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VAN NELLE  
FABRIEK

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## 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.*

JOEY RAMONE

## FOTINI GOUSETI

### LIGHT 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.

**LIEKE SNELLEN**HOME 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

**HARM WEISTRA**ENCOUNTERS & CONFRONTATIONS

Harm Weistra's work tends to radiate a latent disturbance, but always simultaneously a disconcerting beauty. Most of his work is on the one hand touchingly beautiful, on the other hand painfully disruptive. The inherent visual seductiveness, along with the consciousness that his work evokes, complicates the reception of its manifold layers of meaning. By creating disruptive situations and by breaking the passivity of the spectator, his work references avant-garde theory as well as emancipatory movements.

Weistra's work questions the apparently rationally and logically but often culturally entrenched beliefs and opinions. Most of his work demonstrates how life extends beyond its own subjective limits and often tells a story about the effects of an open society with ubiquitous interactions, since the Internet is a dominant platform for (anonymous) human debate. Although storytelling is inherently constructed, the artist's intention is to serve the story as open as possible, without manipulating the viewer in a particular direction. Nevertheless, his stories challenge the binaries we continually reconstruct between self and other, between our own *savaged* and *civilized* selves. As a result, the work often leaves the viewers orphaned with a mix of conflicting feelings and thoughts, inviting them to take a position.

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