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NEFELI PAPADIMOULI

GENERAL BIOGRAPHY NEFELI PAPADIMOULI

Nefeli Papadimouli (born in 1988 in Athens, Greece) lives between Paris and Athens. She holds a Bachelor Degree from the School of Architecture of the National Polytechnical University of Athens, followed by a Master Degree at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, and from Le Fresnoy - Studio National. Papadimouli was awarded the *Artworks Fellowship* from Stavros Niarchos Foundation (2018); the *Dauphine Prize for Contemporary Art* (2019). She was nominated at *Révélation Emeriges* and won the *Matsutani Prize* (2022), the *Pierre Cardin Prize* of the Académie des Beaux Arts for Sculpture (2023).

Her recent solo exhibitions include *Skinscapes* (THE PILL, Istanbul, Turkiye, 2024); *The World in My Mouth* (Dohyang Lee Gallery, Paris, France, 2023); *Étoiles partielles* (Le Crédac, Ivry sur Seine, France, 2023); *Relational Cartographies* (Ter Posterie, Rosealare, Belgium, 2022) and *Build the World of the You - ACTE* (Le Concept, École d'Art du Calais, Calais, France, 202).

She has participated in group exhibitions such as *How To Hold Your Breath - 9th Asian Art Biennial* (Taiwan, 2024); *Crossing The Water - 17th Lyon Biennale* (France, 2024); *La Nuit venue, on y verra plus claire* (Centre Culturel Jean Cocteau, Les Lilas, France, 2024); *Etre Forêts* (Fondation MABA, Nogent-sur-Marne, France, 2024); *Entre là* (Casa Conti - Fondation Ange Leccia, Oletta, Corsica, France, 2023); *Douze preuves d'amour* (Révélation Emerige, Paris, France, 2022); *Transmeare* (FRAC Picardie, Amiens, France, 2022); *Playground Festival* (M Museum Leuven, Belgium, 2021); *Archipel - quatre residences, mille experiences* (FRAC Grand Large, Dunkerque, France, 2021); *Still Here Tomorrow* (Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, Athens, Greece, 2019); *Imaginary homes, 6th Biennale of Contemporary Art* (MOMUS Museum, Thessaloniki, Greece, 2015); *CAUTION! SLIPPERY GROUND* (Istanbul Modern, Istanbul, Turkiye, 2015).

GENERAL WORK NEFELI PAPADIMOULI

Nefeli Papadimouli (Athens, 1988) is an artist and architect living in Athens and Paris. She works across media ranging from participatory action in the public space, to sculpture and moving image, with installation and performance being the current focus of her practice. Drawing from the tradition of the avant-garde, her work blurs the boundaries between categories of artistic practice and appear as fusions of “in-between” media.

Believing in the capacity of art to re-dimension our realm of perception and sensibility, the artist conceives her works as poetic exercises that reveal and redefine our cultural constructions and call to an engagement in social consciousness in a deep, subliminal way.

Her works interrogate interdependence in the context of social and natural structures and translate a certain politics of connection. Through her research, the artist is tempting to question notions that inhabit our societal systems – *such as activity - passivity, difference - repetition, union - opposition, individual – collective, human – non-human* – and explore where those dichotomies break down.

Her projects, conceived as radically inclusive spaces of encounter, aim to gather invited performers and spectators to participate in actions while engaging their consent of “being” part of the work of art as a condition of its existence. This process reflects the desire to engage bodies and impulse gestures by stimulating behaviors and collective negotiations while the works are becoming catalysts for the emergence of social links. By generating actions encouraging tenderness and empathy by non-verbal communication, Papadimouli is attempting to unfold the tensions formed in the in-between / betwixt space of relations and our perception of otherness.

Her process emphasizes the importance of the body – *first place in which we exist* - by often initiating a direct implication of the public with the work of art (*the status of the work is a way to act*). The sculptures are presented as “*action generators*” questioning perpetually their finality by the constant transformation of their physical form or/and the context that surrounds them, as well as the transition of their symbolic character, while they are awakening personal impulses and revealing public’s behavioral codes.

Lately, her research focuses on the diversity of possible ecosystems that result when studying material bodies as spatialized and spatializing entities and their relationship with their environment. Her recent works explore methods of organization and techniques of visualization of inter-personal and inter-subjective correlations including more-than-human bodies. This proto-architectural approach, inspired by phenomenology, proxemics and contemporary feminist and political theories, is tempting to reveal that spatial configurations of distance is the essential element of balance.

NEFELI PAPADIMOULI, SKINSCAPES, TEXT BY THE PILL

for the exhibition *Skinscapes*, The Pill, Istanbul, Türkiye, 30.11.2024 - 25.01.2025

THE PILL® is thrilled to present Athens-born, Paris-based artist Nefeli Papadimouli's first solo show in Istanbul and at the gallery between the dates 30 November 2024 — 25 January 2025. The exhibition presents a selection of the artist's signature wearable sculptures alongside a series of photographs and graphic notations centered around the title "Skinscapes" as a conceptual framework to introduce the multifaceted practice of Papadimouli moving between architecture, sculpture, and performance.

