

TUDOR BRATU

THE DISSIDENTS' TRAVEL GUIDE

The Dissidents' Travel Guide, Tudor Bratu's first solo exhibition at JOEY RAMONE, proposes to function as both a fragmented and fragmentary rendering of the contemporary nature of traditional documentary form. Content-wise, Bratu's work engages a study of the post-ism identity in dealing with a globalized ethics, which seems to govern social spheres worldwide.

The works exhibited, ranging from an artists book in edition, to photography, video and sculpture, do not intend to propose their own identity as being works *of art*, but more as being works *of direct observation*. The materials Bratu chose to showcase, results of the artist's research while travelling through Romania and China, are formalized, but not fundamentally altered. In this sense Bratu acknowledges the necessity of raw direct exposure as perhaps the only viable entrance to the fundamental critiques frequently and elusively addressed to governing systems.

The artists' publication, which provides the exhibition with its title, and acts as the show's philosophical backbone, contains drawings, photography, and a crescendo series of essays authored by Bratu. The essays gradually zoom in on the nature of a perceived contemporary moral predicament, which could be summarized as: *we all know we need to act now, but we seem to systematically fail in doing anything at all.*

Bratu's main question remains a presumably simple one, for the artist in the end just asks *why?*. This seemingly uncomplicated question however could not be effectively reached without a very carefully constructed journey though a variety of authors, concepts, and images, which serve to elucidate the reasons societies, governments, and individuals alike, seem incapable of deciding on a course of action, which would embrace and defend what Bratu proposes to be a course of *a basic human decency*.

The Dissidents Travel Guide stays true to its name: Bratu mimics travel guide logic, by briefly showcasing real life situations in an almost impartial way. At the same time the artist proposes the nature and core of dissidency to be reached through experience by close proximity, i.e. through a conscious documentary approach to a given context, which could perhaps serve as a catalyst to permanently altering perception and consecutively, action.

WIETSE EKEN

F*CKTOTEM

Wietse Eeken's new body of work entitled F*CKTOTEM consists of small and large-scale sculptures in mixed media and drawings. His work reveals a dazzling inner world -a personal universe of a post-pop mix of mythology, history, politics and religion- that addresses fundamental issues such as good and evil, life and death, heroism and immortality through a surreal and ironic point of view. His sculptures subvert historical and social data with references from the mass psychology of pop culture, films and comics to children's stories and other artworks and ethnic origin. Wietse Eeken's works create a personal cosmology with poetic narratives that depict the human species in the depths and heights of its greatness, through a humorous and ironic style.

FOTINI GOUSETILIGHT BEIGE WITH LITTLE BLACK FLOWERS

Fotini Gouseti's recent work focuses on the social and ideological crisis that follows the financial one. Her case study is the small town Kalavryta, symbol of the establishment of the Greek state in 1821. She draws on the controversy that arises when after the last elections in Greece it was announced that a big amount of votes for the right-wing Golden Dawn came from Kalavryta. This is noteworthy because Kalavryta was totally destructed and its male population massively executed by the Wehrmacht Army on December 13, 1943.

For her exhibition at JOEY RAMONE Gouseti prepared 2 works to be presented as an installation in dialogue, *Kalavryta 2012* and *about 1500*.

Kalavryta 2012, reflects on one episode from the post-war history of Kalavryta. After the war the village received supplies from the Red Cross and UNNRA. The Vagia family one day received a huge package that contained over two thousand neckties. Not knowing what to do with them, the mother of the family used them to make a traditional *kourelou* carpet. *We were starving, but walking on silk*, her son recalled laughing. For this artwork Fotini Gouseti collaborated with people from the villagers and a group of volunteers with knowledge of the traditional weaving technique to recreate the carpet using about two thousand neckties.

about 1500 depicts portraits of living Kalavrytans. It refers to the approximate number of women and children that survived the destruction. As the destruction of Kalavryta is traditionally documented with woodprints Gouseti chose to use the same medium to portray the survivors collecting images from museum archives, facebook and people's offerings.

Gouseti translates the elements that shape her work, the re-enactment of (hi)stories, the use of a traditional medium as an attempt to look into what many individuals in Kalavryta who suffered those traumatic events introduced as a need for catharsis. Aristotle refers to catharsis as of positive social function through tragedy, as the purifying of the emotions of pity and fear takes place in the viewer. But in everyday language the word is charged with a wider meaning of cleansing in different levels. Through her practice Gouseti asks if it is possible for art to contribute to a cathartic process.

GERWIN LUIJENDIJKFICTIVE IDEAS, RECYCLED THOUGHTS

Gerwin Luijendijk works mainly with video, performance and video-installation. His work derives from a fascination for the work-process, the reflection on artist-hood and the choices made within the artistic process. This reflection on his own role as an artist, his artistic choices and his possible influence on what happens in front of the camera, emerge more through a conceptual set up rather than the classical role of a film director. His video performances in particular inquire into how the physical appearance of the performer challenges space and the surrounding objects.

