

# Enjoy (y)our State of Emergency

## Art and activist strategies in times of crisis

lectures, performances, discussions, screenings

3 – 7 December 2014

**The series of events is taking place in English.**

### Participants

**Sofia Bempenza, Sofia Dona, FYTA, Lisa Glauer, Pablo Hermann, Robert Huber, KavecS (Kostis Stafylakis/Vana Kostayola), Jenny Kneis, Panos Kompatsiaris, Brigitta Kuster, Paris Legakis, Ilias Marmaras (personal cinema), Maiden Monsters, Metatheodosia, Vassilis Noulas, Stefan Nowotny, Georgios Papadopoulos, Dimitris Papanikolaou, Günther Sandleben, Maria Sarri, Jamie C. Schearer, Ruti Sela/Maayan Amir, Zafos Xagoraris**

How are we to understand the term “state of emergency” – which is currently being used or also misused in reference to Southern Europe? Taking as case study the debt crisis in Greece and its connotations, the five-day event will present contemporary art and activist practices. The event insists on contextualising and debunking an on going crisis in Greece and beyond.

The event departs from a discussion of the specifics of Greek society, it carves out preconditions, absurdities and pathologies leading to neo-conservatisms and democratic deficiencies, to different kinds of nationalisms and populisms, right wing radicalism(s), fascism, racism and so forth. It examines contemporary rhetorics and neoliberal logics in relation to the maintenance of predefined economic policies, which seem to increasingly dominate the political terrain. The various art practices presented within the framework of the event focus on activism, querfront movements, gender attitudes, debt crisis and migration policies. This constellation underlines the fact that the current political, economical and social situation in Greece or elsewhere, often presented in mediasphere(s) as special cultural phenomenon, experimental laboratory or heroic resistance and cultural dissidence, are to be discussed within the broader context of neoliberal regimes in times of global financial crisis.

Within this framework the event will present cultural practices concerned with collective action and civic engagement. How to (re-)act to the current transformations affected by increasing inequality and the de-democratization of Greek society at different levels? If we are imagining new forms of social organisation as well as cultural practices of political and social intervention, where and how do the latter take place?

**Please find the program overleaf.**

nGbK project group: Sofia Bempenza, Sofia Dona, Lisa Glauer, Pablo Hermann, Vana Kostayola in collaboration with Zafos Xagoraris and Kostis Stafylakis

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## Programme

Wednesday, 3 December

### ***We are left, we are right, we are al(l)right***

17h Introduction by the nGbK project group

17.30h *Daddy Knows*  
**Performance by Metatheodosia**

In her piece “Daddy Knows” Metatheodosia presents a phone call to her father, where the line between truth and performance, what is live and pre-recorded is blurred. A taste of Greek reality, familiar to many Greeks as the unspoken reality of family surrealism, ranging from nonsensical to self-contradicting to truly insane.

18.30h *PSAK – Buildup of Anti-Memorandum People's Movements*  
**Lecture-Performance by Sofia Bempeza & KavecS**

The time has come for a true change in Greece's political landscape – a change that will originate “from below”! PSAK is the newborn movement, which seeks to unify all anti-memorandum and anti-colonial Greek forces. Those involved in the movement recognize the urgent need for direct intervention in the Greek political setting. PSAK relies on joined patriotic forces, which can offer an alternative for exiting the Crisis. PSAK’s long-term strategy is to ensure native/indigenous growth and social/cultural cohesion in Greece.

19.30h *New Greek Patriots*  
**Input by Sofia Bempeza**

In the last years of the so-called Crisis a new kind of Greek national imaginary seems to gain form. This imaginary grows out of severe considerations on issues such as global financial policies, people’s sovereignty and the governmentality of the state, thereby expressing the need to build up and identify with a new type of contemporary *Greekness*. What I intend to depict within the framework of this lecture is the emergence of new kinds of Greek patriotism and their specific origins. Thus I will highlight the political endeavors that focus on a hybrid political constellation blurring the borders between left, center and right wing politics whilst seeking to produce a new patriotic political identity. Furthermore, I will delineate my main concern regarding the notion of the *Political* insofar as this relates to new-fashioned patriotic imaginaries in Greece.

