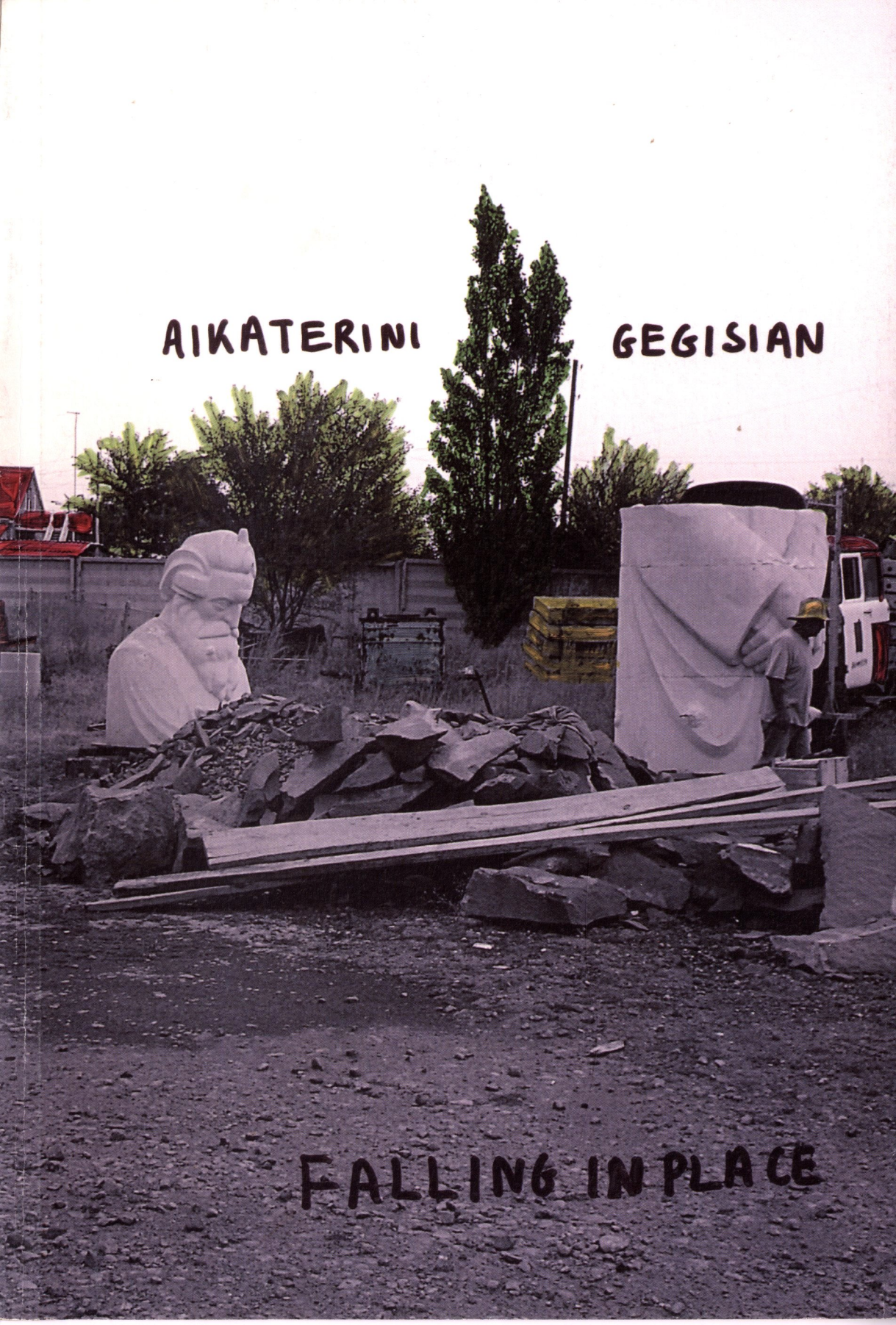


AIKATERINI

GEGISIAN



FALLING IN PLACE

# Aikaterini Gegisian

Falling in Place



**Kalfayan Galleries**

Athens - Thessaloniki



© 2010 Aikaterini Gegisian & Kalfayan Galleries  
ISBN: 978-960-99065-2-4

KALFAYAN GALLERIES

Χάρητος 11 – Κολωνάκι, 106 75 Αθήνα

Τηλ. 210.7217.679 – FAX 210.7217.623

Προξένου Κορομηλά 43, 546 22 Θεσσαλονίκη

Τηλ. 2310.231.187 & 2310.225.23 – FAX 2310.231.820

[www.kalfyangalleries.com](http://www.kalfyangalleries.com)

[info@kalfyangalleries.com](mailto:info@kalfyangalleries.com)

# CONTENTS

## ESSAYS

- 04 THE LONG VIEW: COLIN PERRY

## PROJECTS

- 08 DIEGO GARCIA – 2010  
16 NOTES ON A CONCEPTION OF A FILM – 2010  
24 SEVAN BOYS – 2008  
30 A RAY OF SUNSHINE – 2008  
34 PASSENGERS – 2007  
38 THE IMAGE UNFOLDED – 2007  
46 10.34 AM – 2006  
52 TOKYO TONIGHT – 2003  
56 THE DAY THAT LEFT – 2002

## APPENDICES

- 62 CREDITS  
63 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## THE LONG VIEW

We are looking across lush and vertiginous hillsides towards a silver-white ocean. Overhead, the sky blackens with low, bulging clouds that indicate a rainstorm is about to break. Here, close to the highest geographical point of the island, a man and woman take snapshots. They look at us, spying at them indiscreetly and clocking the coordinates: a vista, a hire-car, honeymooners, bad weather. They continue clicking away with business-like purpose. I imagine their mind's eye is filled with an image of this scene that they've seen already, in a brochure or on the Internet; the same place, but with an azure sea and cobalt-blue sky. We hear a soundtrack that has clearly been recorded elsewhere (there's background music and chit chat), in which a man delivers a soliloquy in creolised English, 'You know, Mauritius is a paradise islands [sic]'. It's unclear whether he's trying to convince us, or himself. This scene, from Aikaterini Gegisian's video work *Diego Garcia*, 2010, shows us the dark underbelly of a troubled paradise. It asks us to think about how the idealisation of a place relates to perspective, distance, control and power. It turns answers into questions, and asks us to look at the world in all its brutal rawness.

Gegisian's videos, photographs and installations frequently explore our relationship with remote or marginal places. The island from which *Diego Garcia* takes its name is a tiny coral atoll 1,900km away from Mauritius, a lonesome dot in the vast Indian Ocean. It is small, but not insignificant: today, the isle is home to the largest U.S military-industrial complex outside of the United States<sup>i</sup>. Whilst not as famous as the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base and detention camp in Cuba, Diego Garcia is arguably more important: the Pentagon has called it "an indispensable platform for policing the world"<sup>ii</sup>. Not coincidentally, it is also home to one of the world's five Global Positioning Systems (GPS) control bases, which has been used to guide bombs dropped on Iraq and Afghanistan. The GPS system is a panopticon weapon, its satellite perspective turning ant-like humans into "collateral damage"<sup>iii</sup>.

But this is not the full story. Diego Garcia has a parallel, darker history. In the late 1960s, in order for the military complex to be built, the island was 'swept and sanitized' of its native population. The inhabitants of the Chagos archipelago, of which Diego Garcia is the largest island, were rounded up, packed onto ships, and taken to Mauritius by the British colonial owners of Chagos (The British had leased the island to the U.S with this proviso). In Mauritius, the Chagossians languished in dire poverty. Left without an identity, nationality or income, many committed suicide, turned to drugs or prostitution. The expulsion by the British is a clear breach of the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights, to which the U.K is a signatory. Indeed, this fact was upheld in 2000, when the Chagossians won the right to be repatriated to Diego Garcia at the British High Court in London. But it was a brief victory: a decree issued from the highest level of British government declared the court's ruling irrelevant (policing the world is evidently more important than the rights of a few dark-skinned islanders).

