



Workshops European Summer Academy

European Identity in Times of Crisis (EITC)

European Summer Academy 2017: Myths of Europe – April 29th to May 8th

Title: “ Warming ourselves with the ice”.

Workshop Trainer: Triantafyllos Tranos, Painter, Art teacher, Adult Educator, PhD in Theory and History of Art

Workshop description

A diagram for an adequate drawing and sculpture workshop in times of crises.



Friedrich Hölderlin wrote once in a letter to Schiller the following passage: *„Es ist mir oft, wie einem Exulanten, wenn ich mich der Stunden erinnere, da Sie sich mir mitteilten, ohne über den trüben oder ungeschliffnen Spiegel zu zürnen, worin Sie Ihre Äußerung oft nimmer erkennen konnten. / Ich glaube, daß dies das Eigentum der seltnen Menschen ist, daß sie geben können, ohne zu empfangen, daß sie sich auch „am Eise wärmen“ können. / Ich fühle nur zu oft, daß ich eben kein seltner Mensch bin. Ich friere und starre in dem Winter, der mich umgibt. So eisern mein Himmel ist, so steinern bin ich.“*¹

¹ "It is often as exile, if I remember correctly the hours, because you told me to, without the murky or unelaborated mirror to be angry, in which you could often not recognize your statement. / I believe that this is the property of the peculiar people, that they can give without receiving, that they can also warm themselves



The formula of the iron sky in the same letter to Schiller, anticipates that of the sky as a heavy cover at Baudelaire, the same as the menacing sky in a refugees camp. Although fits the obvious like the pictures of the ice and the rock under expression forced formulated image from the clouded mirror, it is also historically marked Hölderlin as suffering from mimetic competition for recognition as a genius. The same is true for everybody in the era of the mirror-mediumship (spectacle society) with its vast empowerment including the resulting mass-produced specific competition. In the contemporary context of war and expatriation we, like Samuel Beckett, are highly dominated as artists as well as teachers with the concept of the expelled.

Hyperion was in fact already an expelled (εξόριστος) from his country.

If the total *Hyperionfigur* therefore undoubtedly stands grossly as a prefiguring of "asylum" offered once in Germany, so the question remains if the German criticism still is a subject of conscious current application to the victims of the recent crisis.

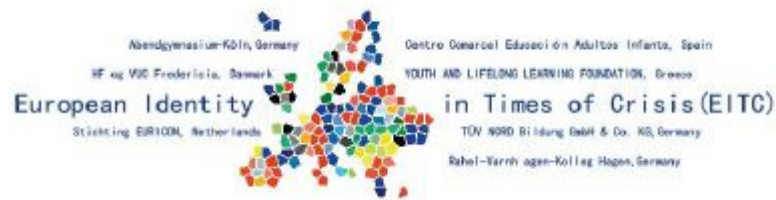
The philosophical theme that pervades Hölderlin's late hymns and the novel *Hyperion* as well—is what Theodor Adorno calls “an allegorical history of nature”. In his essay “Parataxis” on Hölderlin's poetry, Adorno describe this theme as resistance to the will to dominate Nature, resistance to the compulsion to *Naturbeherrschung*: the Nature Control.



Animality has often seen as an offering and as an allegorical history of nature.

In my artistic and theoretical inquiry I often rotated towards the query of animals, thoroughly investigating the biology especially this of Aristotle and at the same time examine the monternistic example of the representation of animals, especially in the work of Paul Klee and Franz Mark .

with the ice. / I only feel too often that I am not a rare man. I feel cold and stiff in the winter that surrounds me. So my heart is as strong, I am so stony. "



To adequately address the question on the animal (Animality), a question revamped both the modern and the modernist art and philosophy, it is necessary to examine first of all what really do the animals in art itself.