Challenging notions of individuation and separation between bodies and the environment, the term "skinscape" is the title Papadimouli has given to a series of wearable, connective sculptures that function at once as prompts for collective movement, abstract monochromatic paintings that conceal hidden bursts of color, and architectural interfaces for assembling bodies and negotiating boundaries. Designed in compatibility for multiple human bodies to inhabit and activate them, when hung on the wall, these works are conceived to be "on strike". In this muted, inactive form, they engage as much with painterly representations of the body, as with archetypal costumes and history of fashion; while in their activated, embodied state, they transform into wearable and portable surfaces, much like a collective skin. They are softened, through movement, into breathing architectural elements that shape space through a synchronized and directed kinetic flow based on spatial partition, constantly transforming how a given architecture and rhythm is experienced, used and conceived by the public.

A series of polaroid prints and graphic notations accompany these central pieces through a rhythmic deployment in the gallery's space, revealing traces and studies from Papadimouli's activations of these same sculptures in collaboration with performers and audiences. Using the scale of the human body to measure reality, the drawings in the "Relational Cartography" series deploy choreographies of collective movement made possible by these sculptures. The geometric backdrop made of assemblages of pink and blue millimeter paper references the grid as the foundation of modernist abstraction, while the circular, interconnected, multidirectional patterns of movement drawn by the artist introduce elements of contingency and unpredictability, embracing the improvisational and spontaneous aspects of collective experimentation to question the margin of free movement in everyday spaces. Grounding the ensemble in the artist's study of the body in relation to space, the Polaroid photographs document activations of Papadimouli's sculptures, where movement expands the visual and spatial boundaries of the body in bursts of spectacular deployment like wings or feathers.

With a background in architecture and visual arts, Nefeli Papadimouli works across media, from participatory actions in public space to sculpture, photography, drawing, costume design, moving image, installation and performance. Inspired by phenomenology, feminism and contemporary political theory, her proto-architectural approach explores spatial configurations of distance as essential elements in processes of social conflict, negotiation and equilibrium. Informed by utopian architectural and artistic avant-gardes as much as contemporary dance, her series of modular, connective, elastic sculptures function at once as prompts for collective movement and architectures of assembly, investigating the interdependence of cultural and natural forms and exploring the notion of space through its relationship to the body.

The Pill

NEFELI PAPADIMOULI, THE SKIN CONNECTS US TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, INTERVIEW WITH ONUR BAŞTÜRK

for Yuzu Magazine, December 2024

Skinscapes, the first solo exhibition in Istanbul by Greek artist Nefeli Papadimouli, who lives in Paris, has opened at The Pill. Before exploring the exhibition, take a moment to hear what the artist has to say about her practice...

Onur Baştürk : When and how did focusing on architectural costumes become central to your art practice? How has this practice evolved over time, and how do you evaluate where you are today?

Nefeli Papadimouli : The ongoing research project Relational Cartographies, which includes the architectural costumes, emerged in my practice with Etre Forks during the lockdown. It was first exhibited when galleries reopened after the long pause. At that time, I aimed to create a work that could act as a vector, a catalyst for building communities, where participants in performative actions would feel connected both literally and metaphorically. I began by developing a material protocol of connections to activate through performances. This consisted of a system of textile modular elements—pockets and containers that attached to the bodies of each participant. These costumes, or corporeal masks, took form as wearable sculptures.

I wanted to design wearable structures that facilitated transitions: from oneself to another, akin to ritualistic masks, and between people through the connective protocol. My goal was to position participants in a vectorial state, placing them in an «in-between» space of identities or conditions. During rehearsals, I observed a transformative effect: the costumes seemed almost magical, allowing my collaborators to feel altered, to experience being «Other.»

As I worked on this project, I realized it visually and methodologically translated a politics of connection, proposing that spatial configurations of distance could serve as foundational elements for social balance. This realization sparked my passion for exploring ecosystems that emerge when material bodies are seen as spatialized and spatializing entities in dialogue with their environments. This proto-architectural approach now defines my practice, enabling me to explore methods of organizing and visualizing interpersonal and intersubjective correlations.

This research, and the six large-scale works it has produced so far, is deeply rooted in my architectural education. It examines the relationship between body and space and how their mutual interpretations shape our society. Today, amidst the undeniable ethical and ecological crises we face—a cataclysmic reality that makes the future feel like the past—I feel compelled to focus on the connections living bodies can create over time (linking us to both past and future) and the relationships between living beings and specific places, including our rights to land.

THE SKIN, AS OUR LARGEST LIVING ORGAN

OB : The title of the exhibition at The Pill, Skinscape, is a combination of two words. Why did you choose to merge these two words? What is the philosophy behind this name?

NP : Skinscapes is the title of one of the series of works featured in the exhibition. We chose it as the title for the entire exhibition because it provides a conceptual framework encompassing the diverse works presented.

The skin, as our largest living organ, simultaneously protects us from and connects us to the outside world—the Other. It allows us to breathe; it is a boundary yet also a passage. It functions as an adornment or surface, but fundamentally, it is our physical link to everything surrounding us. All the works in the exhibition address the idea of connection—between one and another—and aim to become vectors for creating relationships: studying transformations and initiating new relational landscapes. They explore transitions between the individual and the collective and vice versa.

OB : Will there be people wearing the costumes at the exhibition in Istanbul? Or will the costumes, as you describe them, be displayed “on strike,” hanging on the walls?

