

FILOPAPPOU HILL AS "HUMAN-NEST" OF ART

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Abstract

During the period of the pandemic and especially during the period of quarantine, there was an unusual concentration of people on Filopappou Hill, the Attic landmark that gave birth to new habits that under other circumstances had not evolved. The research deals with Filopappou Hill as "human-nest", a word inspired by the book "Darwin goes to town" by the evolutionary biologist Menno Schilthuis, and studies the activity of man on the hill from antiquity to the time of the pandemic and the negative aspects of tourism. The hill of Filopappou was and is an inspiration for the creators, manifesting the relationship of nature with art through the walk in the natural landscape. The research carries out a critical assessment as to the viability of the interventions of the regionalist Pikionis with the characteristic paved and the church of Saint Dimitris Loubardiaris, of the internationally renowned Panathenaia of Sculpture until the events of Documenta 14. Based on this assessment, an exhibition was designed that refers to a "pasture" of sculptures for the 100 years since the birth of Natalia Mela.

Key words: culture, sustainability, localism, art, history, Filopappou Hill

Introduction

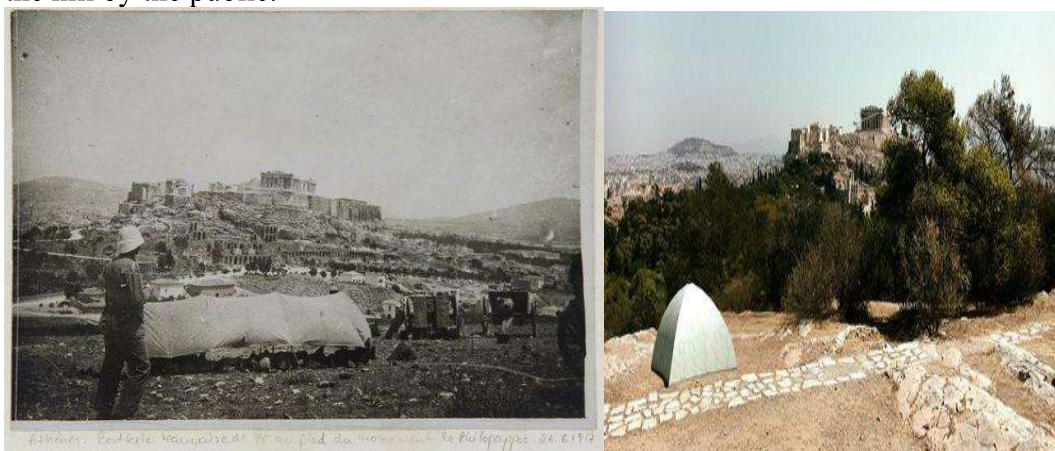
Athens is consisted of an alternation of closed and open shells, in which operating relationships are developed. Talking about the open shells, one of them is the hill of Filopappou, which is an open shell that reserves the presence of the natural element in Athens. Although the construction of Athens in recent times may be going through an opposite course in terms of the preservation of the natural environment, no one can ignore the latest efforts to preserve important nature surfaces that make up the urban fauna and flora of Athens.

Filopappou Hill as a natural element in the city performs multiple functions and its importance for life in the city is very important. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the hill is an amalgam, consisting of history, through the archaeological sites it hosts, as well as modern monuments, such as the church of Saint Dimitris Loubardiaris. On the other hand, we often ignore the value of the hill as a natural landscape, while it contributes to the natural confrontation of problems, such as the alteration of the air, sound and visual pollution, as through its germination it filters and renews the reserves of oxygen. At the same time, it contributes greatly to the lively and empirical contact with history and place, through its routes.

It is worth to add, that the hill allows the possibility to residents and visitors to carry out a series of activities that are necessary for the balance of the human organism. The period of the pandemic that we are experiencing proves this, as in recent months people have been taking refuge on Filopappou Hill to escape from the confinement imposed by the quarantine, constituting a point of "psychological breathing". The hill, however, even before the pandemic was a "Human- nest", as it combines the natural environment and aesthetic pleasure through the monuments it hosts. This combination affects the mental state and the pandemic triggered the reassessment of this place. Through the work we will treat the hill as a "human-

nest" that gathers the public, creating social contacts, but also the interaction through a dialectic between history and the natural landscape.

The aesthetic representations of the natural element on Filopappou Hill have been recorded by many as sources of inspiration for creation. Among the recorded interventions on the hill there are cultural events, such as the outdoor exhibitions, which are dealt with in this work. Specifically, we will talk about the Panathenaia of Sculpture of 1965 and the annex of the international exhibition Documenta 14 in 2017, analyzing the intentions of the curators and the response of the public to these projects, through the minutes of these reports. While, in the last chapter we will quote a plan for the outdoor sculpture exhibition of sculptor Natalia Mela (1923-2019), re-designating the hill and aiming at the creation of a "pasture" of sculpture on the hill that will reveal data on the history of the physical presence of Filopappou Hill in the city, as well as its importance for the awareness, maintenance and preservation of the hill by the public.



