

# KVNSTHALLE ATHENA

## PRESS RELEASE

### Series **CRISIS, ART AND SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE**

#### Project 1

#### **Capitalism and the Aesthetics of Knowledge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Uses of the Social Document in Contemporary Visual Art**

Wednesday 8 December - Saturday 11 December, 18:00-21:00

De Chirico Lecture Room

Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA), Peiraios 256, Rentis, Athens, Greece, [www.asfa.gr](http://www.asfa.gr)

**A series of four screenings and seminars led by Angela Dimitrakaki, art historian and writer (University of Edinburgh, UK)**

Kunsthalle Athena is pleased to announce the launch of **Crisis, Art and Systems of Knowledge**, a series of workshops, seminars, screenings, presentations and roundtables intended to expand the dialogue on art as a field of research addressing historical processes and social issues.

Today more than ever before art practice and theory face the social demand for alternative, open, dialogical ways of learning as a challenge to formal educational structures. A growing, global student movement against the privatisation of education and the disenfranchisement of arts and humanities makes apparent the need to expand access to critical positions concerning the production of knowledge, especially with regard to social space. The series aims to explore if, and how, art responds to this demand.

The series opens with four screenings and seminars entitled **Capitalism and the Aesthetics of Knowledge in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Uses of the Social Document in Contemporary Visual Art**. Focusing on artists' film & video in the past fifteen years, art historian and writer Angela Dimitrakaki will discuss the diverse ways in which a critical use of the lens engages a global space produced by capital and situated forms of resistance to capital's rule. The selected works exemplify contemporary art's shift to the document and documentation as a means to map imaginatively a wide range of social, economic and cultural sites associated with various forms of crisis.

Screening and seminar dates:

Wednesday 8 December      **Ursula Biemann**, *Black Sea Files*, 2005, 43'

Courtesy of the artist

A video essay by the Swiss artist, theorist and curator addressing the 'secondary' social sites of the oil-informed geography of the Caspian Sea and whether knowledge produced in the 'front line' differs from that produced in libraries.

Thursday 9 December      **Johan Grimonprez**, *Dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y*, 1997, 68'  
Courtesy of The Dakis Joannou Collection, Athens

A hugely influential film by the Belgian artist concerning a global visual culture centered on airplane hijacking and terrorism. (Please note that this evening the screening will take place at 20:00.)

Friday 10 December      **Renzo Martens**, *Episode III: Enjoy Poverty*, 2008, 88'  
Courtesy of Wilkinson Gallery, London

One of the Berlin Biennale 2010 highlights, the film considers how the West can teach Africa the profitable 'management' of poverty. A caustic (self)-critique of the contemporary artist's social role.

Saturday 11 December      **Allan Sekula**, *The Lottery of the Sea*, 2006, 179' (3 hours)  
Courtesy of Galerie Michel Rein, Paris

A monumental video essay by the leading American artist investigating our relationship with the sea in contemporary capitalism. (Please note that the seminar will last until 22.00.)

Each work will be introduced by Angela Dimitrakaki, who will also lead the post-screening discussion. The seminars and screenings are free of charge and wine will be served. The introductions and discussion will be in Greek and/or English, according to the needs of participants. To ensure that participants engage in meaningful discussion, the maximum number of participants per screening and seminar is forty.

Please book your place in advance by sending an email with your name, email address, phone number and the date/s you wish to attend at [info@kunsthalleathena.org](mailto:info@kunsthalleathena.org) or call (0030) 6974 387364 and (0030) 6978 806178. If places are available, entry at the door will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Kunsthalle Athena is a non-profit, co-operative contemporary art centre. Founded in Athens in May 2010, it gratefully acknowledges the generous support of artists, theorists, curators, art institutions and the public in developing an open-access programme of events.

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**BOOK YOUR PLACE AT [info@kunsthalleathena.org](mailto:info@kunsthalleathena.org) NOW**

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Ursula Biemann** is an artist, theorist and curator based in Zurich. The border, migration, mobility and displacement are central and recurring themes in her video work from *Performing the Border* (1999) to *X-Mission* (2008). Her video essays and installations are shown internationally at activists' conferences and art festivals, biennials, museums and often interdisciplinary educational settings. She has edited books on the practice of video essay, gender in transnational spaces, geography and the politics of mobility. Her most recent publication contextualises her own practice and is titled *Mission Reports: Artistic Practice in the Field, Video works 1998-2008* (2008). She is affiliated to the Institute for Theory of Art and Design at HGK Zurich and teaches seminars and workshops internationally. She was guest editor for a special issue of the cultural webmagazine *ArteEast: Regimes of Extraterritoriality in the Middle East* (December 2009). In 2008 she was appointed Doctor honoris causa in Humanities by the University of Umea, Sweden and in 2009 she received the Meret Oppenheim Prize, the national art award of Switzerland.