NP : The works from the Relational Cartographies series and the Objects to Connect series being shown in this exhibition share a dual existence. When displayed in the exhibition space “on strike,” they function as sculptures, taking on the status of artworks. Alternatively, they can also act as accessories or prosthetics for scripted collective performative actions.

For this exhibition, we chose to present the works “on strike,” accompanied for the first time by archives and research materials developed during the realization of the performances. In this way, the works themselves become witnesses of past events, carrying traces of previous performances while also serving as invitations for their future actualizations.

ARTIST, MOTHER AND MEDITERRANEAN

OB : Your work seems to take an anti-stance towards the fashion industry. How do you view the fashion industry?

NP : I understand that this question can arise when seeing my work. In their forms, my works, at least the wearable ones, could present connections to the fashion world. I feel though that the works are hybrid creations and they are informed or we could find their origins in different disciplines of the history of art, like painting, sculpture, theater, dance, fashion or architecture.

OB : Now, take a step back and look at yourself from the outside. Try to describe yourself in three words. Which words would you use and why?

NP : This is a difficult exercise. I think it is impossible to see oneself from the outside without the feelings, desires and fears that each one experiences. But I think the most evident words that would define me are artist, mother and Mediterranean. The first two, are the two roles that describe my everyday life, that I struggle to combine sometimes, that they give me immeasurable happiness and inevitable frustrations. The Mediterranean is probably because of my attachment to the sea, to the noise, to the sun which make my overall temper.

OB : What inspires you?

NP : I'm not sure “inspiration” is the right word to describe what drives me in the studio. Instead, I feel deeply connected to people, books, works, situations, and stories I encounter in my life. These encounters - whether physical or virtual - nourish my work. I see some of my creations as “homages” to others - artists, architects, activists, friends, and lovers. Discovering the work and writings of Brazilian artist Lygia Clark, for example, was a transformative experience for me that profoundly shaped my artistic approach.

NEFELI PAPADIMOULI'S DEBUT SOLO EXHIBITION IN ISTANBUL, TEXT BY BEGÜM EROL

for Sanayi 313, December 2024

Established in 2016 to showcase a diverse selection of contemporary art in Istanbul, PILL® Gallery is now hosting Paris-based Greek artist Nefeli Papadimouli's first solo exhibition in the city. Previously exhibited simultaneously at the 17th Lyon Biennial and the 9th Asian Art Biennial in Taiwan, "Skinscapes" provides an in-depth look at the artist's graphic narratives, photographic series, and unique wearable sculptures.

With a background in architecture, Nefeli Papadimouli examines the concept of public space and its intricate relationship with the human body through her multifaceted creative practice, encompassing photography, drawing, costume design, and performance. Her sculptures and installations come to life with performers and audiences as she explores themes of belonging and responsibility within social systems while leaving room for individuals to choose whether to be part of those systems or not. Art critic and curator Julie Pellegrin highlights how Papadimouli investigates scenarios where the concepts of "I" and "we" diverge yet strive for some sort of connection. The term "Skinscape" originates from a series of wearable sculptures the artist previously created. These sculptures create abstract monochrome paintings punctuated by bursts of color within collective movement and architectural interfaces that bring bodies together and redefine boundaries. Reflecting different human body forms, the works symbolize a state of being "on strike" when displayed on walls.

Running from 30 November 2024 to 25 January 2025, the exhibition will also include a selection of Polaroid prints and graphic narratives that document and reflect the choreographies brought to life by Nefeli Papadimouli's sculptures, animated by performance artists and audiences. In the "Relational Cartography" series, the geometric backgrounds refer to the foundation of modernist abstraction, while Papadimouli's circular and overlapping multifaceted shapes emphasize the possibilities and uncertainties inherent in collective experiences. The artist embraces the improvisational and spontaneous aspects of collective experiences to explore the freedom dimension of our actions in everyday spaces.

Begüm Erol

THE WORLD IN MY MOUTH, TEXT BY VIOLETTE MORISSEAU

for the exhibition *The World in My Mouth*, Dohyang Lee Gallery, Paris, France, 2023

The result of a gentle observation, *The World in My Mouth* unfolds along two intrinsically linked axes: the vision of Orion, your child, and your own vision. On the ground floor, you explore the changes brought about by motherhood, an inexorable experience of fusion. You talk about the ability to open up a part of yourself to your child, and by extension, to other forms of life. In the lower level, you lead us into an intimate reversal in which Orion introduces us to the world through his eyes, the sounds he transmits and the gestures he teaches us.

The 'cocoon' sculptures on which the exhibition opens, suspended or hung, seem like outgrowths of the walls. They have the dual effect of being able to carry and protect a body –either human, mineral or plant – against itself. Skin-to-skin contact creates a symbiotic relationship: the wearer's body is instinctively covered in scales, adorned with coppery and undulating exoskeletons. In a form of transference, through the contact of the skins, a little of one passes into the body of the other.

As we descend the stairs, Orion's babbling begins to be heard. At his age, he has the ability to identify and memorise an infinite number of sounds, from every mouth and every culture. Although this skill fades with time and situated learning, these vocalisations are those of a universal song, potentially containing all the languages of the world.