Left: Athenes. Batterie française de 75 du monument de Philopappos. 26/6/1917 French Soldiers setting up tents on the hill, Athens 1917, Benaki Museum, Right: Rebecca Balmore Installation for Documenta 14, 2017

The “Human’s Nest”

The evolutionary biologist Menno Schilthuizen (1965-) in his book "Darwin goes to town" mentions the characteristic term "human-nest" talking about the tendency of man to want to escape from the tyranny of the city by building his own "nest" outside it. He argues that people resort to the natural landscape in order to be able to live freely and less organized, away from the filthy organic fabric of the city and its unnatural aesthetics. 2007 is a crucial year for Europe, because for the first time, the number of inhabitants of urban areas has exceeded that of rural areas. By the middle of the 21st century, 2/3 of the world's population will live in cities, while human life completely dominates most of the planet, something that according to the biologist has never happened before to the extent that it happens today. By 2030, it is estimated that 10% of the planet's land will have been urbanized, while the rest will have been transformed into a man-made landscape, including pastures, farms, plantations. However, the above seems not to have been experienced by the ecosystem. Despite efforts to isolate nature from the interventions of man and his unnatural intervention, human actions have the greatest ecological power in the world. Nature is something completely separate from the human environment, however we seek to be in touch with the canvas of nature (Schilthuizen, 2021).

Air quality in the urban environment has become a determining factor in the quality of life in recent decades. An important factor in ensuring this quality is the hill of Filopappou,

which combines natural and aesthetic pleasure. Research has shown that children seek an environment with clear blue and green, while it seems that the elderly prefer landscapes such as the hills and like to enjoy the view they offer, combined with the green surfaces that contribute to the activation of emotions and relationships (Economou and Mitoula, 2010).

A very special example is the exercise of the sport of flying by a group of elderly men, every Sunday, in the shadows of Filopappou. The elderly men gather every Sunday, participating in small races of petanque against the background of the Parthenon in the woods of Loubardiaris. Indeed, there is a possibility that a club will be founded for this sport on Filopappou Hill so that the younger ones can learn about this sport, according to an article in Kathimerini (<https://www.kathimerini.gr/culture/athinaika-plus/561324514/petank-sti-skia-tis-akropolis-mia-aprosmeni-synantisi/>). This particular area is ideal for this sport, as the ground is suitable and there is a special capacity for its free exercise. Of particular interest was the fact that along with the game social contacts were developing within the green surfaces of the forest.

Filopappou Hill as a "Human- nest" gathers people of various ages who through ordinary activities, such as walking or even unusual such as the petanque, gives the opportunity to bring together the old and the new generation, providing opportunities to express feelings and develop social contacts that in many cases last in time, as found by the group of old men who played petanque with vivid energy.

On the other hand, there is the other side of the "Human- nest", that of tourism. The relationship between tourism and the environment is a central theme of the policy, from the point of view of tourism development, but also the protection of cultural and natural resources. In recent years there has been some shift to more independent forms of tourism related to the interest in nature and the search for cultural activities (naturalistic-cultural tourism), such forms of tourism are grouped as "selective tourism", where it places particular emphasis on quality and part of this quality is the environment (Kakkosis and Tsiatras, 2001).

The factors that affect the quality of the tourist aspect of the "man-nest" are not only political, but to a large extent social and cultural. The development of a human activity has the corresponding impact on the environment. The issue and the concern lies behind the importance of these consequences (Kakkosis and Tsiatras, 2001). In a recent article by archaeologist Elena Stefanopoulou (https://www.avgi.gr/koinonia/377740_emporeymatopoiisi-i-epanoikeiopoisi-o-lofos-filopappoy-kai-i-akadimia-platonos), concerning the relationship between local communities and archaeological sites - recreation parks, through the movement actions and interventions of the residents, and the modern cultural biographies of the sites, referring to Filopappou Hill and the remaining elements, after the Olympic Games and other major projects unfinished or partially fulfilled, speaks of their contribution to the indignation of the local community.

The economic crisis, as well as the health crisis we live in today, led to an appropriation of open spaces, such as Filopappou Hill, as a psychological way out for citizens from the demanding measures. As a common good, it was a solution for claiming the "right to the city", with the hill gathering important actions for multiform claims and through the active participation of groups of citizens enriched the historicity and biography of the sites beyond their archaeological gravity. These actions are trying to prevent the tendency to commercialize and privatize the hill, which are irreversible and will be harmful in the future. Although in the contract between state bodies such as the municipality and the Ministry of Culture and private companies, to highlight the communal character and the free accessibility to the site, according to the archaeologist, there are significant omissions regarding the residents of the areas surrounding the hill.



Filopappou Hill in 1920, Archives of Benaki Museum

The history and intervention of Dimitris Pikionis on Filopappou Hill

The hill of Filopappou took its name from Gaius Julius Epiphanes Filopappou, consul and commander under the Roman emperor Hadrian, during the Roman Empire. The statues depicting the monument on top are himself, his father and his son. While the hill is also known as the hill of the Muses, and it is there that Plutarch locates the battle between Theseus and the Amazons. During the Frankish rule, the hill was called "Seggio hill or segno", probably because it transmitted signals and information about pirate ships or impending attacks (<https://www.documenta14.de/en/venues/15282/filopappou-hill-pikionis-paths-and-pavilion>). The hill actually is consisted of three hills, the hill of the Pnyx, the hill of the Nymphs and the hill of the Muses, where the monument with the unofficial name "Filopappou" is located.

According to the architect urban planner and historian of architecture Yiannis Tsiomis, but also based on what Mrs. Bouki Babalou Noukaki mentioned, the hill of Filopappou is changing and progressing along with the history of Athens. Athens was not the important center it is today, but a province of the Ottoman Empire. Until 1750 the center of antiquity was Rome, and after 1750 it began to attract the historical interest of Europeans. The engravings and the watercolours of the painters depict a razor and rocky landscape, bare, without vegetation. With the utopia that the first travelers had built in their minds from texts and works of the time about ancient Greece, what they saw disappointed them, with Chateaubriand and other travelers talking about a ruined Athens (<https://www.kathimerini.gr/k/k-magazine/943609/i-gennisi-mias-neoklasikis-polis/>).