**Angela Dimitrakaki** was born in 1968 in Greece. She is Lecturer in Contemporary Art at the University of Edinburgh. Her research addresses art in its political articulations, with an emphasis on gender, anti-capitalist struggle and the complexities of European cultural space. Recent publications include 'Materialist Feminism for the 21st Century: The Video Essays of Ursula Biemann', *The Oxford Art Journal* 30/2 (2007) and 'The Spectacle and Its Others: Labour, Conflict and Art in the Age of Global Capital' in *Globalization and Contemporary Art*, edited by Jonathan Harris (Wiley-Blackwell 2011); the essay has been translated in Flemish by *De Witte Raaf* 143 (Jan-Feb 2010) special issue on immaterial labour. Angela is currently writing a book entitled *Gender, Art/Work and The Global Imperative* (Manchester University Press) and co-editing the volume *Politics in A Glass Case: Exhibiting Feminist and Women's Art* (Liverpool University Press). She just completed a book in Greek entitled *Τέχνη και Παγκοσμιοποίηση* [Art and Globalization] (Hestia 2011). She is a member of the Leverhulme Research Network 'Transnational Perspectives on Women's Art, Feminism and Curating' and Corresponding Editor of the interdisciplinary journal *HM: Research in Critical Marxist Theory*. Known also as a novelist in her native Greece, she is a frequent contributor to the national press and writes the column 'All that is solid melts into air' for the Greek monthly review *Container*.

**Johan Grimonprez** was born in 1962 in Belgium. He studied at the School of Visual Arts and attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in New York. His film and video productions explore questions surrounding identity and doubling, and draw on political incidents and the history of filmmaking. He frequently uses found footage and mixes reality and fiction in order to present history as a multi-dimensional concept open to manipulation. His works have recently been presented worldwide in solo exhibitions, among others at Fruitmarket Gallery in Edinburgh, Magasin 3 in Stockholm, Sean Kelly Gallery in New York, Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich as well as in group shows and screenings, including the Garage, Center for Contemporary Culture in Moscow, Blackwood Gallery in Toronto, Whitney Museum in New York, Kunsthalle Fridericianum Kassel, Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, DESTE Foundation for Contemporary Art in Athens. He has also participated in international art festivals such as the Moscow Biennale and Documenta 10. His work is included in numerous collections, including the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the Kanazawa Art Museum in Japan, the National Gallery in Berlin, and the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark.

**Renzo Martens** was born in 1973 in the Netherlands. He studied at the Catholic University at Nijmegen and the Vrije Universiteit, Brussels. In addition, he attended the Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent, and the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam. He lives and works in Brussels, Amsterdam and Kinshasa. As a filmmaker he often travels around the world, examining the role of journalism and documentation and raising issues regarding image production. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions, including Wilkinson Gallery in London, Stedelijk Museum Bureau in Amsterdam, the Vtape in Toronto, as well as in group shows, including at Tate Modern and the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London, FACT in Liverpool, Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and AMP Gallery in Athens. He has participated in many international film festivals and biennials such as Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival, Alba International Film Festival, South American, African and Asian Film Festival in Milan, Human Right Nights International Documentary Film Festival in Bologna, 6th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, Manifesta 7, Brussels Biennial and Documenta 12.

**Allan Sekula** was born in 1951 in the US. He studied at the University of California in San Diego. He lives and works in Los Angeles. He is a photographer, filmmaker, writer, photography theorist, and teaches at the California Institute of the Arts. His works critically focus on social reality and the economic, political, social and cultural conditions wrought by globalisation. His work has been presented in numerous solo exhibitions, such as at Ludwig Múzeum in Budapest, Galerie Michel Rein in Paris, the Generali Foundation in Vienna, as well as in numerous group shows, including Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, MAK Center in Los Angeles, Museum für Gestaltung in Zurich and Whitney Museum in New York. He has participated in many international art festivals and biennials including the 7th Taipei Biennial in Taiwan, Sao Paulo Biennial, 10th Istanbul Biennial, Documenta 11 and Documenta 12. He was recently awarded the Special Jury Prize for Forgotten Space, Orizzonti Competition, Venice. He is the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the NEA, the Getty Research Institute, the Deutsche Akademischer Austauschdienst and the Atelier Calder.