Here, Gegisian's explorative camerawork lingers on the outside of the Chagos Refugees Group headquarters, a neat little shack in Cassis, an insalubrious district of the Mauritian capital, Port Louis. In the adjacent memorial garden that commemorates the loss of their homeland,

---

<sup>i</sup> For more information on Diego Garcia see J. Pilger, *Stealing a Nation*, ITV, 2004, and D. Vine, *Island of Shame: The Secret History of the U.S. Military Base on Diego Garcia*, Princeton University Press, 2009.

<sup>ii</sup> Quote from J. Pilger, *Stealing a Nation*, 2004.

<sup>iii</sup> M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Random House, 1995.

we see walls festooned with naïve paintings depicting idyllic visions of the homeland: freshly speared fish and coconuts are piled up on the beach. There is a hypnotizing romance to this image of a lost homeland, but it is an image that has trapped the Chagossians in limbo, their eyes telescoped on the horizon to the exclusion of their new environs. Gegisian's critiques this idealization through post-production editing and a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between image, voiceover, and text. The visual documentation and the audio tracks were recorded in different sessions, and are layered here in order that we might read one against the grain of the other. Another dialectical device is provided by the use of intertitles, the text of which is taken from the Chagossian's statements at the British High Court. At one point, Gegisian's camera pauses on a giant billboard advertisement breathlessly touting the virtues of Mauritius: 'You don't have to be a Mauritian... to be a Mauritian!' The intertitle issues a riposte: '*We were treated as inferiors. Mauritians' found it shameful to be next to us*'. At other times, these texts unveil a blinkered mindset: '*We have been forced to adapt to and adopt another culture, another way of living, which frankly speaking we don't like*'. Of course, it would be wrong to say this idealization of the 'homeland' is the cause of the Chagossian's predicament (the British should not get off so lightly), but it certainly has not helped.

In another video work, *Passengers*, 2007, we encounter members of an immigrant community of Pontic Greeks living in Nicopolis, a shantytown in Thessaloniki, Greece. The Pontians trace their roots back to ancient Greece: their ancestors set sail around three thousand years ago to establish colonies around the Black Sea and modern day Turkey. Exiled from the Anatolian peninsula in the 1920s following the Greco-Turkish war (1919–1922), many found themselves eventually living in nearby Soviet-ruled territories such as Georgia and Armenia. After the collapse of the USSR, many 'returned home' to Greece as a second wave of economic migrants. In *Passengers* we hear the tessellated narratives of a group of middle-aged and elderly Pontians, who recall their struggles and exile. One narrator (they are not named) tells us: "Our parents and grandparents always told us "Greece is our homeland". Soon they realized, however, that they had more in common with the Soviets, "we live with a different attitude, a Russian attitude".

Again, Gegisian's camera scans the exterior of homes and neighbourhoods, tracing the indices of migrant's everyday existence. There's evidence of domestic pride: plants grow healthily; spacious interiors look cool and welcoming. Officially this is a shantytown, but it bears little in common with the Delhi's slums or Rio de Janeiro's favelas. The buildings look comfortable and modern. Yet they are illegal, as one narrator freely admits, "We grew up in Russia. We knew the laws there..." Sardonically, he observes how he purchased 240 sq. metres of land but was unaware of needing planning permission, "what could I do with just 240 square metres... plant wheat?" It's a tough, endearing sense of humour. Perhaps this pragmatism emerges from the fact that, while they "had the dream of going back to the homeland", they "did not have an image of Greece". Unlike the Chagossians, the Pontians are free from the spell of the visual.



They appear to flourish despite their poverty, preserving traditions in everyday routines whilst adapting to their new locus. Theirs is an example of what the social scientist Michel de Certeau called 'the practice of everyday life': a form of near-invisible resistance in order to maintain a coherent identity through the flux of modernity.<sup>iv</sup>

## EXILED IMAGES

Like the exiles and migrants whose lives she trails, Gegisian's camera is nearly always on the move. Indeed, if the camera is not moving, it is frequently sequestered away near a window, watching the traffic of human bodies on the street, children playing, lives being lived. This concern for motion is especially evident in a trilogy of videos made between 2002-2006: *The Day That Left, Tokyo Tonight, 10.34 a.m.* We assume *Tokyo Tonight* was filmed in Japan because of the title, and the fact that the first narrator to speak does so in Japanese (there are also English and Greek narrators). But it's a ruse: the video was actually shot in Hastings, a town on the South coast of England. Everything about this video is an artifice: a train flash past from right to left, but this footage appears within a screen-with-a-screen that scrolls in the opposite direction, from left to right. The motion of the scrolling images – zapping trains tapping out a rhythmic metre – corresponds to their protagonists' sense of dislocation, hallucination, and bodily confusion. The English narrator seems disoriented, muddling observed reality with a film she has seen previously; in a hermeneutical slight of hand, she recalls the title of this half-remembered film is also 'Tokyo Tonight'. The narrator in *10.34 a.m.* describes a woman experiencing a similar if more comical muddling of fact and fiction. Scanning the shelves in a supermarket, she '...cannot find the cheese area. She thinks they may have changed the location. She wonders why they keep doing it.' Suddenly the story cascades into a psychological thriller, again with a dénouement of disorientation and collapse: '10.35 AM. I am in the supermarket as arranged. The woman next to me seems anxious... I feel like I know what she's thinking. I'm dizzy'.

In these works, Gegisian's spoken narration explores first-person subjectivities. Often, it seems that the narrator is Gegisian herself (her voice is on most of her videos), but these works rarely express a pellucid authorial stance. For example, in *the day that left* Gegisian's narrative initially seems personal, confessional and diaristic. As in *Tokyo Tonight*, we see segments of video scroll across the screen (this time, the images move vertically rather than horizontally). We see alternate video frames shot through a window in Greece (it is sunny, there's a vine growing), and in England (the sea is gunboat-grey, waves crash in briny-white peaks). Gegisian speaks in Greek and English, switching language according to the image on screen, as if reminiscing about the two domestic scenes from first-hand experience. But, as we are lulled into the comfort of autobiography, she distances herself by reflecting on the scene not as a memory, but as an image encountered for the first time: 'It looks familiar, maybe I've been there before'.

---

<sup>iv</sup> M. Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press, 1988. The 'practice of everyday life' theorizes how a people's behaviour often escapes the control of colonisers despite conformity to its laws. One example is the preservation of Mayan religious practices through adopted and adapted Catholic religious practices in Central America.

## UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Gegisian, who is Greek with Armenian heritage and currently lives in the UK, has a personal investiture in the migrant's experience. Although her work frequently denies the authority of authorship, she also approaches filmmaking in a decidedly personal register. In 2006, she visited Gyumri, Armenia, the result of which was two short video works: *Sevan Boys*, 2008, and *A Ray of Sunshine*, 2008. *Sevan Boys* (produced in collaboration with Greek artist Lizzie Calligas) is a double screen video installation, in which the artist attempts to chat with a group of adolescent boys, a task made virtually impossible due to the lack of a shared language. *A Ray of Sunshine*, is a terse video work in which the camera is pointed directly at the sun, generating refracted light spots within the lens. The artist describes this as 'an attempt to inscribe the personal in a consciously changing landscape'. Gegisian explores this motif – a personal, psychological understanding of geography – in the video *The image unfolded*, 2007, a personalised, dream-sequence in which the artist interprets a catalogue of images she has collected during her travels in Armenia, Greece and Turkey. In the work *Notes in a Conception of a Film*, 2007-2010, a wall installation of one hundred and ninety black-and-white photographs, the artist has literally 'inscribed the personal' onto the images, using a coloured pen to add marks and allusive slogans such as 'Do you think you are maybe exposing yourself to unnecessary trouble?'; 'What comes in between is not always visible'; 'I am lying in the place where there is no sand'.