August Ferdinand , The Hill of the Muses, Pnyx, Panoramablatt Nro. 2. (Museon und Pnyx.), 1840, National Library-Archives of Onassis Foundation

In the first decades after the Second World War, the development of urban culture in Greece was limited within the boundaries of the city itself. As for the landscape, it is also entangled in the stages of metropolitan construction. In 1951-1957, Dimitris Pikionis (1887-1968) took over the configurations of Filopappou Hill and the Acropolis, composing a large-scale landscape architecture, in a space that he understood as an "Attic landscape". However, according to Zisis Kotionis, the "*Attic landscape*" is an imaginary concept of the past far from the point of view of Pikionis who considered that the geological configurations of the landscape were expressed by the Attic landscape itself, as a composition of light, air and environment. Pikionis' landscape was close to a historical-mythological reality, something that we find in his writings, which balance between nature, history and myth, in a particularly poetic way. Pikionis combines the configurations of the soil, plants and trees as fragments of history, integrating them into a mythical context, composing the Attic landscape. In 1925 Pikionis talks about the "bending" during the period when Greece was counting its wounds from war and poverty that plagued it, a few years later, he included the "*bending*" in the tour of the place, in order to see the landscape differently and to accept the invisible presence of an "*underground meaning*". To read the engravings on the floor, we must turn our gaze towards the earth and our body to form a curve downwards. Thus, the body participates in the experience of the landscape, not only vision is enough, but also the movement and inclination of the body (Kotionis, 2004).

Tzonis and Lefaivre argue that Pikionis' work on Filopappou Hill is an architectural work liberated from technological development, presenting the intangible that unfolds through a walk, weaving a grid of places of folk architecture. The emotions caused are not superficial, as they are not related to a flat experience of everyday life. They identify a spirituality that in order to be explored, we need to look at architecture away from technology and with its human face. While Kenneth Frampton, referring to "*Critical Regionalism*", characterizes Pikionis' work as a work with a parochial spirit (Frampton, 2009).

Pikionis was called upon on the hill of Filopappou, to face an almost insoluble problem, combining interpretations of the landscape, the ancient Greek spirit and modern life. The work was in strong contrast to the modernist current that was sweeping Greece at that time, mainly with the works of the Greek National Tourism Organization in the decade 1956-1966. Pikionis manages to combine the "*collective memory*", studying ancient texts, searching for the symbolic myth of his own people, uniting centuries and multidimensional symbols (Psomopoulos, 1993). He followed the temperance of the East, the lightness and simplicity of the figurative representation of "*Greekness*" that pervaded the spirit of modernist Greek artists of his circle, such as Parthenis.

Nature, art and the walk on Philopappos Hill

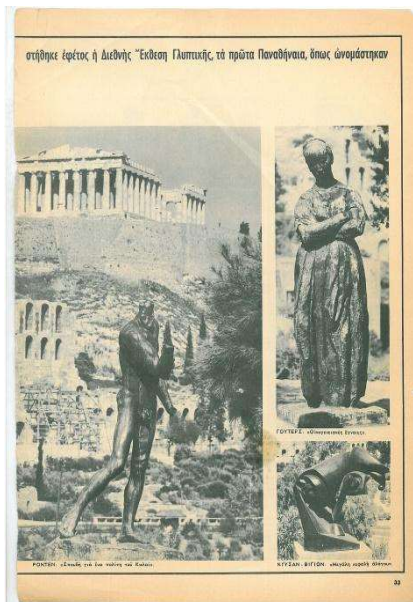
The nature of the Attica land is at the heart of Pikionis' thought and design. In the texts bequeathed to us by Pikionis, we can identify a coherent web of ideas between nature and art, associated with a broader meaning of the natural world and human culture, with an emphasis on tradition. The walk on Filopappou Hill is accompanied by a variety of impressions recorded in the body and soul, as we step on the folds of the ground and enter paths where light alternates. Pikionis made sure to maintain a more objective substance, but sought a careful observation (Kontaratos, 2018).

Pikionis' approach concerns the discovery of the truth and the mysteries of the universe by following the laws of nature as a genuine craftsman who utilizes the humblest means, but at the same time works of art: "the conquest of the meaning of art requires deep reflection and subtlety of intuitive power, so that the convert can penetrate with time and effort to the sanctuary where the higher truth will be revealed". Although Pikionis believed in the

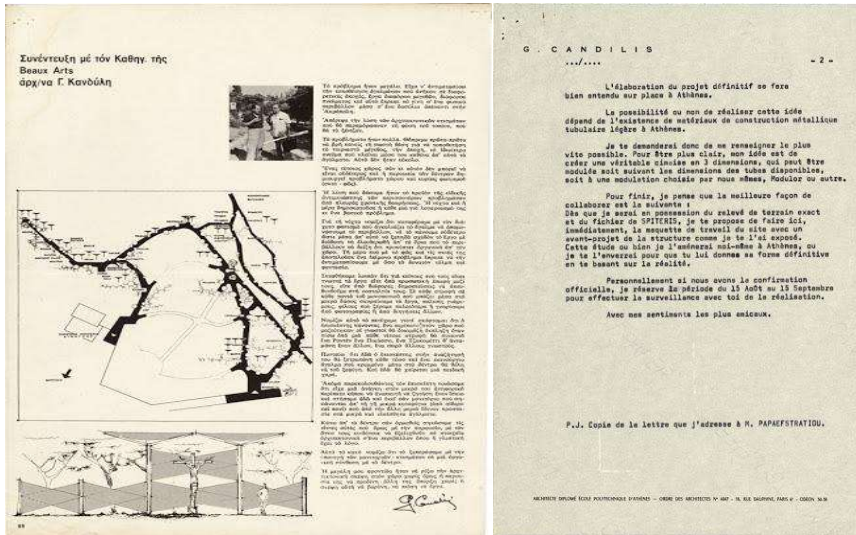
expressiveness of art, he did not move spontaneously with regard to the work of the Hill, moving away from the function of art as self-expression. Pikionis combined the aesthetic view of nature with that of art, as a method of approaching the particularity of Greek tradition, with nature and art harmonized by the metaphysical principles of myth, producing fertile elements of aesthetics made by "human hands" (Kontaratos, 2018).