20h *On Querfront today. Aspects of the “third position” in recent global radicalism*  
**Lecture by Kostis Stafylakis & Pablo Hermann**

This session discusses aspects of Third-Positionism in today’s global politics, culture and radicalism. The discussants try to analyze the reasons why third-positionist and querfront politics are appealing to today’s insurgent social bodies and trace the historical dimensions of this appeal. The understanding of the third-positionist merge between ideological aspects of the revolutionary Left and the radical conservatism of the Right seems to be, perhaps again, a crucial step in decoding the syncretist/integralist politics of our times.

21h *Nation's Vow*  
**Lecture by Sofia Dona**

The *Nation's Vow* (Táma tou Éthnous) is a Christian-orthodox church that the

participants of the fourth national assembly of 1829 had pledged to construct in return for Greek liberation from the Ottoman Empire. Later on this unfulfilled initiative continued with the attempts of the military regime of April 21, 1967 to build the Táma tou Éthnous. In the competition many urban planners took part, among them Konstantinos Doxiadis with his idea of building the monument instead of Tourkovounia, to Lycabettus hill.

Nowadays the idea of realizing the Nation's Vow is back by an old couple, who already created a corporation in order to collect money and build the church-monument in Tourkovounia. Just as construction on the Çamlıca mosque started *the errands group* organized an open air talk at the area of Tourkovounia in order to discuss the possible connections between the case of Çamlıca mosque and Nation's Vow discovering similarities and potential relations.

Thursday, 4 December  
**me Tarzan you Gender**

17h *CATS ON THE ROOF – Women on the battlefield: from Partisans to transsexuals.*

**Film & Lecture-Performance by Maria Sarri**

There are three valuable documentary films directed by Alinda Dimitriou. In these films, women narrate their experiences from 2nd World War, civil war and the struggle against dictatorship. All the stories are about the battle of left and communist women in Greece for social justice and equality. In my presentation, taking up the path Dimitriou had opened but also diverging from it, I would like to talk about women in Greece today in terms of the so called "crisis" due to economical reasons. Under the new social aspects the targets and desires of people have completely changed; through filmed interviews with various "women" I would like to present the new struggle beyond sexes, national identity and classes; the struggle for co-existence, dignity and pride. Women: old, young, trans, lesbians, immigrants.

18h *Männer, Helden, schwule Nazis*  
**Film: Rosa von Praunheim, 90 min**

20h *New Queer Greece?*  
**Lecture by Dimitris Papanikolaou**

Greece is not merely a country that has seen its Athens Gay Pride (and similar events in other big cities) become a major event in the last few years. As critics have been quick to note, new modes of queer cultural expression have also appeared and gained visibility in the country in the past 15 years. However, the current "crisis" climate has also fostered a strengthening of older gender hierarchies and a new upsurge in homophobic and sexist discourses, as well as a rise in gender violence and homophobic attacks. The debate, therefore, seems to be adopting extremely oppositional terms: a recently emerging backlash coming from a *traditionalist, patriarchal and homophobic Greece* in contrast to a dynamic of *modern and progressive queer Greece*. The lecture will show how, for all its worth, this binary belies a much more complicated situation. To create a radical queer *genealogy* in the Greek public sphere is still unthinkable by both traditionalist and progressive rhetoric – and this is exactly why such a gesture remains, politically at least, the queerest thing to do in today's Greece.