With new-borns, the integration of knowledge is inseparable from moments of sleep: it is during the first phase of sleep, which is often agitated, that the new information gathered during the periods of wakefulness is processed and memorised. This is when a universal phenomenon occurs: the infant's face displays a succession of innate emotions: joy, surprise, fear, disgust, sadness and anger. Its body moves in sudden, jerky movements, with limbs twitching and relaxing. You observed this sort of spasmodic dance in Orion, and asked the choreographer Theo Pendle to interpret it. Lying on his back, an unsuspended horizon of movement opens up to the dancer: from micro-gestures to convulsions, this is the dance of a body that memorises the world.

In the adjoining room, a soft space where bodies can move without injury, you've hung a number of sculptures, remarkable for their haptic qualities. These are works to be looked at lying on your back, to be touched, sculptures to be bitten. Here you return to your lifelong obsession with transitional objects, defined by Winnicott as essential supports for the child's emotional projections. These objects help them to become aware of their individuality and to see others as the outside world rather than parts of themselves.

You, whose practice constantly tests the elasticity of the distances between individuals in order to reposition them in the world, have decided to put us in the place of a new-born baby. A soft, cuddly world, where things are understood with the mouth. Orion tenderly shows us the way to swallowing the world and assimilating it.

Violette Morisseau
Translated in English by Emmelene Landon

MILIEU MOUVANT DE NEFELI PAPADIMOULI. TEXT BY VIOLETTE MORISSEAU

for the performance *Milieu Mouvant*, pal project, Paris, France, 2021

Milieu mouvant

Artist and architect, Nefeli Papadimouli questions space, a crucial dimension of her artistic practice, in its relationship to the body. She creates « standard works », which, from our body scales, allow us to measure the real. More precisely, it is the spacing between things and beings that the artist works: this « negative space redefined as relational object, the space that separates us as a space that connects us »¹. The exhibition *Milieu Mouvant*, which presents original works by Nefeli Papadimouli, reflects on our shared spaces, urban and public, and how we regulate distances between individuals.

« in between spaces »

Nine fans are displayed in the pal project gallery, treated in a sculptural manner: human-sized, they are made of paper, fabric, wood and metal. Nine costumes, shaped from a monochrome fabric evoking the colours of the city, are associated with each of the fans wrapped in boxes and waiting to be used: a possible ephemeral community takes shape behind the sculptures. Some photographs and a film, projected in the exhibition space, shows these works activated by performers in an urban environment. Manipulated, folded and deployed, these giant fans modify the space and its perception. Depending on where they are placed, on the ground or against the gallery walls, the fans create borders, openings, interstices, and even fragile habitats. In this way, as with teepees, they sometimes offer the possibility of a refuge for our bodies, where spectators can gather, alone or with a partner.

« middle can move »

Through their materiality - some of them are heavy, very architectural, while others are more aerial and mobile - and through the actions they imply (folding-unfolding, enveloping-expanding, bending-resisting, including-excluding), the fans become the revelation of deep and non-verbalized experiences shared by a same community. Nefeli Papadimouli has thus worked on the « informal spaces », defined by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall as « the distances we observe in our contacts with others »²: intimate, personal, social, public, these distances generally escape the field of consciousness. In a world where all contact has become potentially dangerous, these social separations have never been so visible and framed. Nefeli Papadimouli's fans reveal them, making us aware of these spacings as well as the distance from one another as an element of social balance. Redefined by the spectators who can adjust this space between them, this distance that separates us becomes malleable.

« middle can move »

Matter is made of folds, creases, hollows, anfractuosités; we can slip into them, curl up in them or insinuate ourselves into them. These folds engage both our small perceptions and a macroscopic vision of reality. Folded, they seem to compress the air that surrounds them; in their unfolding, there is a continuous variation of matter as well as a continuous development of form, an unfolding of the sensible that can go so far as to « project the world onto the surface of one fold »³. With the fan and its « fold that goes to infinity », Nefeli Papadimouli gives us the possibility of enlarging our spaces, and of sharing them. Even when compressed, folded and wrapped, fans have the power to stretch and expand the world.

Violette Morisseau

1. Julie Pellegrin, *La crise, l'habit et le panier : Nefeli Papadimouli ou l'art de la réparation*, cat. exp. Archipel, Résidences de recherche et de création dans les Hauts-de-France, 2021

2. Edward T. Hall, *La dimension cachée*, Paris, Seuil, 2014

3. Gilles Deleuze, *Le Pli. Leibniz et le Baroque*, Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1988

TEXT BY VIOLETTE MORISSEAU

for the exhibition, *You cannot buy the Revolution. You cannot make the Revolution. You can only Belgique the Revolution*, présenté by Diametre, POPPOSITIONS Art Fair, Brussels, Belgium

For POPPOSITION 2019, Diamètre has decided to present a solo show of the artist Nefeli Papadimouli.

« You cannot buy the Revolution. You cannot make the Revolution. You can only be the Revolution », is the specific project the artist developed in the occasion of Popposition 2019, "Capital of Woke". Nefeli Papadimouli designed and sewed clothes with images extracted from archives. Historical images of struggles and rebellions of the twentieth century, disruptive moments of defining events who transformed the cursus of the history, (May 1968 - France, Civil War - Spain, War of Independence – Algeria) become textures and textiles. To enforce our relationship to history and our knowledge on our collective past experience the artist decides to use textiles printed with Wikipedia pages for the the lining of the clothes. Each archival image is combined with the story as told through Wikipedia, this enormous machine of information who forms the majority of the world.

