. From March 2014 to present, the program has been introducing high school students to a variety of contemporary art forms and their creators. The program is also implemented at the NEON exhibitions aimed at families with children.

→ For the Public Programme the Hellenic Children's Museum will implement the innovative educational program *Is This Art?*. Families with children aged 8 years and above are welcome to participate.

Melissa Network (melissanetwork.org) was envisioned as an open beehive of communication, creativity and exchange and was founded in 2014 with the direct involvement of migrant and refugee women leaders. Based in Athens, it provides a safe space of support, learning and creativity, promoting women's rights, advocacy, integration and active citizenship. It supports women and girls on the move, as well as survivors of gender-based violence, focusing on mental health, education, art and active citizenship. With members from more than 50 countries, it aims to create and sustain bonds between the ethnic communities, to build bridges of communication with the host society, and to create synergies within and beyond Greece.

→ Melissa's ongoing innovative program fostering women's empowerment and integration, through art, learning, mental health, social engagement, advocacy and the ethics of care, will open up to the public during *space of togetherness* through small, intimate actions around a long table.

The **Papigion project** (papigionproject.gr) is an urban phytocentric-environmental initiative founded in Athens in 2021 by Achilleas Chariskos. Papigion is a project that seeks to offer a second chance to plants that have been 'discarded' and left abandoned on balconies and in gardens or that arrive at Papigion through an exchange process. The Papigion project aspires to give a 'second chance to plants' to find a new living place, continue telling their stories, and even write new ones via three main pillars – collection, care, and redistribution. Reuse, biophilia, and sustainability are central concepts in the Papigion project.

→ For *space of togetherness* Papigion project partnered with artist Maria Loizidou for the permanent installation *Olga's Garden*. This installation will be accompanied by a talk with the artist and the founder of Papigion project Achilleas Chariskos and will conclude with the permanent relocation of the garden and its transplantation to the grounds of the Drama School yard.

TAVROS (tavros.space) is an independent non-profit arts space that opened its doors in 2019. TAVROS' programme reflects our belief in the transformative potential of shifting perspectives and moving minds and bodies through our relationship with art. TAVROS is dedicated to thinking critically about the social and political circumstances around us, by exploring notions of democracy, equality and environmental justice whilst looking to address these issues through dialogue, collective listening and learning. By using a variety of tools, exhibitions, research, commissions, educational programmes, listening sessions, screenings, community work as well as guided tours in Albanian, Arabic and in Greek sign language, TAVROS aims to be a welcoming and open space dedicated to embracing and enriching relationships between similarly-minded institutions in Greece and internationally, with artists of diverse backgrounds and with the local community and creating a space for unheard, threatened or marginalised voices.

→ For the public programme, TAVROS' curatorial team will organise a variety of time-based activities, including readings, lectures, gatherings, panels, and more, over two consecutive days. These events will take place in various spaces of the venue, creating informal hubs for dialogue and collective thinking.