21.30h *Glüh/Birne*  
**Performance by FYTA**

FYTA will be presenting a multimedia delirium where (post)-political indignation

meets (anti)nationalist enjoyment - all with a queer ethos and in apocalyptic aesthetics! FYTA will be attempting to re-present nature in its raw and unnatural origins. FYTA displace what is seen as the socially-uniting commonsensical truth and replace it with another, ever-elusive type of common sense which is irritating and contradictory, yet stubborn-minded and pseudoscientific. In our de-naturalising project we aim at the total alienation of our audience. Lost in a meta-semiotic sea of stimuli, our audience falls into structural despair, hopefully emerging the other side ready to re-think politics and aesthetics.

Friday, 5 December

***The activist pacifier***

17h ***Activism and Art in Athens: The Case of the Mavili Collective***  
**Lecture by Vassilis Noulas**

I will present and discuss two examples of artistic activism that have occurred in the last years in Athens by the Mavili Collective.

On 11th of November 2011 Mavili occupied the historical disused theatre building of Embros, deserted and left empty for years. They aim to re-activate this space temporarily with their own means and propose an alternative model of collective management and new contemporary forms of creative work. For 11 days Mavili reconstituted Embros as a public space for exchange, research, debate, meeting and re-thinking.

On 20th of February 2014, the Greek Minister of Culture Mr. Panos Panagiotopoulos delivered the opening speech of the EU conference 'Financing Creativity' in Athens. This conference seeks to address models of cultural policy in the coming decades. Yet not a single artist was invited as a speaker nor was the conference promoted publicly. Mavili Collective called for artists from different fields of practice to attend the conference. Having been excluded from a dialogue about cultural policies the artists present publicly expressed their feelings regarding the proposed role of culture and laughed. The response of the Minister was revealing.

18h ***Antihumanist alternatives in recent art activism and performative experimentations: notes on the Greek case***  
**Lecture by Kostis Stafylakis**

My interest in today's anti-humanist art activism in Greece is a consequence of a quest for modes of artistic action that may challenge various sociopolitical deadlocks that seem to define the momentum. And one of these deadlocks is what I understand as a moralization of the political sphere, a moralistic turn in today's politics – a regression to humanistic depictions of Greek social strata and collective struggles. The most exemplar instantiation of this moralist deadlock is, I think, the perception of contemporary Greeks as a resisting Nation – the instantiation of some essential, trans-historical concept of the Greek as a primordial human essence fighting against his alienation. Cultural expressions, art (mainstream or underground), activism and resistance are also caught up in the haze of this humanist moralism. I think that, in the context of cultural practice, amidst the Greek crisis, the most delicate examples of an antihumanist art practice emerged out of the local queer scene. The proliferation of ideas about social gender and queer performativity, taking place during the last decade, enhanced a scepticist political stance that sees the questioning of ideological orthodoxies as the most urgent enterprise for radical politics and art.

19h ***'Exerting Force in Opposition': Predicaments of Art, Resistance and Social Usefulness***  
**Lecture by Panos Kompatsiaris**

Occupying a distinct territory within the Greek public sphere and beyond, the concept of 'resistance' currently seems to provide the organizing principle of any effort

to articulate progressive politics. Various understood either as subversive acts against concrete abstractions, such as capitalism, the state or the financial system, or as forms of localized, ground-level practices of community-building, eco-farming and grassroots activism, the notion of resistance is conceptualized as capable of disrupting, hijacking, undermining and potentially overturning the existing state of affairs. As an incitement to “exert force in opposition”, resistance usually implies not only a negative predisposition towards hegemonic politics but also the agential actualization of this predisposition in the form of rupturing and dissenting articulations. This presentation navigates through the tensions and conflicts inhabiting artistic performances claiming the territory of resistance where contested ideas of aesthetics and social usefulness unfurl.

20h

*Sound of Crisis*

**Performance by Maiden Monsters**

In our project, "crisis" is transformed into faces, sounds, pictures - feelings. We let people tell their stories and structures to be unfold. How do people deal with the impact of "the" crisis? Their messages travel from person to person, from one region to the other by collecting and re-arranging their personal language, music and images into our live performance.