« You cannot buy the Revolution. You cannot make the Revolution. You can only be the Revolution. » is thought as an installation, recreating the intimate space of a bedroom: a matrimonial bed would stand in the center of the exhibition space, and a coatrack would be placed nearby, displaying the printed clothes made by Nefeli Papadimouli. The sheets of the bed would be made with another printed sheet created by the artist, showing an enormous crowd struggling for their rights, for their independence, to transform.

All these images of highly tensed struggles, transformed in sheets and clothes, are becoming objects of marchandisation and consumption. Nefeli Papadimouli, here, cynically enlightens the phenomenon of capitalization of ideals and struggles, "the capitalization of our dreams", the ambient hypocrisy in the social and political environment and in our relation to the other, our understanding of the other and of ourselves as being part of whole: our social and political commitment. The crisis images and their explanation, their Wikipedia pages, symbols of the vulgarized information, are worn and transformed in design objects, declinable, erasing all possibilities of the transmission of a powerful message. All the struggles are melted in one consumerist flow, which annihilates their meanings. Nefeli Papadimouli transforms the sleeping bodies or the dressed bodies in an archival and senseless machine, which cynically invites us to reflect on our ethic choices, our social engagement, to rethink our participation to the collective experience.

The projects also proposes a reflexion about the art world, and its inherent hypocrisy : supposed to be a space of expression and of freedom, the burden of the art market often limits the possibilities of revolts in the works, leaving them in the field of the politically correct. Indeed, the politically correct is marchandisable.

Violette Morisseau

INTERVIEW WITH VASSILIKA SARILAKI

January 2018

Nefeli Papadimoulis's charismatic work could be the best example of a new artist's metamodernism in Greece. She is an artist constantly experimenting with many means, producing authentic and unique work, based on her ethics, passion, goal and vision. With an honest, indifferent look at our recent political history, she employs the "renegotiation of the wound" by exploiting the healing qualities of art, in order to follow the path -using the witted with wisdom auras of older artists- into prolific and truly hopeful art. And all this with a courage to produce new Words and Deeds, without imitations and postmodern cynical "appropriations" of works by other artists.

Papadimoulis's conceptualism is inherent in her thinking as a reflection, not as an impressiveness and fanfare. Besides, her value system derives from artists such as Kunellis. There is an awareness of her history and debt as an artist against the disgraced greek society. In her political works, affection and a direct revelation of social pain is visible. At the same time, her Neo-Romanticism leads her to a poeticism in writing. In an instant or constant vision that she cultivates consciously.

The architecture she studied at the National Technical University of Athens taught her the measure and the effective form on the premises. Her later studies at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris transferred her fertile value system into art. Concepts such as heterosexuality, identity, rebellion, ephemeral, "the space in-between" and "the potential space" are central axes of her work.

Her works have been presented at several group exhibitions in Greece and mainly abroad. Indicatively, Havana Biennial (2015), Istanbul Modern (2015), Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature (2016), Louvre, (2016), Biennale of Thessaloniki (2017) etc. The following interview is particularly interesting as it unfolds the thought and the work on process of a truly creative mind and a talented personality.

Vasilika Sarilaki : Nefeli, looking at your work, one would say that you are a pure representative of the generation of metamodernism. Characteristics of this generation is that it transcends postmodern views, characterized by deconstruction, irony, relativism, cynicism, style mixing and rejection of big narratives. Since 2008, when the international financial crisis began, some younger artists have revealed a craving for the reconstruction of art, for its sincere and constructive expression, for a new creativity that includes hope, neo-romanticism, narratives and the pursuit of communal action. I see that all these elements characterize your work. Which is your opinion ?

Nefeli Papadimouli : I think we are in a time when the data has changed in relation to the modern or postmodern era and has been systematically changing at a rapid pace. Surely, the period in which we live is a time when we see the end of the "big narratives" that marked the 20th century, while at the same time the absolute and dominant ideological systems failed to give solutions. An age in which the future and the present can no longer be described with only one or a few passwords. In addition, as students and artists, we grew up at a time when we systematically taught "the end of art" in schools, and we found that now art is just starting again.

At the same time, in the 21st century -when Beuys' prophecy «Everybody is an artist» has now been realized and everyone has access to imaging equipment or materials, and when technology has evolved too much- the concept of «construction» has changed. Certainly, this new data has brought about a breakdown in how we perceive what art is, but also how we create.

The artists were appealed to stand in practice through their works. So today, I have noticed that there are two main waves. There are the artists who primarily adopt these new production tools and are 'moved' from physical objects to virtual environments, and others who perceive machines as competitive creative tools and therefore turn to the mastery of human gesture and skill in trying to show its importance, uniqueness and poeticism.

VS : You are right. Indeed, there is a duality. In addition, metamodernism's artists believe that our era is characterized by an oscillation between versions of modernism and postmodern. However, they are flirting with the idea -and they are finally succeeding- of producing something else that is now being born. This includes the great expansion of public art, which you have been interested in, as well as the interactivity in art. Also the return to political art that we have recently seen in Documenta14, even with a naive, anthropological character. How do you relate to these?

NP : I think that the openness of public art and the active involvement of the public in it, actively works openly and consciously to a large part of artists from the early 1990s -and certainly increases over time. I think it is the need of artists to communicate more directly with a wider part of society than the specialized audience of art, which fortunately has already grown up.