The example of Pikionis' intervention on Filopappou Hill, puts us in the process of reconsidering the issue of the relationship of the walk with nature and art. These routes emphasize the importance of movement in space as an architectural act. At the same time, Pikionis' approach reminds us of that of the "artist ethnographer", as he studied the ethnographic activity of his country, placing it in specific cultural and historical conditions that he drew from Filopappou Hill. According to anthropologist James Clifford there is an oddity when talking about ethnographic knowledge, due to the search for stable elements (Clifford, 2013). Pikionis makes a collage of elements in his cobblestones, including the process of detaching one thing from one place and integrating it into another, at the same time producing a repetition that is smoothed out in the process of ethnographic comprehension. Pikionis, through these fragments produces semiotic messages, while the seams of the research process are invisible, because they are embedded in the landscape, it is as if they are embedded in it.

The wandering of the landscape varies from approaches, but art is differentiated from them, because it reflects culture in the landscape, transforming the physical background into a mental background, in the light of a symbolic context. Art mediates the natural landscape, by introducing symbolic and formalistic features to it, while in the case of Philopappos Hill, it is as if it is framed with mythical and poetic elements and the plastic language of Pikionis can prove this to us. At the same time, art, or rather the art of folk tradition, but also ancient art, the context of their anonymity, reveal to us a timeless aspect of art. The viewer is the center of meaning, as he chooses a series of approaches, that of the visitor, that of the traveler of the landscape, the protagonist of an invisible myth, or the one who inhabits his own "Human nest" on the hill.



Left: A page from an article about Panathinaia, 1965 **Right:** Rebecca's Balmore installation, Biinjya'iing Onji (Frominside,2017),Marble 140 × 200 × 200 cm, 2017



Left: Interview of the architect Giorgos Kandylis on the exhibition Panathenaia Sculpture, the photo at the top presents Giorgos Kandylis with the curator of the exhibition and art historian Tonis Spiteris, from below we see the route and the points where the works were placed, while the last photograph depicts ground studies and drawings for the sheds of the sculptures. **Right:** Letter of G. Kandylis regarding the assumption of his duties in the Panathenaic sculptures, Tonis Spiteris Archive, Teloglion Foundation of Arts, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

The Biennale of 1965 and “Learning from Athens” by Documenta 14

Pikionis' intervention may have been one of the reasons for the meaning of the hill and its association with modern art. The dialogue between modern art, nature and antiquity continued a year after the completion of Pikionis' work, with the Biennale of 1965 or otherwise "Panathenaia of Sculpture". This is an international exhibition and perhaps the first major exhibition presenting modern sculpture in Greece. The curator of the exhibition and art historian Tonis Spiteris, set up the exhibition presenting the linear evolution of sculpture, starting with Rodin and ending with the first generation of artists of the 20th century. Spiteris sought to tell the story of sculpture with its morphological evolution, while the exhibition took place in the open air, something that was subversive for the data of the ways of presenting such works. The hill of Filopappou was chosen to host the works, as it is a place with cultural and national markings.

The art historian Areti Adamopoulou, making the assessment of the exhibition, pointed out that the exhibition was a special event, due to the cost of the event undertaken by the Greek National Tourism Organization, for the presentation of works that were considered quite pioneering for the data of Greece. The outdoor placement of the sculptures was original and by European standards, not because the works were placed in a natural landscape, but were related to those of the archaeological sites. According to Adamopoulou, as well as the front pages of newspapers of the time, the exhibition was an important artistic event at an international level, something that contributed to the "spiritual uplift" of the country. It is worth noting that it was not an easy undertaking to realize this exhibition, for the design of the exhibition, the architect George Kandylis was invited from Paris and in his statements said: *“The biggest problem we faced was not to hurt the area of Filopappou. So I have sought simplicity which is always so difficult. Some of the works I covered with mobile umbrellas because I think they needed a roof. Others I placed them in such places that it seems that we meet a friend in the park (Adamopoulou, 2019).”*

Another dimension of the exhibition is the fact that it remained open in the evening hours, while according to the art critics of the time, the lighting was particularly well cared for and highlighted the works. However, there was also negative criticisms and refusals of participants from the domestic art scene, due to the coexistence of the works with the ancient works, but also their inability to construct works for an outdoor exhibition, specifically Zongolopoulos had refused the proposal stating: *"I did not accept because I did not have a proportional work for the countryside and for such an exhibition with the importance of the Biennale"* (Adamopoulou, 2019).

The opening of the exhibition took place on September 8, 1965 and at the press conference, in statements he gave to the newspaper Kathimerini, Spiteris stressed that the exhibition: *"has a huge purpose: To gather for the first time in a single space so many wonderful works. The Biennale has a historical purpose. They do not resemble the other Biennale that each State selects the projects and then sends them to the organizing committee. The selection of the works for the "Panathenaia" was made by a three-member committee [...] we wanted to give a complete picture of the sculptural art of our century, not including in this image new artists because we intend to continue another year in this direction. So our youngest exhibitor at the Biennale is sixty years old. All trends are represented in the report. [...] Known and unknown [works] for the first time are presented in a space. [...] This report is a great lesson and we will certainly draw useful conclusions."* (Adamopoulou, 2019).