Our quest for the "sound of crisis" led us in 2013 to Portugal, Spain and France and recently, in September 2014, to Greece. There, we introduced ourselves in the home country of "the" crisis, into the gist of the matter! We aimed to talk to owners of shipping companies, soap manufactures but also recorded local musicians, researched alternative ways of living and joined their daily life. On site, we asked people „What does the crisis sound like?“ „What does it look like?“ and „Where do we find it?“ Their statements guided us to places or other people that they identify with "crisis". In these places, we recorded sounds and images before heading on to the next spot. In this way, we develop a musical-visual journey through Greece that is combined with the collected material from Spain, Portugal and France in a live performance.

Saturday, 6 December

**Cut 'n Save**

17h

Cause and Consequences of the Crisis

**Lecture by Günther Sandleben**

The Crisis as an “Epidemic of Overproduction” as a state of momentary barbarism (Marx, Communist Manifesto) castigates humans all over the world, in Europe and especially in Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy. Poverty, material need within an incredible material wealth – a paradox that needs to be clarified. What are the causes of the contemporary crisis? What role do Euro, financial markets, banks and state play? What is the effect of the crisis and what are the consequences? These are the questions I will try to address. The crisis destroys and reactivates economic powers (“cleansing crisis”), it creates an environment for backward nationalist but also emancipatory-revolutionary movements. What would happen if the German former chancellor Helmut Schmidt was right about his intuition: “No revolution shapes itself according to the constitution and we are at the eve of the possibility of a revolution in Europe”.

18h

*Spoken Finance (performed by a dyslexic)*

**Lecture followed by a Performance, by Georgios Papadopoulos and Carsten Lisecki.**

Cut ups from economic theory, literature, and media reports merged together in an attempt to uncover the hidden messages of the neoliberal propaganda. Short statements on the paranoia of the market and the greed of the apologists of finance; mantras of liberation, haikus of disengagement and passivity, poetry of desublimation. Word becoming the new unit of currency in a hopeless, self-defeating and ephemeral attempt to short-circuit the flows of economic value.

19h

*Live Auction*

**by AKW** (Auktions Komitee Wedding) Pablo Hermann, Lisa Glauer, Robert Huber, Fortuna/Europa (an allegory)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Customers and Visitors of the NGBK-ENJOY (Y)OUR STATE OF EMERGENCY Job Auction 2014 – WELCOME!

AKW is pleased to announce the launch of NGBK Job Auction 2014. Our team of international experts is driven by the desire to provide simple, paid jobs for those in search of a way to earn money easily. Today we have up for auction text passages of economic theory that the successful bidder will read out loud for cash. It will be a new and exciting way for individuals to earn money. To celebrate the second job auction organized by AKW in collaboration with NGBK- ENYJOY (Y)OUR STATE OF EMERGENCY, we are proud to offer a unique and exceptional collection of texts reflecting on the liberalization of trade, creative economy and the increasing global debt during these past 100 years. Visitors and bidders will discover a rich and varied selection of international economic theory, as well as rare and exceptional reports and speeches on the creative economy.

Process:

- 1) Dr. Robert Huber will introduce each individual text, using his expertise to appraise and comment upon each one.
- 2) Europa/Fortuna (an allegory) will then roll the dice to determine the starting wage. The numbers of the dice correspond to 11 countries selected from the European Union with minimum wages starting from 11,10 EUR (Luxembourg) to 2,25 EUR (Croatia). From there, the public will attempt to underbid each other in order to acquire the job of reading the aforementioned text, signaling their willingness to bid by raising their flyer.
- 3) The Chief HR Auctioneer Lisa Glauer will guide you through the bidding process. After a reading has been acquired, the successful bidder will go to the Executive Relations Manager Pablo Hermann, who will provide the contract to be signed.
- 4) After the auction, the successful under-bidders will be supervised when they go to a specifically demarked public place to read the acquired texts out loud. In the name of AKW, we would like to thank you for your participation. We wish you a lot of fun and success at the AKW – NGBK Job auction.