The questions Gegisian's work pose have evolved out of a long history of documentary and ethnographic filmmaking. This lineage includes filmmakers such as Jean Rouch and Werner Herzog, who have explored the problematic tendency of film to objectify, to present material as evidence, rather than a fable open to interpretation. One solution is to personalise the story, turning the supposedly objective into the recognisably subjective. Gegisian's camera, unlike that of the tourists snapping away on the hillside in Mauritius or military's GPS line-of-sight, does not seek to turn people into things. Her view is multivalent, prismatic and dialectical; it senses the haptic world like fingers touching Braille. This perspective – up close and personal – celebrates the experience of what Gegisian calls the "shifting geographies" of the contemporary world. As she documents sites freighted with colonial or neo-colonial history, her camera shakes off narratives of fixed identities, the clinging roots that tendril back to impossible homelands. Heraclitus, the ancient Greek philosopher who gave us the wise cliché 'you can't step in the same river twice', knew that geography was intimately related to time. Gegisian intimates that this is something that should be explored and celebrated. As described by post-colonial theorist Homi K Bhabha, contemporary culture, which is marked by what he calls the 'realm of the beyond', is the most exciting and fertile territory for an artist to explore. Watching these works, we become aware that we are never exactly where – or who – we think we are.

Colin Perry, London 2010

---

<sup>v</sup> Gegisian in conversation with the author, February 2010.

<sup>vi</sup> H.K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 1994, Routledge.



# Diego Garcia

*2010 – 16 mins – stereo sound – DigiBeta/DVD  
(Shot in DVCAV in Mauritius in April 2009)*

Diego Garcia is an artist's documentary, which looks at the deportation of the inhabitants of the Chagos Islands in the Indian Ocean (now the site of one of the biggest American military bases in the world) by the British Government to Mauritius.

The film juxtaposes text extracts from the Chagossian's High Court testimonies, which collectively portray the islands as a paradise lost, with a camera that continuously wanders in the Mauritian landscape. These testimonies become the starting point for looking at Mauritius and the Indian Ocean as a complex set of relationships and act as catalysts in unravelling the hidden traces of history inscribed in spaces.

The film takes the form of a journey where landscape becomes the central character. Blending different narrative voices, such as the collective voice of the testimonies, the observational eye of the artist with ambient voices and sounds, the film comments on shifting geographies, on the myth of paradise and on the ways we inhabit a globalised world.

Opposite page: Storyboard-Detail, Diego Garcia, 2010  
Following pages: Production Stills, Diego Garcia, 2010



tion in the middle of Indian Ocean  
 and special significance  
 the perfect paradise has become a military nightmare  
 all the inhabitants got deported  
 - a microcosmos. The fact that the whole island has  
 military base

← the impossibility  
 to make sense

experience time space Are they indigenous?  
 is it-witnessing  
 question ourselves?

← The image of  
 ← the work to be /  
 survival, a way of  
 of the impossibility of Nam  
 homecoming  
 Strategies

ny denies - how do you transform them to visual

NOT TO DOCUMENT REALITY  
 TO REPRESENT ~~REALITY~~ DESIRES  
 THAT OFFER THE POSSIBILITY OF  
 FREEDOM.

authentic  
 ness in my subjects

to reality - to respect your subject?

the mental universe

- i) narra
- name
- name
- ii) voice
- what
- how

Questions?

to escape speed of  
 time. a slower pace  
 when time is left to  
 unravel

the exiled Chagossians  
 have not left their island  
 to look for freedom

- \* What do you choose
- \* what medium you use
- \* What action-activity
- \* What questions to ask
- \* What scenarios to
- \* How do they conce
- \* Is the film about my
- \* What are your sites
- \* How the temporalities
- are expressed in the
- \* What happens when/
- \* How am I positioned
- How can I be present
- \* What is their favourit
- \* How do they react - per
- \* How do Chagossian
- \* Can one
- \* Can nos
- \*

↓  
 they were thrown out!  
 So they are not necessarily  
 looking for freedom.

I AM THE ONE THAT IS LOOKING  
 FOR FREEDOM

The film is not about me looking for freedom  
 is it?

**BELONGING  
 UNBELONGING**  
 (I decided not  
 to have a home so  
 that I don't lose a  
 home)

↓  
 what do they  
 feel about  
 belonging

Methodological tools

- direct cinema - no setup interviews generate
- ~~dialogue~~ interactions which create dialogue
- Deconstruction - make it obvious that this is my vision of the story
- Reconstruction - asking people to re-enact scenes
- Re-enchantment
- A structure that is cyclical - that everything goes back to.
- Archipelago as a structure
- Where is cam. in placed? what type of shots?
- Using real characters to create fiction and vice versa. Mixing of documentary + fiction
- landscape to become a character (detached from human action) e.g. Antonin
- multiple screens - each different point-of-view + visual style + narrative story















## **Diego Garcia**

*Script - Extracts from Chagossians Testimonies*

*British High Court compensation case. Chagos islanders vs the U.K. government.*

In 1964, we become aware of visits by British and US officials. They said that the entire place was to become a military facility, with fighter jets and helicopters and that these engines would eventually kill us.

The ships were scheduled to set sail after sunset. We packed as much clothing as we could carry, and we were heartbroken to leave behind all our pets and animals.

When we reached Mauritius, our nightmare continued. We were left entirely on our own. We had no alternative but to beg for shelter.

We lived in complete poverty. We had to get up at 2 am to collect fallen mangoes from other's people's land. We survived on this and some boiled breadfruit and mashed maize.

We were treated as inferiors. Mauritians' found it shameful to be next to us. Most of us therefore tried to hide our identity, our culture and background.

We eventually lost all trust in ourselves and in our children grew up feeling the same way. We did not know where we belonged who we were and what would become of us.

We all lived in individual homes on Chagos. Most adults were involved in the copra industry. The wages were low, but there was no substantial cash economy.

We lived according to our own rhythm, neither in fear nor in stress of having to strive to make ends meet in order to feed the members of our family.

We had and lived a life, which was our own. We had our own traditions, our own culture, our own norms and values.

We have been forced to adapt to and adopt another culture, another way of living, which frankly speaking, we don't like.











## **Notes on a conception of a film**

*2010 – 190 B&W photographs with drawing and text  
(Various locations, between 2004 and 2010)*

Notes on a conception of a film is a photographic installation that derives from a personal archive of snapshots collected in Greece, Turkey, Armenia, Belgium, UK, Germany, France, Holland, Spain, Mauritius, Canada and USA. The photographed spaces are presented with no identification as to the specific locations they were taken or any chronology. The combination of text and drawing infuse the photographs with emotional and psychological allusions.

Referencing both the filmic frame and a storyboard and blending narrative and documentary, the notes explore narrative moments and attempt to construct the landscape of a personal geography. The hand-tinted process brings to mind the childlike activity of colouring books, as an attempt to make sense of space, colour, architecture and perspective, but can ultimately be read as the artist's attempt to question representation and to situate the photographed spaces in one's personal imagery.

Following pages: Notes on a conception of film, 2010



# NOTES ON A CONCEPTION OF A FILM IN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE TENSE

Already living with regrets

We have become stereotypes of ourselves

Do not assume that the other is  
at the same point in time

Hiding behind my gaze

Noone saw her ~~disappointment~~

the idea: to use the black and white  
photographs as the canvas to project  
ways of making sense of the spaces and  
landscapes projected  
to understand the space  
like a childlike activity of making  
something your own.