Tonis Spiteris, during the setting up of the exhibition, in front of him is distinguished work of the futurist artist Umberto Boccioni, summer of 1965, Teloglion Foundation of Arts AUTH

The critics who commented on the exhibition agreed with its educational character, but also with the efforts to promote modern art, waiting for the reactions of the public who were not trained in such forms of art. The particularity of space was a common point of reference, critics argued that ancient Greek art as the beginning of plastic expression, illuminated Western creations. The connection of the Acropolis with the plastic forms and the morphoplastic manipulations of the exhibits offered another insight into modern sculpture in the Greek area. Opinions differed on the issues of museology, expressing objections, disapprovals to the side of the event. On the other hand, the enthusiasm for the hill was limited only to its choice; many considered that there were difficulties of access due to the natural features of the landscape, the slope of the ground, claiming even that tree planting affects the lighting. This, according to Adamopoulou, reveals that Greek art critics knew better the most controlled conditions of exposure to the so-called "white cube" and perhaps did not realize that perhaps these difficulties were part of the viewing of the exhibition (Adamopoulou, 2019).

Let's see a more recent example, that of Documenta 14 and the annex of the exhibition on Filopappou Hill. Almost half a century after the Panathenaia, the Greek public was not prepared for the phenomenon of "contemporary art", something that reminds us of the similar reception that modern art had during Panathenaia. According to the reports of documenta 14 in Athens, the public is disappointed by this exhibition, which began in April 2017. Due to the international promotion of Documenta, the audience, art lover or not, had a similar expectation and expectations were high. The first general impression was not good, by many art critics, this attitude was considered unfair, because it was like rejecting the course of Documenta so far. Documenta, in contrast to similar events, such as the Biennale, is more of a research exhibition with reflections on history, society, politics, etc. It is more of an exhibition of accounts far removed from the phantasmagoria, while it touches on the German perception on the above issues. However, the audience had a dismissive feeling from the early days.



Opening of the documenta14 exhibition in Athens, Saturday, April 8, 2017, EMST

The artistic director of the exhibition Adam Szymczyk, took over in 2013 and a year later he proposed to the International Committee of Kassel to develop Documenta 14 in two cities, Athens and Kassel. The idea of holding Documenta simultaneously in Greece and Germany was something that did not have much chance of being realized. It was a decision where Documenta 14 would acquire a "divided self." On the one hand, Athens, which combined the humiliating stigma of the crisis, the difficulties of everyday life with the "neo-colonial and neoliberal formula", and on the other, Kassel. It was "a play in two acts", according to the artistic director. Szymczyk, inspired by Antonin Artaud, conceived Documenta as a "theatre and its idol", shifting the geographical and ideological center of the event from Kassel to Athens, seeking a challenge to the classical unity of an exhibition. Space expands and time moves in parallel in two cities. He characteristically states in his text *"Repeatability and otherness - learning and working from Athens": "Art is an experience both physical and spiritual: it is not an abstract demonstration of conditions that can develop in any context. Despite the illusion of existence promoted by the marketing strategies of global capital and the optimistic narratives of faltering dominant politics, space and time matter."* (Latimer and Szymczyk,2018).

Documenta used Athens as a cultural crossroads and a link between three continents, creating a "collective and historical us" full of challenges and transformations. It was a search for lost or uprooted roots of identities, something that was also strongly seen in the Documenta branch on Filopappou Hill. The hill hosted 5 artists, three visual artists and two musicians. Before we get to the visual arts of the hill, it would be important to refer to the

musical event that took place on the hill of Filopappou, specifically in the church of Saint Dimitris Loubardiaris.

The concert of Giorgos Axiotis and Dimitris Theodosis included electroacoustic instruments friendly to the surroundings and took place within the framework of documenta's series of events entitled "*Listening Space*". The aim was to explore and understand sound beyond the conventional way of musical production and performance. This particular concert is characterized by a particular heterogeneity, as forms of electronic sound expression were heard that contradicted the usual atmosphere of the church of Saint Dimitris Loubardiaris. It was definitely an unconventional sound perception of space, as the sounds were not natural, but artificial. People had gathered and were sitting even on the cobblestones or near the trees.

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However, the temple, during Documenta 14, was filled with cables of various kinds that somewhat altered its aesthetic simplicity and harmony with nature. There were cables for lighting, speakers, or connections for electronic devices. The space especially at night has a characteristic acoustic, which in the event did not exist, which was a negative element of this heterogeneity. The cables were like invading and seeking to steal the show from the branches or even from the pavement, because the visitor had to be particularly careful, as he passes by them or is close to him.

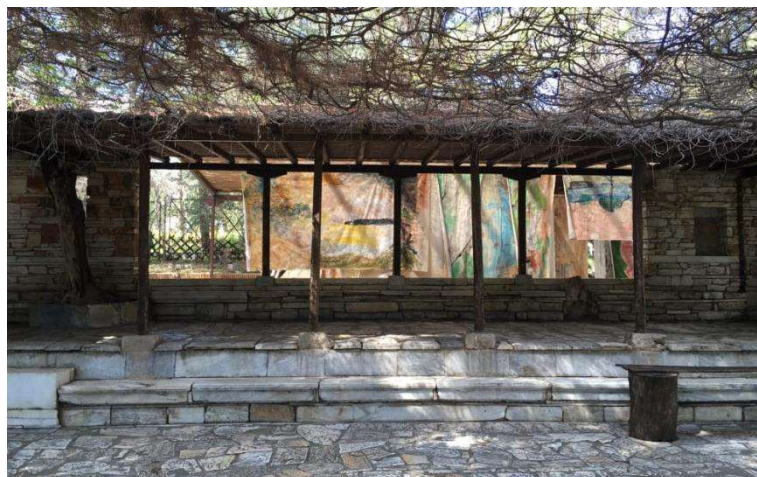


Giorgos Axiotis and Efthymis Theodosis, concert, Church of Agios Demetriou Loubardiaris, Filopappou Hill, Athens, documenta 14