Aristotle recognized correctly, as the founder of the scientific study of life, the importance of the animals. He first placed the investigation of living beings, especially animals, in the focus of the theoretical study of nature. Since then wildlife attract human attention and careful observation since time immemorial. The historical interest in collecting, displaying, sorting and finally dominating over Nature rests on human history. Many philosophers support a dialectical approach to these positions. Drawing from the seemingly opposed traditions of Analytical Philosophy and the Critical Theory, I, as an active artist and tenacious researcher of visual culture myself, systematically gathered information from different fields that have had a significant impact on the theory and practice of history of art.

In my writings, drawings and public interventions I identify a historical paradox: the modernist art is a "strange attractor", a pendulum which is permanently at what I call "lost and found supermodernism": the "point zero", the historical oscillation detected without adequately analyzed transitions and repetitions of modern art dominated and retracted of postmodern theory.

Heeding with methodological adequacy - although somehow idiosyncratic, tradition of the Warburg Institute, I use as a study model of modern art one of its most central concepts: the specific iconography of the Passion.

The term *Pathosformel*, the form resembling the reproaching of the Passion, as understanding key reappears in the current era, similar to the Renaissance era as an unexpected cultural transition.

This thought was imposed de facto due to the specific conditions of cultural production in the postwar period. In an additional effort to find a desirable relationship between the art of teaching art and what I elsewhere somewhat prematurely called "hidden" or "illustrious" modernism I insist on the emergence of biology and visual physiology in critical theory and the importance of the new science of Neuroaesthetics.

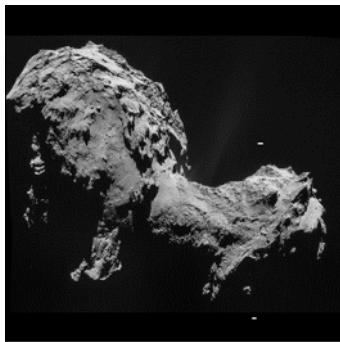
The treatment of art as an asterism of visual fragments of the common experience, is for me of central artistic, philosophical and educational significance. The deep dialectical interpretation of nature and animality serves for me at the same time as a precondition for my art and my educational practice (*praxis- πράξις*) as well. I try to detect and rescue from the ruins of the civilization which are strewn the horizon of history, the more subtle traces of 'utopian' residues. Those "traces" still retained and bred in the "long" historical period, as "red arrows" as Ernst Bloch called them once. They remain there substantially unfulfilled, as a cipher and as high art simultaneously.

Others artists and theoreticians face the inflationary postmodern wave of the last decades more positively, as a necessary articulation of heteronomous course materials, approximately proportional to the overall political and social post war settlement that collapses today.



Possession and dispossession, displacement and debt are also the concern of the documenta 14.

The magazine *South as a State of Mind*, temporarily reconfigured as the documenta 14 journal, examines forms and figures of displacement and dispossession, and the modes of resistance—esthetic, political, literary, biological—found within them. While the intensity of our present political conditions and the challenges of our global economic world order cannot be overstated, still the means of protest are rich, and diverse. The collective of voices here, and the often dissident and marginalized histories they limn and draw from, offer an alternative cartography; in so doing, we imagine that they might allow us to delineate alternatives to our untenable present and unclear future. “The learning process is something you can incite, literally incite, like a riot,” writes Audre Lorde. Let us hope so.



Workshop process

ANIMALITY

During "Oneminutesculpturesworkshop", plaster and paper animals are produced in a miniature scale for the sake of self expression and the understanding of the modern art. Through a refined modernist educational example, the workshop aims to lead to the reversal of the inflexible and inefficient practices in education of art and revive the relationship of the educational process with the visual arts.

The thematic content and the exemplary artists of the project are chosen by the environment of the modernist art of the twentieth century.

It should be noted that the term “modern” implies here novelty as a vehicle of qualitative power rather than its chronological characteristics.

Criteria for the selection of the paradigmatic artists of this period were the visual dynamism, the artistic level and specific characteristics of their works (texture, technique, material).