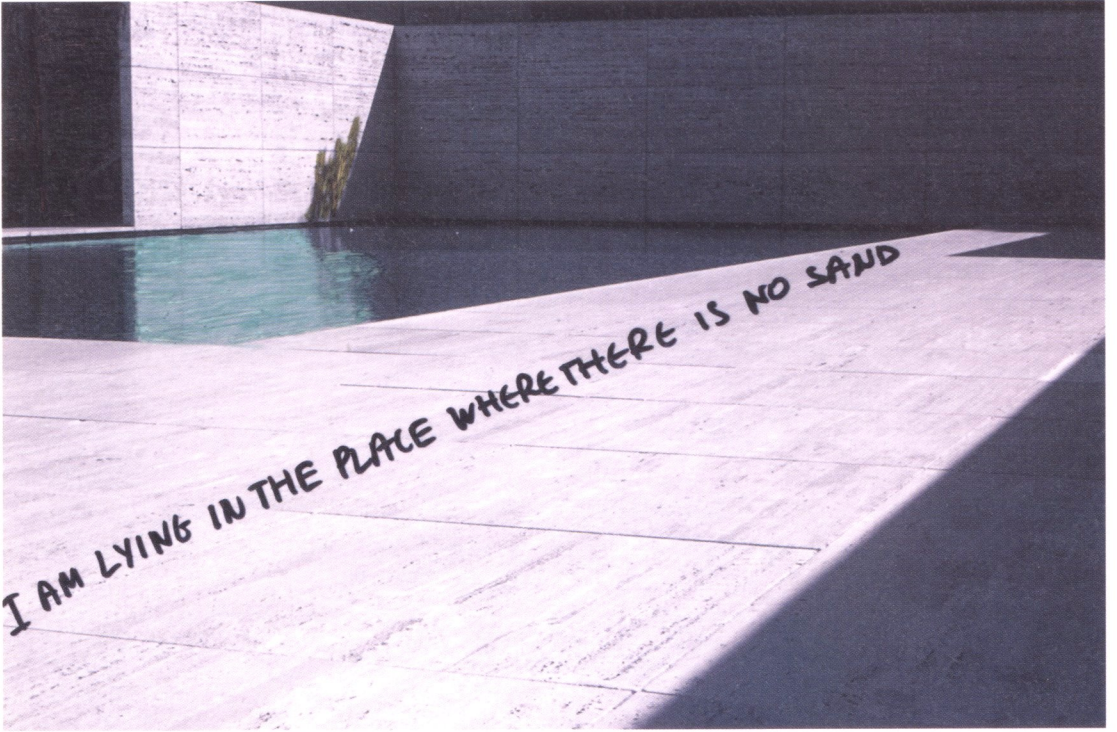
At the same time to have this  
idea of possible and imaginary  
films - which is actually possible +











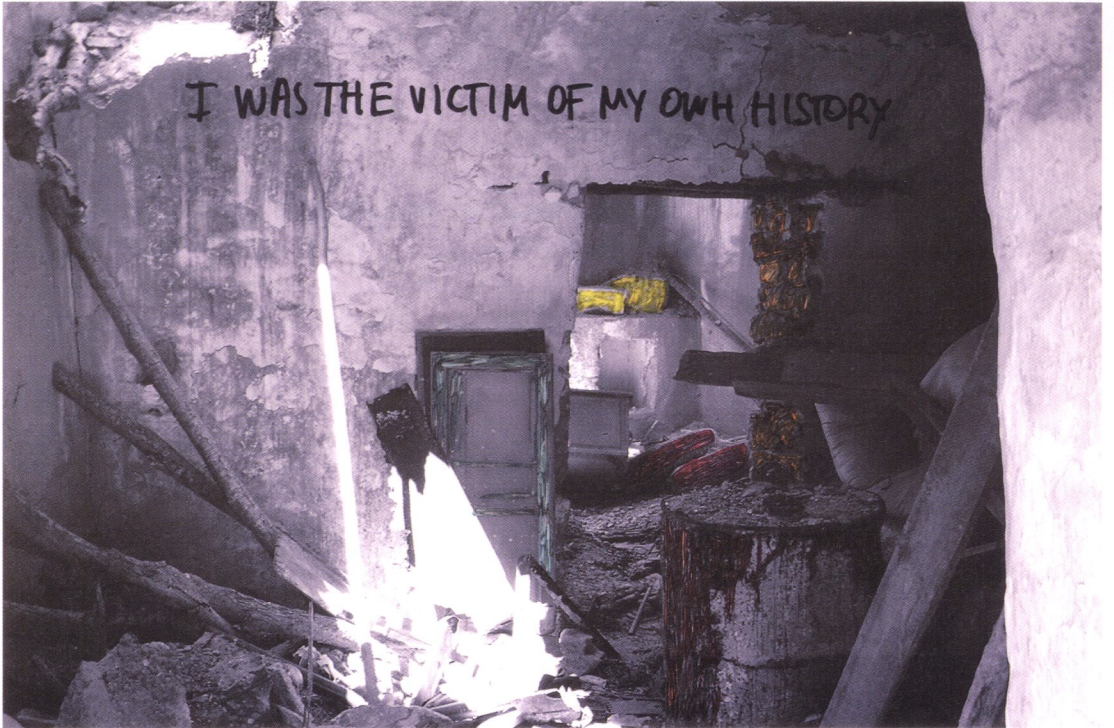








I WAS THE VICTIM OF MY OWN HISTORY





## Sevan Boys

2008 – 7 mins – two channel video installation – stereo sound – DVD  
(Shot in miniDV in Armenia in August 2006)

Sevan Boys was filmed in August 2006, during a workshop that took place in Lake Sevan in Armenia, during the 5th Gyumri Biennale. The footage was shot on a trip Aikaterini Gegisian and Lizzie Calligas took to an unfinished hotel, which was left abandoned when the Soviet Union collapsed. Filmed with a handheld camera, the installation focuses on Aikaterini's attempt to communicate with a group of young boys, while Lizzie Calligas follows her with another camera.

*'The curiosity for the unknown, the anxiety for the future and the desire for communication obtain a greater intensity through the image of the deterioration of something which was never completed, as well as through the simultaneous recording of their long and close-up shots.'*

Maria Tsantsanoglou (from the exhibition catalogue *"And Now? Visual Arts in Greece 3"*, State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece)

Courtesy Aikaterini Gegisian & Lizzie Calligas

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, Sevan Boys, 2008

Following pages: Video Stills, Sevan Boys & Installation Shot, *And Now?*  
State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece, 2008



# STRUCTURE

## (re) Telling & Creating

Creating instances where s

Create instances where stories

Create images where instances  
that is: isolated moments  $\rightarrow$  where spatial

GENERATED MOVEMENT  
MOVEMENT IN SPACE

SPA  
[A  
MOVE

### SCULPTURAL RELATION/ACTIVITY

How ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> the unrepresentable is  
that which cannot be re  
that which cannot be p  
that which constitutes the

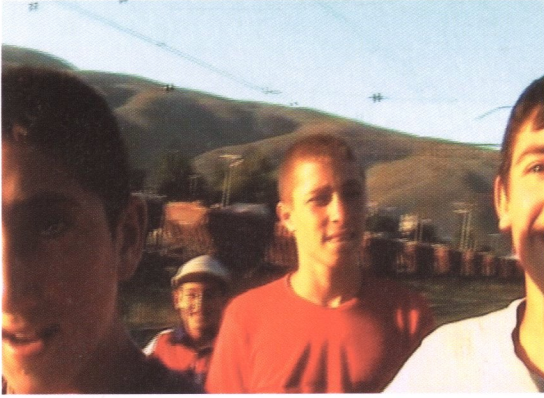
Post-narrative: Disjointment between  
which are / ~~because they~~

"Open work"

work = message = medium

















# **A Ray of Sunshine**

*2008 – 1 mins – stereo sound – DigiBeta/DVD  
(Shot in miniDV in Armenia in August 2006)*

A Ray of Sunshine is based on footage shot in the area of Lake Sevan in Armenia around a derelict hotel that was abandoned when the Soviet Union collapsed. Starting from an almost black screen, the image slowly opens up to reveal an ambiguous landscape, while the sound transports us to a different perceptual space. Using colour and sound, the work questions the realities of the recorded image in an attempt to inscribe the personal in a continuously changing landscape.