AKW - Auktions Komitee Wedding

Ms Lisa Glauer, Chief HR Auctioneer

Mr Pablo Herrman, Executive Relations Manager

Dr. Robert Huber, Head of Expertise Assessment Fortuna/Europa (an Allegory)

20h

*Exercising the 29th Limb*

**Performance by Paris Legakis**, Guest Contribution / Organ kritischer Kunst

A set of rules that depict the choreography of the performance is written on sailcloth. The text consists of various videos found online that document immigrants caught by the coast guard in Greece. Brutality and inhuman treatment describes the arrest.

The performer attempts to incorporate in his body two figures which are at the epicenter in national and international scene, that of the fascist and that of the immigrant. Here the body of the performer represents the broader body of society, consisting the scenery in which the two figures intensely clash. The

performance questions if a possibility for co-existence of the two is feasible; if society will hold on the clash.

The performer stands opposite to the sailcloth. Language imposes itself to control; the voice orders, the body responds to orders ...*SKASE (shut up), MI MILAS (don't speak)*... Voice imperative, movements sharp and aggressive. Both, voice and movements coincide and the co-existence of the two figures proclaims violence, the insistence and the repetition announce a painful process. The coordination between voice and movement gradually start to fade; body disobeys voice; voice gets confused; the body trips. The marks of the clash are disclosed on the body, on the society. The exhaustion and expected break down of the body suggests the impossibility of the co-existence of the two figures, the danger for society.

Sunday, 7 December

### ***H-/edging towards Europe***

17h            The Exterritory Project  
**Lecture by Ruti Sela & Maayan Amir**

Exterritory Project is an ongoing art project dedicated to encourage practical and theoretical exploration of ideas concerning extraterritoriality in an interdisciplinary context. Extraterritoriality designates modes of relations between space, law and representation. Traditionally the subjects of extraterritoriality were either people or spaces. In the first case, and depending on the circumstances, extraterritorial arrangements could either exclude or exempt an individual or a group of people from the territorial jurisdiction in which they are physically located, in the second, they could exempt or exclude a space from the territorial jurisdiction by which it is surrounded. While offering that the concept may be extended to other objects and spheres of activity such as regimes of representation and information, Exterritory Project attempts to use extraterritoriality as an analytical tool to examine phenomena in contemporary life, while simultaneously offering it also as a conceptual and practical platform for reexamination of current political concepts, spatial-political orders and image regimes.

18h            ***H-/edging towards Europe***  
**Panel and Discussion** with Jenny Kneis, Brigitta Kuster, Stefan Nowotny, Ilias Marmaras, Jamie C. Schaerer, Moderation: Sofia Bempeza

• **Jamie C. Schearer:** “The relevance of European Networking and self-organized counter spaces”  
The input will explore the relevance of self-organized struggles. Especially focusing on alliances and their relevance when speaking from the margins. Exemplified along the lines of the European Network Meetings for People of African Descent and Black Europeans, which is trying to highlight Black realities throughout Europe.

• **Brigitta Kuster:** “Erase them!”  
In Europe currently protests by refugees and transmigrants are growing. The refugees of the Vienna Protest camp in the Votiv Church formulated in conjunction to their demand for basic services, freedom of movement within Austria, permission to work, access to education, termination of displacement - as as a surprising additional postulate: „If you do not want to fulfill our demands, then at least remove our fingerprints from your databanks. We have a right to our future.“ – The right to freedom of movement is connected to the right for data sovereignty here. More than a quarter of the migrants who have arrived in Italy during the first half of 2014 have not had their finger prints taken, to be sent to Brüssel, by Italian authorities as reported by the press.

• **Jenny Kneis:** "How to bear witness?"