In my opinion, interventions in the public domain are of particular interest to the artist himself, as they require him to redefine the codes and systems through which he creates his works, as they are intending to different viewing conditions and audiences.

For me, art is a language, a means of communication, and as in any language I try to adapt my vocabulary so that the receiver can understand me. This is particularly important in public space projects. In my work, I often ask myself who I am addressing to, and this is already helping me to strip my works from glamorous tricks. In addition, I sincerely believe that every art is politics, as every being is political, every act and every attitude.

As I mentioned before, we are in the age of the end of the great narratives and at a time when the world is changing rapidly, a time of extremes, crises and wars, successive ecological disasters, and we are now aware that the world is small and singular, so that any disaster/ judgment has consequences everywhere and we understand it directly. The end of the big narratives means that there is no one change, a revolution, a solution but many, continuous, constant rebellions and disputes, local and thematic, and I think that is what we saw in Documenta14 a few months ago.

VS : You have recently described in an article that your work, as it is influenced by the crisis we are experiencing, «tries to introduce the possibility of re-establishing systems of relationships and values that go hand in hand with their poetic and political dimension as well as their own uncertainties, proceeding with successive 'oscillations'». What exactly do you do in your work? An ideal representation of elements of the crisis? Do you propose new ways of viewing and new balances? You are also talking about a revaluation of values...

NP : Your questions are very dense and my mind travels incessantly. I will try to put things in a row. Initially, in terms of judgment, of judgments, I believe that at least for the people of my generation are important experiences that cannot be represented by themselves, but are there as part of a primary state of any creative act. Next, I have to clarify that my work focuses on studying what I call the "relationships in-between" things and the situations that are produced through them. When I refer to systems, I mean the various forms of correlations of things, concepts, subjects, subjectivities that construct reality. A work with such a nucleus of interest cannot represent "crisis's elements" or symbol-signals because it tries to understand the way with which they are manufactured, that is, the way they operate as such. The notion of representation nevertheless seems to play a dominant role in my work, and that is because I believe that through the representation of relationships and representations of reality you can reach the point of creating new realities that will be there next, they will be supposed as alternative worlds, ready to be "lived". These alternate worlds, this "imagination in action" recreates the image and is the real that it no longer looks as Absolute, and in this way is finally redefined. Values change because the systems that structure them change. In other words, I think that by crushing a network of relationships that produce a system, you also hide its truths, its values. Replenishing one, you twist the other. Overall, I would say that what interests me and what I am looking for through my works is to propose enlargements of our reality, where the imaginary of each one meets with its reality.

VS : The artist, said Andre Malraux, is starting and doing important things when he dares to start becoming unpleasant. Do you believe this or does the artist have to heal the trauma, as Joseph Beuys said?

NP : Why do not these two look so opposed to one another to me? As I do not know what exactly these references mean, I will answer clearly through the way I interpret the sequences of the words. I tend to agree with both, in combination. Initially, unpleasant for who? For viewers? For other artists? For the market? For institutions? Surely, for some, somehow, you will be unpleasant at some point. The point is to manage to define who they are. Any form of action as it gets its position is also unpleasant for a part of the world. And this is legitimate, necessary.

However, it is not exactly what I 'read' on this question. Influenced by a book by Francoise Coblence, a French psychoanalyst, I tend to think that the trauma that is inevitably inherent in an artist's work is also transferred to the viewer. That is precisely the condition that can be described as unpleasant.

The great works, as they say, are the works that struggle with the elements of each other, when the subjective and very personal ghosts of the creator manage to approach reality, collective truths and collective injuries. Healing from a trauma is an unpleasant and painful process and that is because we need to realize its existence, that is to say, to bring it back to it. In my work in Le Louvre in May 2017, for example, what I have been trying to do is connect the Samothraki victory again with its place by making the sky of Samothraki live stream from the exact position in which the statue was at the site exposed in the museum.

Finally, I think that the important works are usually the results of intimate fears or desires and traumatic experiences that the artist brings forward through spaces, pictures or situations to relive them and unwittingly, maybe somehow sadistically I could say, he also imposes on the public. So, I think I conclude in the fact that the art is there to heal the traumas. Simply this is a very unpleasant process.

VS : In a previous discussion, you told us that there are actually two sides to your job. On one hand, there is poetry and romance, and on the other, the political dimension. How are these two dimensions expressed in you, how do you imply them and how do you attribute them to your work?

NP : I think my works, at least those I think are still relevant to my concerns, come from reality - common and mine. They are therefore political, social, like me. But they do not describe situations, they project them. That is where I think it is that one could see the poetic, romantic or dreamlike dimension of my work.

As I said earlier, I want through my works to enable the imaginary to be through the real or the real within the imaginary. I will describe to you something that I have not considered as a work but as an attitude. Since last May any note that has passed through my hands I vindicate it with poems, I read, I gathered, I wrote. Artists friends saw it as a political act of devaluation of the value of money. The truth was that paper was made again. In particular, I think these are what travels the most among the people. I believed that in some way I could interfere anonymously with one of the most trivial social conventions, such as the exchange of products or services against a cash payment, by opening -for the most careful ones - a window to another reality. I do not know why I'm telling you that. However, I think that somehow with this example I answer the question.