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, A Ray of Sunshine, 2008

Following pages: Video Stills, A Ray of Sunshine, 2008

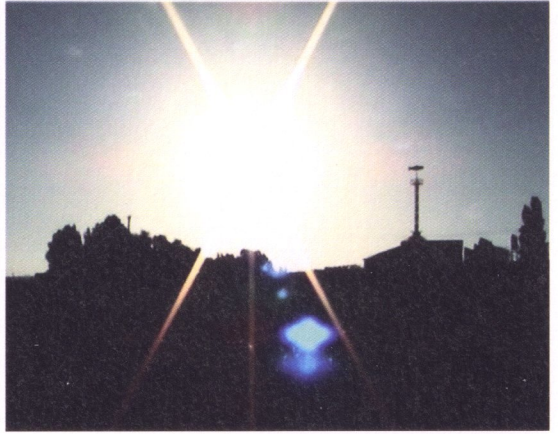


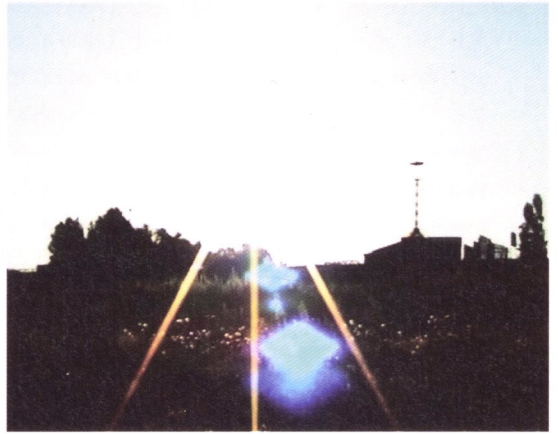
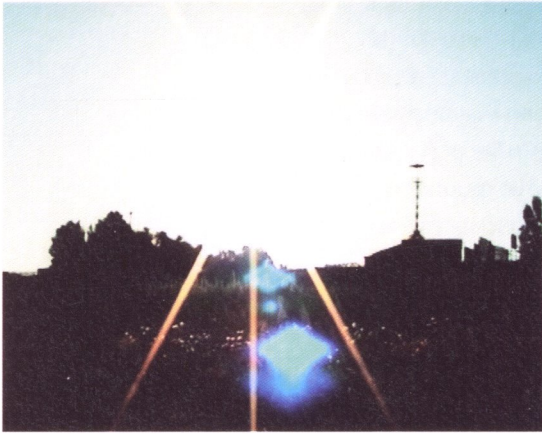
What comes in between is not  
always visible

Can a sound be separated from  
an image

↓  
distinctiveness  
autonomy  
hierarchy  
interrelation  
creation of meaning  
formulation / configuration  
of knowledge  
acknowledgement  
telling









# Passengers

*2007 – 13 mins 37 secs – stereo sound – DigiBeta/DVD  
(Shot in miniDV in Thessaloniki, Greece in May 2007)*

Passengers was filmed in Nicopolis, a newly built shantytown area in the city of Thessaloniki, Greece and focuses on an immigrant community of Greek-Pontiac descent (originally from the coast of the Black Sea in Turkey) that came to the city from Kazakhstan in the beginning of the nineties.

The film begins with a static view of the area from above and follows a woman walking in the distance. It then concentrates on the stories narrated by the community about their experiences of exile within the Soviet Union, about coming to Greece and the difficulties they faced trying to set up a new life. Their stories are told as a voice-over juxtaposed over tracking shots of deserted derelict trains and of their neighbourhood streets.

The film uses documentary modes but it does not try to identify, classify, indexify or justify the existence and the spaces created by the community. It actually takes a lyrical reflexive tone that attempts to reveal the position of the maker and the impossibility of documenting all aspects of a perceived reality. The image is what grounds us to a specific reality while the fragmented voice-over populates the spaces and tries to deny its role as an explanation of images.

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, Passengers, 2007

Following pages: Video Stills, Passengers, 2007



side of their area?  
used fragments of  
locations?

ments of moving images?  
about the night?

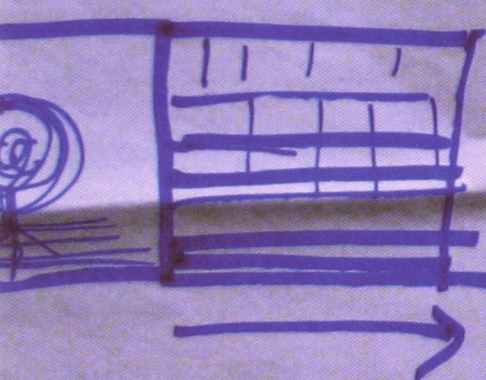
**NIGHT SHOTS**

Details!

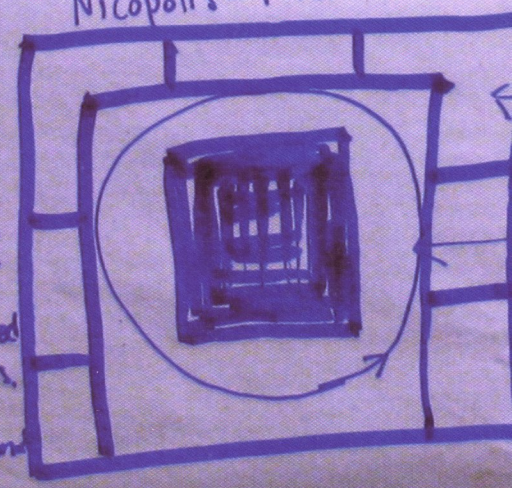
Something  
recurrent?

Ambient sound?

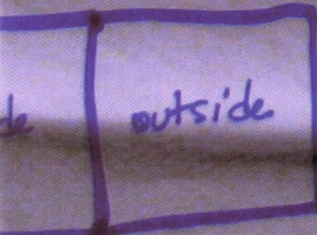
Diegetic sound?  
on-off screen



Nicopolis - Microcosmos



- shot of the living room interior? →
- shots of the half-finished insides of the buildings.
- shots of the interior the domestic / the person



outside

literally formally - contextually

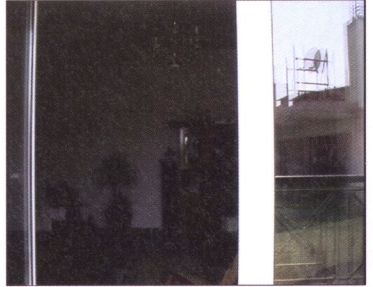
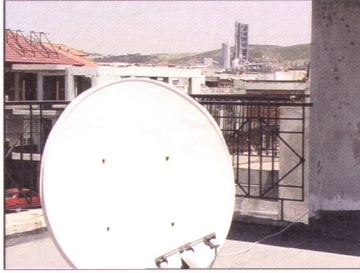
the rhythm of the juxtaposition

inside of their story →

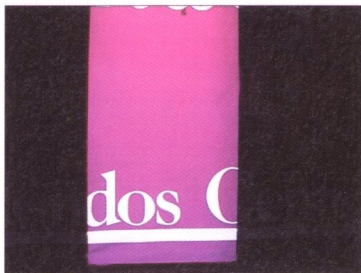
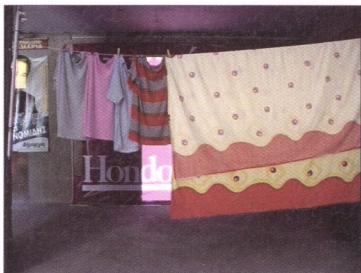
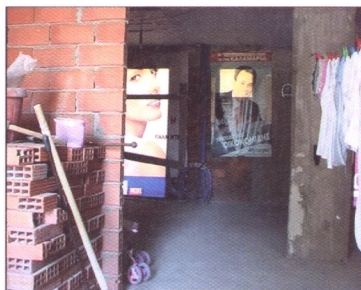
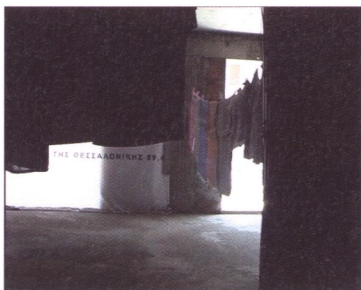
- what is the conceptual analogy?  
how do I present a voice-over that is an outsider to their story / the outside without stereotyping and making the voice-over the authoritative voice.