Voice-over has become a crucial tool within the work. It does not merely reflect on the imagery but is used as an instrument to control the reading of the film. Both artist and performer are given a voice, offering different interpretations of what we see. Most of Gerwin's work talks about a romantic desire and the question of how to get closer to its fulfillment. How does one deal with the boundaries of one's own existence and day-to-day compromises?

Gerwin Luijendijk's new video works, which assemble the exhibition *Fictive Ideas, Recycled Thoughts*, focus on their own making. Luijendijk challenges his subjects by creating situations through set-ups in which the camera provokes an activity of the performer. This activity is subject to coincidence, and both the artist and the performer are constantly trying to maintain control over their own goal within the process. This creates moments of failure and frustration, often manifested in a humorous fashion.

ROI ALTERA FEW NESSECITIES

A Few Necessities contains representations and shreds of some common dwellings of human culture - technology, ideology, conflict, recreation and expansion.

Sculptures and installations made out of found materials (a flower crate, a carpet, broom sticks, plastic bags), paintings and drawings, compose Roi Alter's universe. The element of experimentation is profound not only in the substances Alter uses as the starting point for his work, but also in the objects and images that build up his formal vocabulary. A make-shift rocket, a hybrid animal - weapon, a fragile aqueduct team up not only to recreate the world from which they derive but also negotiate the way in which we relate to them, as well as their properties and how we choose to invest in them.

Through humor, irony and insight but also a strong desire for subversion the works presented appear to be vital munitions in the face of contemporary society. They are but observations of the human dwelling, as full as it is with contradictory advancement and transgression, creation and destruction, purpose and vanity. It is a celebration of the world gradually becoming a dystopia, kissing human culture on the cheek, then spitting in its face.

LIEKE SNELLENHOME BUILDERS AND NEW HOMES

In her work Lieke Snellen (NL, 1980) focuses on architecture and objects, which she connects with the navigation of the human body. In this way she challenges architectural ideologies and social relations. Classic sculptural rules are combined with formal experiments. The assembled sculptural objects are an experiment of possibilities. For her exhibition at JOEY RAMONE she will be showing a combination of old and new work, which could be seen as sculptural doodles, reflecting on something that might have happened during a working day, but could also possibly be build architectural structures.

...A sculpture is like a sentence. It makes a statement about the conditions of its own possibility. It says: *This is how things can work out between objects in space. But it can also work out like this. Or, under certain conditions, also like this...* This statement connects the different parts of the sculpture as well as the sculpture to the space that surrounds it. To do a sculpture means to make a statement in space. A sculpture can be a claim, a comment, a joke and many other things: a means to embrace a given situation or create a new one. Sculpture can do all this. In principle. Its power to actually do it, however, depends on the fact that - and if so, how - someone activates its potentials...*

* Excerpt from 'What it is and what it can do', written by Jan Verwoert, 2010

art
athina

ART ATHINA CONTEMPORARIES
Curated by CHRISTOFOROS MARINOS

marjolijn kok

Now You See Me, Now You Don't

The exhibition *Now you see me, now you don't* is based on the material gathered during a two months working period in Brooklyn NY (Nov 2014- Jan 2015). Marjolijn Kok started working with cutouts from second hand books that created silhouettes, negative spaces. Although the silhouette from the 18th century onward was a way to create the best-liking portrait of a loved one for an affordable prize, nowadays the silhouette is seen different due to the advent of photography where a portrait is life-like. For us the cut-out or silhouette anonymizes the person in the photograph and he/she becomes no one and therefore could be anyone.

The work plays with Roland Barthes' concept of *punctum*. Barthes sees the punctum as an unintentional detail that draws you into a photograph and makes you engage with it on a deeper level (love it instead of just analyzing it). The cutouts deliberately create a new focus that hides instead of reveals the subject and shifts the focus in the photograph to the fringes.

The best way to get to know a city is to walk its streets, to wander. Expanding the idea of the punctum Marjolijn Kok made the chance occurrences the central point from which to depart. Investigating the negative spaces, the overlooked and creating fantasies of what might have been or could come into bloom. Redirecting the focus and developing scenarios in which the things, we no longer take an interest in, take the main stage. Shifting between temporal and spatial contexts new meanings are unfolded. Histories of others are intertwined with our own as the remnants could be part of anybody's life and so become part of everybody's present.

JOEY RAMONE

JOEY RAMONE
Josephstraat 166-168
3014 TX, Rotterdam
The Netherlands

www.joeyramone.nl
galler@joeyramone.nl
[@joey_ramone_rotterdam](https://www.instagram.com/joey_ramone_rotterdam)