VS : Poeticism and politics for me are particularly the installation you showed in the recent Biennale in Thessaloniki. All these "unexpected" symbolic things you have made to balance on these woods that act as scales. Which is the meaning you give to these things?

NP : This work began to work in 2015 after my acquaintance with the neo-conceptual Cuban artist Wifredo Prieto who had presented "A glass half full" to Madrid's Arco.

This project was sold for 20,000 euros, in a Spain plunged into the financial crisis, creating a huge scandal. This fact for me was shocking. I saw the work and the situation that was created around it as extremely important. He touched me. For me it meant the swing between the absolute cynicism and the poetics of human thought. However, it was not enough.

The truth is I do not like cynicism in art. Our life is so drenched with cynicism that we do not have to insist on it even in that area, where we are looking for freedom. So this is how the first balance was somewhat born. I made a piece of wood that had exactly the dimension of my two open hands, I hung it from the ceiling with a rope and placed a glass of water half-full and a glass of water half-empty on each end. With caution and finding the right places for the three places (positions of the objects and the point of balance from which the wooden board was hung), the system was balanced.

I had before my eyes a system in which two phenomenologically similar situations were presented, but they were differentiated only through the human perception, from the point of view that everyone would choose to see, to name the reality that is presented in front of him. Two points, two objects, identical and different at the same time that are in conversation or confrontation. Seeing the result, I realized that one could not work without the other. Naturally, of course but simultaneously conceptually. If one collapsed, it would take with it the other one. The two signs / marks/ objects/ words/ concepts/ symbols intertwined. One was created and created the other through an identification process.

This observation led me to the search for the process of producing the identity of the objects. I started experimenting. To place objects and concepts, one across the other, looking for the multiple narratives and situations that each system could produce.

A pair of scissors against a political map of the world, a knife against a cut apple, a feather facing a rock, or a collar opposite to chicory and others. I was working on a system that was built on a dipole. As much as human thought. The classic white/ black we say. Nevertheless, I was not looking for this. What I was interested in was the point of equilibrium, the place where those two met, "the space in which there is neither the yes nor the no", their common place and the unified identity. How to say? I was interested in the phrase, not the specific words.

VS : Some of these "scales" are tilting, giving an element of uncertainty and fragility that is inherent in other works. Do you think that the work must, as Juan Munoz said, be able to mark weakness beyond certainty? Really, how does damage and time affect the balances of your system?

NP : This system is built on the natural state of things. The time and the characteristics of the space affect it. These items are in balance without aids. Therefore, when the apple begins to dehydrate, its weight is transformed and the balance is redefined until it collapses. The balances that living elements contain, elements with water, tend to collapse each in its own time. A strong wind or intense movement of a visitor can affect the way the system works, too. I see this installation as a way of doing sculpture in the sense of time. And yes, it's fragile! Very! I believe brittleness is a natural state. Time and external factors, conditions affect us.

I think we need to deal with the things that surround us with affection. And I include artworks on it. Therefore, my works are often intended to be touched, worn or populated.

The use of objects also gives them an eternal life span. However, the truth is that I do not think I am interested, or at least not at present, to just create new images. Mainly new experiences. I think this has to do with what you call uncertainty, which, of what I understand, is quite noticeable in my works. I think I always begin out of questions, or of my questions. Therefore, I am confident that the role of the artist is to ask questions or to broaden the existing ones, to explore and to study. Art is like a birth process. In addition, even when it comes to contact, I think the emancipated viewer finds his answers, his certainties.

VS : This is the beauty of art. How each viewer sees another truth and this is not necessarily a certainty or even an affirmation. He may perhaps see himself in the mirror of art. May see his Achilles heel. Really what do you think? Should we reconcile with our Achilles heel or try to overcome it?

NP : I think that the works are more of our weaknesses, the injuries, as we said before, collective and personal. I tend to repeat myself, perhaps I like it, but the poetic works stem from reality and this is often characterized by our inability to intervene as ideally as we would like. Nevertheless, that is where magic is. That art may be the only place where everything can exist in their ideal form!

Now the battle with our Achilles heel... The myth of Sisyphus. The theatrical texts of the huge Beckett. Probably in the dipoles I always answer "both". Reconciling just unconditionally, without effort, means to give up. And with it and with ourselves. I think the only way we can reconcile with weakness is to try and overcome it. Only this ultimately helps us to recognize it, to be aware of its existence. It is basically a vicious circle. Somehow, I see it. Like running and stumbling. Let's fall and come back. Reconciliation means awareness. What is interesting after all in knowing something if you are not trying to overcome it?

VS : Let us talk now about the installation you made in Paris with the mobile walls that held upon immigrants. I find excellent your innovative idea to create in principle an architectural space with two movable walls that kept back unspoken people coming from sensitive social groups. In essence, it was a theatrical setting. On the one hand, there was the rigidity of the white walls and behind them the people who were marginalized reading various texts. Tell me about this work...

NP : Parallèlement is a work I have been working since early 2016 and first introduced in Paris in September 2017. The installation was recreated for the "la pensée du tremblement" exhibition inspired by the philosophy of Edouard Glissant.