- How do I find reflexivity in the voice-over? In the way the interview are filmed?











## **The image unfolded**

*2007 – 5 mins 38 secs – no sound – DigiBeta/DVD*

*(Shot in miniDV in Greece, Turkey & Armenia between 2003 and 2006)*

The image unfolded is based on an original text piece, created in 2005, which was generated from words collected from the walls of my studio, in an attempt to create an inventory of my practice. The text produced through this process is intercut, in the final video work, with fragments of footage shot in journeys in Greece, Turkey and Armenia. Based on the repetition of the words 'image' and its 'unfolding', the work explores the nature of memory and documents the gaps between images, sounds and sentences.

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, *The image unfolded*, 2005

Following pages: Installation Shot, Chelsea College of Art and Design, 2005

p 40-41: Video Stills, *The image unfolded*, 2007

p 42-43: Installation Shot, *Room with a View*, Action Field Kodra, Thessaloniki, Greece, 2007

the present

and

the representation

of the present

which ~~then~~ does then

~~when does the~~ become the

unrepresentable

that which cannot be represented

that which cannot be present.

that which constitutes the other

With the virtual we impose a  
representation

to the formless

contact + details







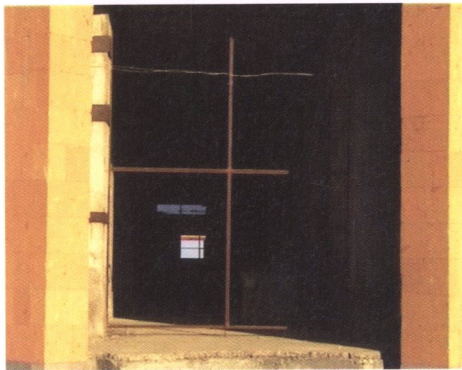
THE IMAGE  
THE IMAGE UNFOLDED  
THIS IMAGE OF SOLITUDE  
THE IMAGE OF MY SOLITUDE  
THE IMAGE OF MY SOLITUDE UNFOLDED  
THE SOUND REMAINED  
THE IMAGE REMAINED STILL  
THE IMAGE OF HER STILLNESS  
THE IMAGE OF STILLNESS UNFOLDED  
IN THE RHYTHM OF PULSATION  
THE IMAGE OF FRAGILITY PULSATING  
THE IMAGE OF OUR FRAGILITY UNFOLDED  
IN THE INSTANCE OF OUR FRAGILITY  
IN AN INSTANCE THE IMAGE UNFOLDED  
THE IMAGE OF THE INSTANCE SHE LEFT  
IN AN INSTANCE SHE LEFT  
THE SOUND STOPPED  
HE CLOSED HIS EYES  
THE IMAGE OF HIM CLOSING HIS EYES  
THE IMAGE OF HIM  
HIS IMAGE UNFOLDED  
THE IMAGE OF HIS RESIDUE  
THE IMAGE OF RESIDUE  
THE IMAGE LEFT A RESIDUE  
IN THE PASSAGE OF TIME  
THE IMAGE OF TIME PASSING  
THE IMAGE OF OUR TIME UNFOLDED  
THE SOUND PERSISTED  
YOUR MEMORIES PERSISTING  
THE IMAGE OF YOUR CHILDHOOD MEMORIES  
LIKE THE IMAGE OF YOUR CHILDHOOD UNFOLDING  
THE IMAGE I PINNED ON THE WALL  
THE IMAGE PINNED ON THE WALL  
THE IMAGE ON THE WALL  
WHEN THE IMAGE ON THE WALL UNFOLDED  
THE SOUND PULSATED  
I SAW THEM LOOKING AT ME  
AS THE IMAGE UNFOLDED, THEY WERE LOOKING AT ME  
AS THE IMAGE UNFOLDED, I SAW THEM  
AS THE IMAGE APPEARED  
IT LEFT AN IMPRESSION  
THE IMAGE APPEARED  
THE IMAGE DID NOT UNFOLD



The image

The image remained still

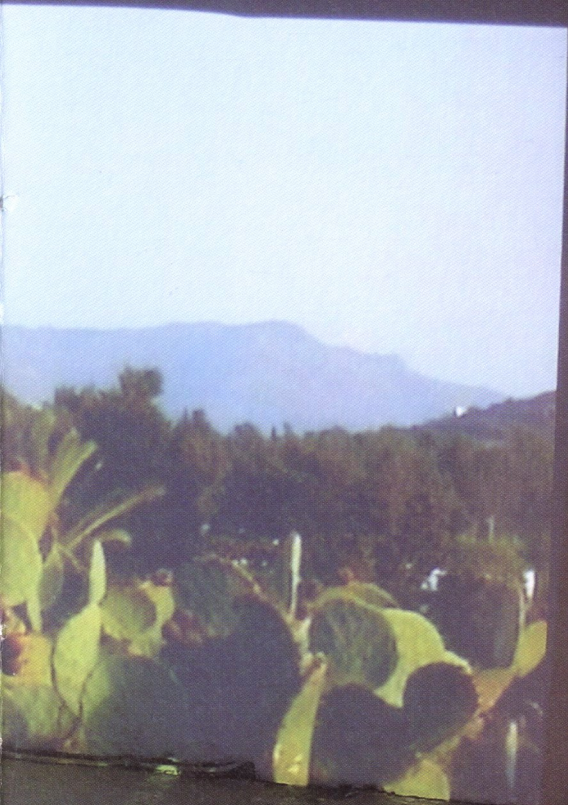
In the rhythm of pulsation













## 10.34 AM

2006 – 2 mins 40 secs – stereo sound – DigiBeta/DVD  
(Shot in miniDV in Thessaloniki, Greece in 2005)

10.34 AM is the third part of a trilogy of films that examines how the digital scrolling of images affects perception and narrative. It is set in a supermarket, the time is 10.35 am. It follows the movements of an invisible female character as she goes about her daily activities. The supermarket shelves scroll continuously becoming the screens that reflect her various emotional states.

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, 10.34AM, 2006

Following pages: Video Stills, 10.34AM

p 48-49: Installation Shots, *trans:parent*, B.I.G Project Space, Athens, 2006



# SUPERMARKET CHARACTERISTICS

- not about prices anymore?
- Shopping experience that is easily navigable

→ Laying out of the store  
We have a cognitive map of the stores → based on fixed points - like the hills or rivers in a classical landscape

→ change in the cognitive map - disorientation

→ sensory overload  
over abundance of products  
since we can ~~keep~~ keep prices in our minds  
we start thinking visually

Subjectivity  
both  
constructed +  
represented

- a non-place
- anonymity
- solitude
- a-historical
- a-relational
- haunted by the present

## TIME MEASURED

ON ~~THE~~ TIME

WAITING ON THE TIME

↳ Movement of traveller  
↳ movement of the landscape  
↳ dual movement

Reversal of gaze →  
the gaze dissolves into

↳ emptied consciousness

Silent dialogue with  
identity loss

Modernity →

Supermodernity → no





## **10.34 AM**

*Script*

### **10.35 am**

She is looking around. She seems upset. She cannot find the cheese area. She thinks they might have changed the location. She wonders why they keep doing it? She breathes deeply.

### **10.35 am**

She remains still. She knows this is not her favourite activity. She looks carefully. She is overwhelmed. She wonders how many images can the eye process. She walks on.

### **10.35 am**

She stands in front of the shelf. She feels like she has a brick wall in front of her. She wishes to be able to pass through it. She knows she can't. She tries to remember what she wanted to buy.

### **10.35 am**

She hears a familiar sound. She cannot understand where it is coming from. She finds the chiller cabinet. She pauses for a moment. She realises it is the sound of the fridge. She walks past. The sound remains in her memory.

### **10.35 am**

She reads the instructions. She presses the button. She takes the slip and waits. She turns around. There is a long queue. She realises she does not know anyone. She looks straight. She is alone.