Alongside the musical event was the exhibition of the works of Vivian Suter (1960-), which in 2016 had carried out an artistic intervention, of similar extent to a "land art" intervention, in a natural landscape in Nisyros, where she placed a fabric canvas made of natural materials, painted with oil pigment and materials found there, such as volcanic rocks and soil. On the island is inspired a series of fabric canvases which he presents in the church of Saint Dimitris Loubardiaris. The canvases are hung like cloths, waving and creasing with

air. They are flooded with color and unfold like papyrus floating in space, adapting to the alternations of light and wind. Their presence for some is intense, for others annoying, as it is as if they interfere with the calm atmosphere of the temple, for others the paintings converse with the work of Pikionis and the natural materials he has chosen, creating a combination, while for the curator Moyra Davey, they look like a living invitation to the body and the senses. From afar, if one half-closes one's eyes and looks at the work, it is as if the sunset falls on Pikionis' work, and paints it with warm colors, bringing the sense of the warm climate that the artist experienced while she was creating these works in Guatemala, where her style is inspired from there. The colors are fluid, the stroke is distinct, and an osmosis of colors is created. The solid of the earth and wood in Pikionis' work comes into contact with the fluidity of Suter's colors.

Despite the conversation of different materials and works, in their background there was the dissonance of the cables, and the small lights that interfered in the restroom. Something else that was also disappointing was the plastic signs that the organization had placed in parts of the rest room, these signs were not particularly used, they simply had the logo of the event and some darts, while a plastic sign wrote the elements of the project and was resting on the floor. However, in order for someone to be able to understand his work and his information better, apart from the understanding of the artistic form, it was also necessary for the curator's text, which did not exist in the space, but only in the catalogue. This element created some obstacles to the perception of the work, but it is an element that existed in all the annexes of documeta14.



Vivian Suter, *Nisyros* (2016), installation view, Pikionis Paths, Documenta 14



Left: Vivian Suter, *Nisyros* (2016), installation view, Pikionis Paths, Documenta 14, **Right:** Example of a project caption, EMST



Left: Rebecca Belmore, *Biinjiya'iing Onji*, Hand-carved marble tent, 2017, **Right:** The monument of Philopappos witnesses the everyday life of the "Army of the East" (1917), Ministère de la Culture France – Médiathèque de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine – Diffusion RMN

In another part of Filopappou Hill, lies the work of Rebecca Belmore, where she divided the public, but not the critics and journalists of art magazines and newspapers. It is an ephemeral monument of marble that converses with the permanent monument, that of the Parthenon. This dialogue refers us to the similar dialogue that had taken place between modern and ancient art in the Panathenaic Sculptures. Curator Candice Hopkins notes that this project was built exclusively for Athens with local raw materials. This is a scene related to the events of the migratory flow in Greece and for Belmore, it is a testimony of the experience of the emergency, as a makeshift refuge. The design of the scene is reduced to local species of shelters, depending on those found in the caravans or scenes of the Indians. At the same time, the stage enables people to be on a constant move and set up their "home" wherever it is needed. It is worth mentioning that this is not the first time that a tent has been placed on the hill. During the First World War, allied troops of Greece landed in Piraeus and settled on Filopappou Hill, along with their equipment. Due to the strategic importance of the hill, it was a frequent phenomenon to place makeshift barracks, especially during the Turkish occupation and antiquity.

Of particular interest is the criticism of this intervention by Professor Manolis Korres, who in his statements spoke *"of the tendency of some artists to use places of colossal glamour, in order to add their environment as a surplus value to their work"*. Korres did not fail to comment on the choice of marble, claiming that it is a material that has been degraded in Greece, due to its abuse and that some other material could be chosen that is better harmonized in Kassel. According to the KAS, the project weighed 300 kilos and in order to be transported, a special crane of the "spider" type was used, while it was transferred to the installation point with an elastic corridor on a plywood, in order not to cause damage to the paved. While in the reviews for the specific placement of the installation, the director of the artistic office supported the conversation of the work with the Parthenon and the contemporary topography (<https://www.protothema.gr/greece/article/678209/marmarino-adiskino-me-fodo-tin-akropoli/>).

What is worth pointing out is that all the works hosted by the hill were guarded by staff, hired by Documenta 14, while there were staff who were sometimes there to direct the public towards the works. However, no map had been formed or designed showing the points where the works are located on Filopappou Hill. The work of Elisabeth Wild was not easy to locate, as was Belmore's, and there were no daily tours by Documenta 14, so it was like a game of "hidden treasure" to locate them. In fact, Elisabeth Wild's work was curated by documenta 14's artistic director, Adam Szymczyk.

"Learning from Athens" is more of a re-territorialization in Deleuze terms, rather than a divided self, as stated by the artistic director. The relations between the two cities are not linear, there is a complex grid of interaction and interconnection. It may have been presented as an empirical external contact with the otherness of Greece, but this is one of its aspects. What, according to Szymczyk, "We learn from Athens" is the management of "global crisis" and through the "divided self" we turn to "radical subjectivities". Documenta 14 in Athens may have been a mixture of antiquity, crisis, history, without overturning the already existing perceptions generated by "tourism". The crisis was presented according to some critics and professors as an eloquent description of exoticism. It is worth mentioning the phrase "Please do not exoticize" of the action "rockumenta14" from a group of refugees who had agreed to participate in Documenta 14, but was removed and carried out a reactionary action, stealing the play "Replica of Oath Stone".