The exhibition was held at Les Grands Voisins, a unique place, a heterotopia in central Paris. An old hospital that has now been transformed into a whole neighbourhood where the two galleries -in which have exhibited social homes, cultures, self-managed restaurants and shops, workshops of artists, showrooms, a camping site and more- coexist. It is a hybrid place and autonomous. The approximately 2,500 people living there are able to work in space and be paid with their own parallel currency -a bill they consume in other functions of the site. This system creates an independent and sustainable economy. I am referring to all of this because I still feel extremely enchanted by this shocking experience and very tied to the people with whom I have lived and worked.

Parallèlement is an installation that comes alive through a group performance. With regard to the installation, that is the constructed piece, it consists of two gigantic, portable walls. These walls, built exactly in the dimensions of the room, were positioned to leave a narrow corridor from the main door to the opposite wall, through which the public came in. Everything was white. An empty room, an empty tent filled with viewers only. From behind, on the red side, the performers were leaning against the walls/ dashboard and whispered texts, all together, at the same time. Texts we chose with participants passing through a five-day workshop process.

The scrambling texts we came up with were about the identity, the journey, the horizons, the other, with which they felt to be identical. The conditions were these. Quite simple and specific. The interest, however, was in the unexpected situations they created. The various performers having different shapes in each of them and trying to keep in balance and straight on these gigantic walls was shaking and along with them and the walls who felt the viewers were ready to be demolished!

The simultaneous reading created a murmur that changed texture and tone as you moved through the corridor and depending on where you stood you could hear a different story. All this reminded of a theatrical performance where there was nothing to see because everything was going on in the backstage, like a long quake, like an invitation to fall walls and boundaries, borders like a silent cry of what isolation would say. For me, it is a work-experience, different from how I anticipated it before it was done, different from what others tell me, and I still have a lot to work on in its next possible scenarios.

VS : Indeed, it is an extremely innovative and interesting performance. It had the theatrical elements in fact, but also the existence of an architectural structure. Because you are also an architect, in what extend do you think architecture has influenced your art?

NP : The space. The place. The composition. I think a lot. I find that my studies in architecture have shaped the way I think. I make instalments. Key elements that affect me are the dialogue with the existing architecture, historical and anthropological identity of the place where I act, create and eventually intervene. Moreover, the loyalty and perhaps the persistence I have with the medium's economy -using the least possible to reach where I want.

As time passes, I realize that my studies in architecture were dominated by a tendency of neo- modernist architects with specific design methods. I did not really go along with them then. With my colleagues, we were looking to do other types of construction, quite sculptural. We always wanted to make landmarks. We were greatly inspired by the foreign star-like architects. However, I do not like what we did. It was like forgetting the peculiarity of greek light and the materiality of the landscape around us. I say all this to end up going somewhat back. I see things differently and this is visible within my art. I do not care about the impressive techniques. I am looking to find the essence, the simplicity, the immediacy, the primordial element. Were I an architect now, therefore, I think I would draw the hut again.

VS : I feel that your work and your installations have been stimulated by very important greek artistic and foreign influences. It is a work with roots and influences that have nevertheless been fertilized into you in a new version and give the viewer a sense of evolution. For example, in your installation at Thessaloniki's Biennale, one can see some influences from sculptor Theodore, from Kounellis, possibly also from elsewhere. In reality, from which Greeks and foreigners have you been influenced?

NP : Certainly Kounellis is one of the artists I have studied and followed quite, as well as the rest of his comrades from the Arte Povera Movement, for the unlimited freedom with which they deal the "materials" of art. However, at the same time I feel that the scale and structure, the "architecture" of the sculptures of Zongolopoulos, are an important lesson for me. Kessanli's humanism, and his "The Tail", which I have seen for many years every day going to the School of Architecture, the insurgent poetry of Alithinos, the vital abstinence of Takis and the shocking illusions of my friend Andreas Lolis -all these I feel like they work as internalized notions in my creative language. Next to them are Greek artists of other arts who have shaped me for years -like the plays and texts of Dimitriadis or the poetry of Gogou that "grew up" me. Also Elytis, Ritsos and so many others. Above all, it will always for me the Minoan frescoes and the Cycladic statuettes that I will go to back to discover again.

From strangers, I distinguish my two 'St. Marcells': Marcel Duchamp and Marcel Broothaers, these two "cultural factories", as H. Muller would say, that showed me what freedom means in a different way. Bosch and the Flemish painters, Brancusi, Rothko, Klein, Smithson and Morris, Beuys, Filliou, Turrel are definitely some of the artists who influenced me, or just my base. I certainly want to mention many others. It is hard to talk about love.

VS : What is the message you want to give today's artists who are desperate due to economic poverty? Staying or going abroad?

NP : I think about Nikos Kazantzakis. How much this phrase "I hope nothing, I'm not afraid of anything, I'm free" has shaped everyone. I have the impression that the state of despair is a first nature and a starting point for all artists. With regard to economic poverty now, yes, surely in Greece things are harder for artists because there is not enough funding for health and education -much less for culture and the visual arts. The market is stagnant and there are a few exhibitions where the idea of living from your art alone seems impossible to all of us.

However, I think that a dipole like Greece or abroad does not really exist. What matters is that you do not stop working, looking, putting your job at risk, and recognizing it every time, just like your "foreign self", and that can happen anywhere. After all, the artists are always "out", always in a big "exterior". As Uncle Speech Odysseus Elytis tells Maria Nefeli: "If you do not support one foot out of the earth, you can never step on it".