### **10.35 am**

I am in the supermarket as arranged. The woman next to me seems anxious. I am also anxious. Maybe that's why I can recognise it. It seems like she is waiting for someone. I am waiting for someone. I keep looking around. I keep hearing the beep of the checkout till. It makes me even more anxious. My eyes catch the other woman's eyes. For a moment we look at each other. I feel I know what she is thinking. I am dizzy.











# Tokyo Tonight

*2003 – 4 mins 20 secs – stereo sound – DigiBeta/DVD  
(Shot in miniDV in St Leonards-on-Sea, UK in 2003)*

Tokyo Tonight is the second part of a trilogy of films that examines how the digital scrolling of images affects perception and narrative. The film takes as its starting point the image of a train passing in front of a static camera. This is juxtaposed to a layered soundtrack of ambient sounds and a contemplative voice-over of three characters speaking in different languages. Their reflections move our attention from the inside of the train to the image of looking at it passing by. The film explores how one image can lead us to a myriad little narratives and how sound can lead us to other images.

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, Tokyo Tonight, 2003

Following page: Video Stills, Tokyo Tonight, 2003



# #Tokyo Tonight?

## Image | VISUAL EXPERIENCE

## Soundtrack

Train passing in front of a static camera.

IMAGE + SOUND SLOWED DOWN

SCROLLING IMAGE BECOMING A PANNING SHOT!!!

The realities of space

Questioning its own structure

(this can be real, a home video  
this can be a scene from a film  
→ but recorded space → so observed + constructed.

Real + the fictional

Relationship with the frame

Subjectivity

Like Borges we invent the film/  
called Tokyo Tonight → and  
so comment on the work's own structural  
complexities. → so we communicate  
an awareness → of possibility and  
of how structures are formed and mediated.

Observing the image's own creation

SAME IMAGE REPEATED 3 TIMES

REPETITION

MOVEMENT → TOWARDS / AGAINST  
FOLLOWING EACH OTHER  
THE TRAIN.

IMAGE APPEARING / DISAPPEARING

Auditory experience

↓ contains the textual construct

↓ voice monologues

Characters within the image

- inside the train

- outside looking at the train

3x languages

2x POINT-OF-VIEWS

Position of characters communicated  
through text → mentioning a  
detail of inside/  
outside

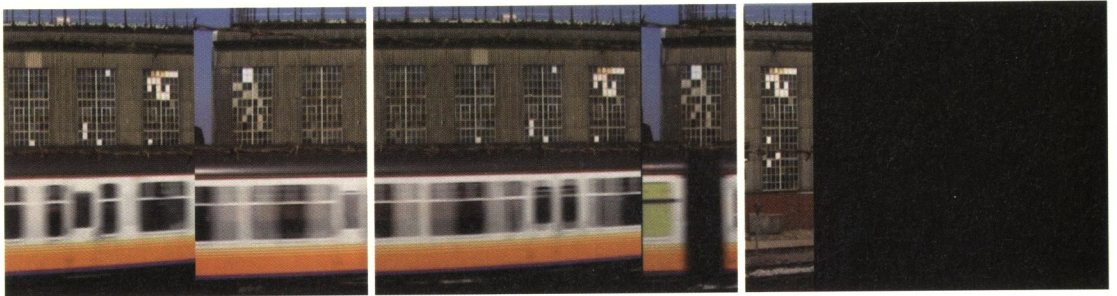
+

sound → actual sound of train passing  
(you are outside)

CONTEMPORATIVE TON

MEDIATING RHYTHM





## Tokyo Tonight

### Script

#### Outside:

You are looking at the train passing.

This scene reminds you of something maybe a film.

Έλα πέραν την γέφυρα τους βλέπω.

Είναι στην παραλία.

Παράξενο μέρος διάλεξαν δίπλα στις γραμμές του τρένου.

Μου είπαν ότι είναι τέλεια τοποθεσία για το επόμενο γύρισμα.

Το ταξίδι προς Τόκιο.

#### Inside:

You are inside the train and you are observing the passing landscape and your own thoughts.

I am getting tired.

When are we reaching Tokyo?

I feel like my mind is going to explode.

Too many thoughts passing.

Sometimes, I know of what makes me happy.

Other times I forget.

Then I feel sad.

And then things change and i rediscover myself.

I wish he would stop looking outside.

I cannot see anything.

Is this the dessert?

No this can't be.

This is not real

This does not exist.

#### Outside:

You are looking at the train passing.

This scene reminds you of something maybe a film.

Yes, I am there now.

Can you hear the train?

The barb wire obstructs my vision.

The derelict building, the train passing.

Mmmmm...

I am sure this scene reminds me of something.

That film.

Tokyo Tonight.

#### Inside:

You are inside the train and you are observing the passing landscape and your own thoughts.

Μακρινό ταξίδι.

Κάθε φορά που αλλάζω τρένο κάθομαι σε θέση με αντίθετη φορά από την θέση στο τρένο που άφησα.

Είναι σαν να γυρνώ πίσω. Σαν να μην έφυγα ποτέ.

Ξαναεπισκέπτομαι την διαδρομή.

Άραγε τι συμβαίνει αν αφαιρέσουμε δέκα λεπτά από κάθε ώρα την κάθε ημέρα;

Φτάνουμε στο Τόκιο σήμερα.



## **the day that left**

*2002 – 6 mins 30 secs – stereo sound – DigiBeta/DVD  
(Shot in miniDV in Greece and UK between 2001 and 2002)*

The day that left is the first part of a trilogy of films that examines how the digital scrolling of images affects perception and narrative. A static camera frames two distinct windows, in two different countries (Greece and England) in the course of one autumn day. A voice-over of one female character alternates between the two languages and between different subjective positions. The landscape beyond the window becomes a reference that points to other spaces and experiences. The film explores how the process of observation may produce spaces that might refer to the 'real' but are nonetheless 'constructed'.

Opposite page: Storyboard Detail, the day that left, 2002

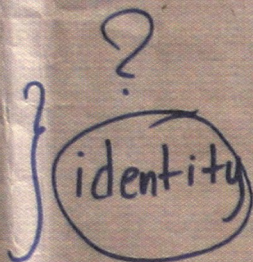
Following pages: Video Stills, the day that left, 2002



# STYLE CATEGORIES

## POINT-OF-VIEWS

- GREEK LANGUAGE
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE



### ① INSIDE THE VIEW

● LOOKING AT (CAMERA POSITION)

● OUTSIDE LOOKING AT THE MOVING IMAGE

● OUTSIDE THE SHOT / NOT RELATING TO ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS

} subject

### ② DESCRIBING WHAT YOU SEE

● IMAGINING WHERE YOU <sup>SEE</sup> ARE AND WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

● REMEMBERING THE PAST (WHERE YOU WERE +

● BEING AT THE VIEW (WHERE YOU <sup>ARE</sup> ~~WANT~~ ~~TO~~ NOW)

● COMPARING THE TWO VIEWS / LANDSCAPES /

(CULTURE) / LANGUAGES / POINT-OF-VIEWS POSITIONS

● GIVING INSTRUCTIONS OF HOW THE IMAGES

COULD OR SHOULD BE INTERPRETED



*the day that left*



## the day that left

*Script in two languages*

### Scene 1 / Greek language

*A mixture of the artist imagining the characters and them remembering.*

*Character in the garden talking on the phone, asking someone to go to the beach.*

*Mentioning of the dogs.*

Που είσαι; Δεν σε ακούω.

Σε ξύπνησα;

Έχω ξυπνήσει εδώ και ώρα.

Έβγαλα βόλτα τα σκυλιά.

Ναι μη μου το θυμίζεις γιατί πάλι έμπλεξα.

Έχασα το ένα, χώθηκε μέσα στα χωράφια.

Θυμάμαι όταν ήμουν μικρή, συνήθιζα να κρύβομαι μέσα στα στάχια την άνοιξη.

Έτρεχα όλη μέρα πάνω-κάτω και έψαχνα για θησαυρούς.

Α! Δεν νομίζω να βρήκα τίποτα πολύτιμο ή να ενθουσιάστηκα, μυστήριο.

