

PRESS RELEASE

ISLAND HOPPING

Barbara Noiret
Sally Osborn
Dorota Walentynowicz



The exhibition brings together works developed around the topic of the island – understood both geographically and metaphorically. “Island Hopping” is itself a historical term, used to describe a (military) strategy where the desired goal is approached not directly, but by navigating in small movements, occupying various positions on the sea. Nowadays “Island Hopping” is what tourists do. It is also what we do in order to make our way in the society, building our social relationships through strategic points of like-minded beings.

Most of the works were created specially for this show - taking a site-specific approach through the choice of visual motives, sculptural materials and thematic references.

Sally Osborn's "What the water gave me" is a group of objects made of unglazed clay which the artist developed in a local ceramics workshop during her brief stay in Heraklion this spring. The work refers to a 1938 painting by Mexican artist Frieda Kahlo in which her fragmented bathing body, as the female subject multiplies into a series of floating islands in the water. Printed poster, 'Foot' multiplies and enlarges an image of a small stone object 'leg pendant' which Sally Osborn found in the Heraklion Archeological Museum and reproduced in the technique of risograph on three different kinds of paper.

Barbara Noiret's "Fantômes sur le rivage" ("Ghosts in the shore") is an in situ installation consisting of a two superimposed photographs which were expanded over the wall of the space in a technique of gouache and watercolor. First of the two photographs was taken a year ago in the nearby semi-abandoned urban area. Second photograph was taken just before the show in order to create a dialogue between the already existing image and the wall of the exhibition space. The installation, through the use of overlaying illusions, references the situation of refugees who quit their homes to cross the sea, not knowing what they will find at the end of their travel, crossing representations (maps) of landscapes, of islands, of hope. "Balisage" is a series of photographs which Barbara Noiret made during her stay in Heraklion this year. Impressed by the traces of time inscribed under the veils of these architectures, where nature resumes its rights, the artists portrays the abandoned mansions as sculptures in the city.

Dorota Walentynowicz installation "De Nova Insula Utopia" is a direct reference to the first edition of Thomas More's famous book "De optimo rei publicæ deque nova insula Utopia" (1516) in which the author described a perfect society and placed it on an imaginary island. Islands as test models for social systems have ever since become a very prolific topic both in literature and later also in cinema. The name "Utopia" stands for a "no-place", however the first edition of the book was accompanied by a detailed map of its geography. Dorota Walentynowicz reproduced that shape of the "Utopia" island which she cut in a sheet of black-painted plywood and hung in front of an aluminum sheet; two ceramic tiles forming an open book are suspended upon another sheet placed on the floor below - their concrete form dispersed in metallic reflection. In another room Dorota Walentynowicz placed on a wall an archipelago of pages ripped out of a book titled "Griechische Gemmen" published by Insel-Verlag in Wiesbaden (Germany) in 1957. The book, found in an antique shop in Germany, consists of high quality photographic representations of various gems adorned with figures which are collected in Museums across Germany. The work brings about the question of value and devaluation, both of the cultural heritage and of landscape - the Greek gems colonized by foreign capital.

There are also two works on view, which were created on other islands and connected secondarily to the geography of the exhibition.

Barbara Noiret's "Wind sculpture" is a photograph taken in Sardinia (Italy). The title refers to salt and wind that models stones and draws a unique landscape that evolves over time.

Dorota Walentynowicz's "Untitled", is a black and white pinhole photograph taken on a Croatian island where an androgenic figure is seen disappearing into the sea via the use of long time exposure technique.