Despite the high level and the sophisticated character of the modern art. The workshop resonates more easily than one would expect the experience and the level of skills held by trainees. It also facilitates the pedagogical act to achieve its objectives and to promote the development of aesthetic criticism and aesthetic consciousness.



Among the explicit targets, the most important perhaps is the one that seeks to identify and mitigate those prejudices on the arts, that reinforce in the young adults conservative and authoritarian characteristics and severely limit the capacity for sensory experience. The paralyzing effect of these prejudices harden their attitude towards art, especially the modern art, impoverish the pleasure ability and reduces the possibility of educational development and the ability of consciousness to self-determination.

The simultaneous production of optical and aesthetic material helps contact with faceted phenomenon and hidden aspects of modern art and aims in the liberation of expressive possibilities. Usually those possibilities are limited and oppressed in school practice by the dominant use of speech as a basic instrument communication. These activities also significantly familiarizing young people with the use of advanced technological means at the same time.

The pedagogically fruitful aesthetic perception runs the constellation of individual activities to offer awareness of the valuable services provided by vision, memory and the conscious experience. It also aims at the reflective observation of nature, the animal form and the microcosm of wild life and remakes all these experiences in desirable and historically necessary and adequate visual language.



CURRICULUM VITAE

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STUDIES

1985 - 1990: Department of Fine and Applied Arts Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki

Triantafilos Tranos, has always had an aesthetic fascination on the physical properties and optical qualities of paper, stone, metal, plaster and wood.

Since the 80's he has been working on paper and other materials of various size, weight and quality. During the 90's he worked furiously and productively on a series of big scale works.

The character of those works, though based on his previous production on paper, was proved to be highly experimental, self-referential and constructively self-sufficient.

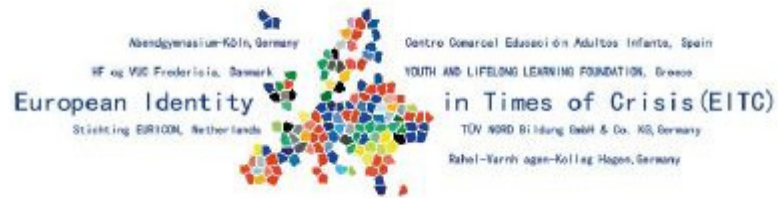
Despite the figurative elements and the multiple references of those elements to the physical world, the priority in the work is being given to the abstract. Thus, the work, that intentionally minimizes its means of production and its color vocabulary, could be considered abstract – amorphous art.

The dynamic and powerful abilities of the painter to design and sketch the figurative elements extracted from the physical world, create a graphic space of lines and forms. This created space clashes with the Euclidean conception of the geometrical space. The end result of this clash has the powerful effect of a turbulent space of unrecognized shapes and forms. This amorphous space succeeds to create the illusion of a different representational proposition that spins within its own rules.

Persistently from 1987 to 1994 the painter paint with ink or with minimal color eventually garnering a large number of small projects. The figures in these works, unfamiliar and abstract tended somewhat to imitate physical features.

Tranos often uses as auxiliary means a vast number of cardboard, plaster or paper models. At times he tried to organize the visual experiences of this chaotic material in larger sculptural projects. Finally in 1996 sensed the possibility of producing autonomous works with morphological and structural adequacy.

The dates of these projects are indicative and accuracy relative. This is due to the fact that some – the most - of the projects evolve over time slowly, erratically, with many interventions and sudden changes in orientation. The thematic cycles are minimal. The titles



are not binding, the viewer can do well without them, and for the painter they are simply convenient handles. For the painter the greater risk above all is the excessive straying in the words of the language. Because of this there is a second language -silent and darkened - the language spoken by the things and places. This language despite the deterioration and destruction of the struggle for expression, demands accuracy. Literature, however has an effect on Tranos work. Serves as both a primer and as template. The subjects of his painting are deeply rooted in his life. Optical signals and memory traces reveal themselves here and there. The everyday tools of work did not behave by him with tenderness. The destruction is more fated than aging.