A map of the location of the works, approximately as no map was published with the points where the works on the hill were located at the time of the event.



Left: Natalia Mela, Right: Photo from the outdoor exhibition in Spetses, source Lifo
A pasture of sculptures on Filopappou Hill: The proposal and design of the exhibition for the 100 years since the birth of Natalia Mela

The choice of Natalia Mela

Analyzing the two top exhibitions hosted by Filopappou Hill, we find that the hill as a location of exhibitions contributes to the meaning of both history and art itself. What should be emphasized, however, is that both exhibitions that took place on the hill, included works that concerned the person. In particular, in the Panathenaia, almost all the works were human-morphological. In the case of Documenta 14, man may have been absent morphically, but he was the conceptual link of understanding the works. Perhaps, it is paradoxical that no works were selected concerning beings that experienced all their lives on the hill, or rather the beings that lived on the hill before all people gained access, as they do today. Therefore, it would be interesting to design an exhibition that, instead of concerning or capturing human presence on the hill, as well as in history, concerns animals, reflecting history from another side.

In order to design an exhibition on the hill concerning animals, an artist was chosen and the type of works that will be presented are sculptures. The choice of a single artist happens, so that the process can be achieved quickly, in direct consultation with the collector and the institutions that will give the works for a while, to be hosted on the hill. The choice of sculpture is not because sculptures were selected in both previous exhibitions, but because the sense of living presence is important for the achievement of the exhibition's goal. That is, the hill will be transformed from a "human- nest" into a landscape full of four-legged animals, which once existed in the city, but gradually disappeared and we meet them either outside the city, or in the province and villages. For the above reason, the works that present goats, wild goats and sheep that are of metal construction were selected, in order to make their presence on the hill even more imposing.

Natalia Mela

The artist selected is Natalia Mela-Konstantinidis (1923-2019), a founding member of the artistic group "*Armos*" and wife of the architect Aris Konstantinidis. During the first years of her career, being a student at the Athens School of Fine Arts, she collaborated with Dimitris Pikionis for the construction of two funerary monuments. After the birth of her two children, she made a "*fallow*" for ten years, only to work later on the production of sets at the Art Theatre, for works by Karolos Koun, while until then she worked on demand, creating works for public spaces. In her mature artistic phase, in the 60's, she abandons marble and turned to more subversive sculpture materials. What led her to this choice was the influence exerted on her by the Greek artists who returned from Paris after the war. He began welding lessons in Palaio Faliro and began experimenting with more abstract forms, which he did not continue to produce, because he wanted to differentiate himself and turned to metal structures with welding. Metal as a material and due to its flexibility through welding, gave it the opportunity to experiment with forms and create new forms with ready-made objects or to utilize the technique of assemblage. Thus, the above techniques became characteristic of its style, which was distinct. Mela's themes were dedicated to nature and mythology (Tsoukala, 2008, Spiteris, 1979 και <http://el.ozonweb.com/art/afieroma-sthn-natalia-mela>).

Mela in the 60s was inspired by a series of works from the animal kingdom. It attributed the animals to various natural postures and because of its expressive means and the materials it had chosen, it maintained the element of abstraction, but in order to be able to make the viewer focus on absolute and indicative characteristics. At the same time, because she did not like to render the figures idealized, she chooses postures that have a playful character or even ironic, creating an interaction between the sculptures and the viewer. In the imprints of bipeds

and four-legged, such as goats, goats and hens, Mela combines the folk figurative character with modern abstraction and modern technology.

The design of the outdoor exhibition and the special tour application

In 2021, the implementation and maintenance of the outdoor exhibition "*Walk*" in Spetses, which includes 11 works by Natalia Mela, from various themes, such as myth, warriors and animals, was completed. The sculptor, before she died, had expressed her enthusiasm for this exhibition. In the area of Faros, the "*Walk*" takes place, on the sculptor's favorite route, which promoted the beginning of the restoration works of her sculptures, since a few years later she died. In contrast to the "*Walk*", which included works from many different themes, without any meaningful coherence, a specific theme, that of animals, was chosen. The outdoor exhibition designed within the framework of the course is entitled as "*A pasture on Filopappou Hill - 100 years of Natalia Mela*" and the appropriate period to take place is 2023 and will last from September to November, where the epidemiological situation of the country will be favorable and the weather conditions will be suitable for such an operation. The exhibition could be held in collaboration with the National Gallery, the Ministry of Culture and Sports, the KAS and the OPANDA of the Municipality of Athens, under the support and funding of a private non-profit organization.

The proposal, apart from the outdoor exhibition, includes a special application for the mobile or tablet (app), so that every visitor can easily locate the works on the hill. The application will be friendly and visually pleasing to the user. The user will be able to tour the hill and choose the route he wishes, as there will be three alternative routes that lead to the top of each hill, namely the Pnyx, the hill of the Muses and the hill of the Nymphs. The works that will be selected for each route are meaningfully connected and concern the themes of motherhood, love and life in the flock.

At the same time, by wandering the selected route, the visitor has the opportunity to listen to texts of travelers who visited Greece. The texts are also to be available for reading. The route to motherhood will concern families with young children, in places where there may be access for the pushchair. The route to life in the herd will be for schools and the visit will be able to take place within the framework of the courses of biology, history, literature and geography. It is planned to be the longest route, with the most stops, so that the course can be conducted. Finally, love is a short journey, which includes excerpts of poems to be read. All three routes will have access to the texts of the travelers.