Το πιο σημαντικό ήταν η αίσθηση.

Το πράσινο στάχυ να σε καλύπτει, να μην μπορεί να σε δει κανένας.

Το σκυλί το βρήκα τελικά κι ας μου έβγαλε την ψυχή μέχρι να γυρίσει.

Δεν είναι σίγουρη αν θα τα ξαναπάω βόλτα.

Είμαι ακόμη έξω στον κήπο.

Έχει πολύ καλό καιρό.

Δε θέλεις να πάμε στην θάλασσα;

Γ' αυτό σε πήρα.

### Scene 2 / English Language

*A mixture of the artists imagining the characters and them remembering.*

*Character in the house looking out of the window towards the angry sea.*

The weather is crap again.

It must be very cold.

I am not going out, I cannot handle being soaked by the rain again.

Come and have a look! Oh! lala! It is so windy, the sea is so angry and the colour is brown.

When I as twelve I was living in a place where there was a lake nearby and on the north they were some mountains. The lake had a similar colour.

I used to imagine how it would be like to live by the deep blue sea.

I was to collect seashells and send messages to the world in a bottle.

Are you going out?

I thought we could spend the day together.

We can drink tea and listen to music all day.

### Scene 3 / Greek language

*The character is placed at camera position and describes what she is seeing.*

*No emotive language, no speculations.*

Φθινόπωρο.

Είναι νωρίς το πρωί.

Δύο μεγάλα παράθυρα. Οι κουρτίνες είναι ανοιχτές.

Έχει λιακάδα αλλά υπάρχουν μερικά λευκά σύννεφα στον ουρανό.

Που και που κινούνται ελαφρά.

Ανάμεσα στην θάλασσα και στα παράθυρα υπάρχει ένας δρόμος.

Αυτοκίνητα περνούν.

Κρύβονται λίγο από τα κάγκελα ενός μπαλκονιού.

Ένας ποδηλάτης περνά.

Δύο σκίτσα είναι κολλημένα μεταξύ των δύο παραθύρων.

Το ένα το κρύβει το πρωινό φως.

Στο άλλο αναγνωρίζεις τα χρώματα.





#### Scene 4 / English Language

*The character is placed at camera position and describes what she is seeing.*

*No emotive language, no speculations.*

Autumn.

It is early in the morning.

A big window.

The window is half open.

In the background some fields.

In the edge of the horizon the silhouette of a building.

The fields are in bloom.

The one closest to the window has no crop.

Railings separate the fields from a garden.

Plants are hanging in the railings of the balcony.

Their leaves are moving.

The wind is blowing.

The shutter moves slightly.

Nothing else is happening.

#### Scene 5 / English Language

*The character is looking at the two landscapes. Images commented, compared, collected. What do they remind her of? Which one does she prefer? Imposing value.*

When I see an image like that I think of the north.

The sky is always grey.

The sea is very rough, it must be the ocean.

I am not sure if it is a holiday destination. There is quite a lot of traffic.

It looks familiar. Maybe I have been there before.

The other image is calmer.

It feels like a Mediterranean country.

I am not sure which one I prefer.

Both have their charm.

#### Scene 6 / Greek language

*The character is looking at the two landscapes. Images commented, compared, collected.*

*What do they remind her of? Which one does she prefer? Imposing value.*

Ένα σπίτι στην εξοχή.

Δεν μπορώ να καταλάβω που βρίσκεται.

Επικρατεί ηρεμία, μοιάζει αρκετά γαλήνιο.

Ίσως να είναι το καταφύγιο κάποιου.

Το χρώμα του χώματος κάνει την διαφορά και το μπλε του ουρανού.

Ωραία η θέα της θάλασσας αλλά πολύ βροχή και κρύο και γκριζος ουρανός.

Μάλλον ο βορράς είναι.

#### Scene 7 / English Language

*Looking at the film. Commenting on how it has been constructed.*

Landscapes filmed through a window, scrolling on the screen.

A voice over alternating from Greek to English.

That will be the beginning of the story.

Then you will use the past tense.

You will have to think of what you already know and the cultural and geographical specificity of what you are doing.

And then you will have created an idea of something.

#### Scene 8 / Greek language

*Looking at the film. Commenting on how it has been constructed. Exact translation from the English language.*

Τοπία κινηματογραφημένα μέσα από παράθυρα, διαδέχονται το ένα το άλλο στην οθόνη.

Η αφήγηση εναλλάσσεται από τα ελληνικά στα αγγλικά.

Αυτή είναι η αρχή της ιστορίας.

Μετά έρχεται ο παρελθόντας χρόνος.

Θα πρέπει να σκεφτείς αυτά που ήδη ξέρεις και την θέση στην οποία βρίσκεσαι.

Και τότε θα έχεις δημιουργήσει μια ιδέα ...



## **CREDITS**

### **Diego Garcia (2010)**

Directed by: Aikaterini Gegisian

Director of Photography: Mark MacEwen

Editing: Andy Moss

Made with the support of Chagos Refugee Group

Olivier Bancoult, Lisete Talate, Rita David

Funded by

Arts Council England

Contemporary Art Center of Thessaloniki (State Museum of Contemporary Art, Greece)

PARTage Residencies, Mauritius

Developed through Picture This' Small Wonders Scheme

### **Sevan Boys (2008)**

Direction, Production, Camera, Editing and Sound – Aikaterini Gegisian & Lizzie Calligas

### **Passengers (2007)**

Direction and Editing: Aikaterini Gegisian

Creative Advisor: Rowan Geddis

Production Manager: Yiorgos Mamoglou

Production Assistant: Stauvros Doudouris

Researchers: Sofia Dimitriadou, Anna Tepetidou

Funded by

1st Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art

Watershed Media Centre, Bristol

The film was produced in the International Workshop for Young Artists (May 2007) a Parallel Program of the 1st Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art: "Heterotopias"

### **A Ray of Sunshine (2008)**

### **The image unfolded (2007)**

### **10.34AM (2006)**

### **Tokyo Tonight (2003)**

### **the day that left (2002)**

Direction, Production, Camera, Editing and Sound – Aikaterini Gegisian

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The artist would like to thank the following people for their invaluable help, advice and support in the development of her work and in the making of this publication:

*Melina Amanatidou, Amalia Manolopoulou, Loukia Alavanou, Beth Alden, Eva Babalona, Rob Davies, Kiriaki Dimitiradou, Sofia Dimitriadou, Konstantinos Dagritzikos, Tio Dantsis, Yiorgos Divaris, Agapi and Yianna Gegisian, Elise Guedon, Mick Hartney, Arsen and Roupen Kalfayan, Yuli Karatsiki, Pelagia Katsaouni, Michalis Kyriakidis, Kostas Kostopoulos, Christos Lialios, Ella Bissett MacEwan, Mark MacEwan, Veronika Mahdessian, Pippa Martin, Elena & Anna Matzaridou, Andy Moss, Haris Pallas, Lisa Panting, Haroula Papageourgiou (D.E.I College, Thessaloniki), Colin Perry, Christina Petrinou, Vicki Politis, Ali Roche, Emilie Rowell, Eleni Saroglou, Christos Savvidis, Theodoris Sdoukos, Nick Schaefer, Yiorgos Skiannis, Melissa Tondeur, Maria Tsantsanoglou, Syrago Tsiara, Kostas Tsormpatzoglou*



This Catalogue was published in an edition of 1000 on the occasion of the exhibition 'Falling in Place', which was held at Elefsina Cultural Center "Leonidas Kanellopoulos", Elefsina, Greece, from 8 May to 5 June 2010. Photo Credits for 'The Image unfolded' Installation Shot: Haris Pallas. Text by Collin Perry. Text editing and translation Yuri Karatsiki, Michalis Kyriakidis and Vicki Politis. Printed by Giorgios Kostopoulos. Catalogue Design Aikaterini Gegisian

Works by Aikaterini Gegisian  
Texts © the authors

Published by Kalfayan Galleries