Recent German migrant struggles can be stated to have begun with the suicide of an Iranian migrant in a detention centre in Würzburg on January 29th 2012. I will take up two statements from an interview with a fellow refugee as a starting point of my lecture.

(1) "Migrants to my mind are the lowest stratum of society" he says. Does this mean to speak of *class*? It clearly seems to imply the idea of a whole of society.

(2) The barracks where they live he says, remind him "on the Nazi-camps". His analogy seems to be inappropriate at first sight, but what does it exactly refer to, in which ways his thoughts seem to be appropriate, *up to date* and as this impossible to be located in some dustbin of (post-war) history?

There can be traced prevailing and latent concepts of class and race, this is my assumption, by following the thoughts of this person within the European migration regime. This attempt can be a political intervention.

• **Ilias Marmaras:** "The avatar of research. An interactive thriller on the possibilities of documentation."

A major issue of debate in the social/political struggle field is the digitalization of the mechanisms of control and surveillance. (Border Crossing, Social Movements, Intercultural Conflict and Dialogue) And though these mechanisms are based on machines and devices, they appear –mostly- "invisible" and "immaterial" to those they are applied on. In order to find a way to visualize these mechanisms –and often their unexpected and confusing results on the involved actor - the idea of using the media form of a videogame that could simulate the different situations and disseminate them to the public, was considered promising.

It was based on the idea that videogames can be either media or games, but sometimes they can be both. Because used as media, they may carry an idea from one place to another. And as games, they can establish a set of conditions within which humans play. Any meaning or message that comes out of the game is generated by the players, and was not necessarily envisaged in the game's original design.

• **Stefan Nowotny:** "Collapses of Translation"

Collapses take place when a given structure or arrangement caves in as its various components "fall together". The structure or arrangement thus ceases to be enabling and instead turns into a ruin of itself. In times of forensic-linguistic analyses or detective agencies hired to provide interpretation services in asylum procedures, this is exactly what's happening to translation and those who rightfully demand to be translated. Whenever rights are violated, however, the question is about how to counter the violation - or evade its very terms.

21h EVERYBODY FOOTBALL!

Closure

***Re-enactement Monty Pythons:  
German vs Greek philosophers***

## works in space

### **Banoptikon** by personal cinema

A major issue of debate in the social/political struggle field is the digitalization of the mechanisms of control and surveillance (Border Crossing, Social Movements, Intercultural Conflict and Dialogue). The videogame Banoptikon has been under development since January 2010 and completed by April 2013. The project is part of the EU research program MIG@NET.

### **FYTA Bianella: an attempt towards the destruction of greekness** by FYTA

A film documenting the weeklong 'situationist burlesque' set up by FYTA at the Athens Bienalle AB4 Agora 2013, involving 50+ artists, performers and pranksters working on the ultimate trolling of Greek identity.

### **HOOKS FOR PUBLIC TALKS** by Sofia Dona & Zafos Xagoraris

Video of the action and installation, Athens/Berlin 2014

### **Job Auction 2013** by AKW

The AUKTIONS KOMITTEE WEDDING invited to a job-market in the former Athens Stock Exchange during the AB4 AGORA Biennale. During the reverse auction aimed explicitly at determining the greatest self-exploiters, the participants underbid each other for the right to work. Fortuna/Europa (an allegory) determines the starting minimum wage according to the respective EU country by rolling dice. The paid labor consisted in reading classical neoliberal texts or economic theory out loud in public. The texts were read in the foyer of the Athens Stock Exchange. The film documents the Job Auction that took place in November 2013 in Athens.

### **Wand der Antikologie** by Sofia Bempeza

How many ancient pillars, vases and sculptures are needed? Or how does the relation of contemporary Greece to its antiquity pervade a whole spectrum of representation(s) of a country under crisis? A site-specific installation (wallpaper) depicts the portrayal of Greece in times of crisis in the German and/or international media.