In the application, after the end of each route there will be a special platform, where the user can record the feeling left by the route, through an essay or even a poem, anonymously or even branded and after the approval of the administrators will be published in a special folder that will have all the texts gathered so that one can read them while on the hill or even after your visit. The exhibition also provides for the holding of some short events that do not require electronic equipment, such as a small lecture writing a poem or haiku in the retreat of Pikionis, a race of pedaling in the woods opposite the temple of Loubardiaris, reading literary texts on the rocks and guided tours of the hill and the works.

It is worth noting that special codes (QR codes) will be designed, which will be imprinted on thin metal plates, which after the exhibition, can be melted and reused for the production of other codes, in case of other similar events. These plates will be illuminated by tiny battery-operated lighting carriers, which is recharged by solar panels and there is no need to interfere with the landscape, such as holes for cables, or a method design for power supply. Solar-powered lighting sources, and slabs, will be donated to be used on the hill and in the future to replace conventional lighting methods.



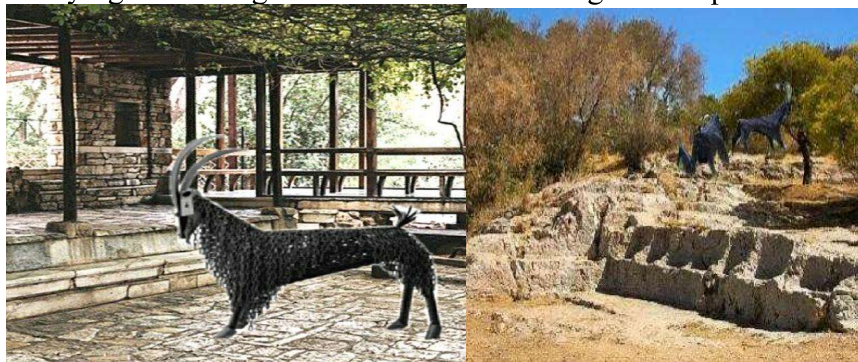
Examples from the app

The objectives of the exhibition

The exhibition "*A pasture on Filopappou Hill - 100 years of Natalia Mela*", is estimated to take place in 2023, celebrating the centenary of the sculptor's birth, raises awareness among the public about the protection and preservation of Filopappou Hill as a natural landscape for the natural organisms that inhabit it. The works contain the contrast between the technician and the physicist, as they present four-legged animals, while they are made of metal or are the result of collages of other objects, such as old chains or old unused parts of bicycles and cars. Thus, through these works, the public is informed about the reuse and reuse of objects for different purposes from that of their production, such as the creation of sculptures.

Through the utilization of solar energy, with the provision of lighting, coming from solar panels and its operation without cables, a different way of lighting outdoor exhibitions is presented. The aim is, after the exhibition, to adopt it as a method of lighting at points required on the Hill, for the better access of visitors to the hill at night, but also to reduce interventions on the hill and especially to bring a gradual end to the "tyranny" of cables.

Finally, the exhibition, through the different routes, attempts to offer visitors a different experience of the hill, as a habitat that harmoniously combines human culture with animal life, without intervening violently. The sculptures are to be placed in places where they could be like living animals, making a strong sense of the habitat, while having an interaction with the audience. The exhibition aims to give a different reading of ancient and modern monuments, conveying the feeling that animals are returning to their place of residence in the city.



Photographs of the hill showing the works of Natalia Mela placed on Filopappou Hill

Epilogue

The hill of Filopappou as a "*Human –nest* " hosts works and actions of people, who, by putting their own stones, form and overturn its rocky physiognomy, constructing settlements and coexisting with animals in antiquity, abandoning them, utilizing the hill as a point of war strategy, as a barracks and finally as an exhibition place. All these actions revolve around the history of human, where with his existence, the evolution of the hill, goes hand in hand with his own changing forms gradually.

A natural element in the city, which is a monument, a retreat, a meeting point and sports, performs a social role in the modern urban environment. The role of the hill as a "psychic refuge" in times of crisis, such as the health one we are experiencing, has enabled us to reassess the hill. With man having the greatest ecological power in the world, his interventions in the natural landscape can have an irreversible impact. One of the areas of exploitation of the hill with negative results of the tourism industry, which constantly lurks to change the face of the hill on the altar of profit. However, the hill continues to gather groups of citizens who claim and actively participate in the protection of the hill, enriching the hill with another meaning.

The hill gathers and connects nature with art. The walk on the hill creates impressions that are recorded in the body and soul. The light alternates between the leaves of the trees and illuminates the shady rocks and paths. We cannot fail to pay attention to the expressiveness of art in nature, through the work of Dimitris Pikionis. The particularities of the Greek tradition in combination with the forms of nature are revealed by elements of aesthetics made by "human hands". The movement on the hill as an architectural act, is the result of an "artist ethnographer", as we approached Pikionis.

Two great exhibitions, the Panathenaia and Documenta 14 were hosted on the hill, interpreting it as an outdoor place of art and interpretation of art history. On the hill, the history of sculpture was written to a certain extent, through these exhibitions. With sculpture closely linked to the human form and history, an exhibition was designed to be able to transfer this connection to other forms, such as the physical ones, presenting the absence of man as one of the impulses of sculpture, bringing back the vitalistic interpretation of sculpture, but also of the hill itself, presenting the transition from the mechanical to the animal and bringing

to the forefront values of the hill that are gradually forgotten. The walk on Filopappou Hill leaves a special legacy, as he tells us his own myth, by marking the place of nature in culture.

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