

## NeMe: Iconoclastic Controversies

**Iconoclastic controversies:**  
A visual sociology of statues and  
commemoration sites in the southern  
regions of Cyprus  
an exhibition by Nico Carpentier

23 January - 6 February 2016  
Opening at NeMe Arts Centre: 23 January 2016, 8.30pm

Seminar at CUT Photography Lab Room, Heroes' square, Limassol  
**Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male**  
23 January 2016, 6pm

in collaboration with  
supported by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB - Belgium), Uppsala  
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Cyprus University of Technology

cut  
CCMC  
Cyprus Association for Historical Heritage and Research

On Saturday 23 January NeMe invites you to the exhibition **Iconoclastic Controversies: A visual sociology of statues and commemoration sites in the southern regions of Cyprus** by Nico Carpentier and to the accompanying seminar, **Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male**.

Το Σάββατο 23 Ιανουαρίου το NeMe σας προσκαλεί στην έκθεση **Iconoclastic Controversies: A visual sociology of statues and commemoration sites in the southern regions of Cyprus** του Nico Carpentier και το συνοδευτικό σεμινάριο, **Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male**.

### **Iconoclastic Controversies: A visual sociology of statues and commemoration sites in the southern regions of Cyprus**

The exhibition which will take place at the NeMe Arts Centre contains 20 photographs, accompanying text panels and eight listening posts of recorded interviews that investigate the monuments, landmarks and statues that are part of the everyday life of Greek Cypriots. *"The statues are vehicles of communication. They are vehicles of ideology and of information",* explains Nico Carpentier, *"and they allow us to reflect about past, present and future."*

The photographs are used to analyse how statues and commemoration sites in the Greek Cypriot community narrate and frame the Cyprus conflict, and how they

in many cases contain references to the "Self" and the "Other". They present a heroic "Self" to the "Own" community, or show the suffering of the "Self". But the exhibition also investigates how some (exceptional) sculptures undermine this traditional presentation of the "Self" and offer a different narrative of the conflict, and of the identities of the people involved.

The photographs were taken during Carpentier's stay on the island, from September of 2013 to September 2014. This ground-breaking project moves away from traditional academic texts to examine and analyse complicated social phenomena, such as those produced by the political situation in Cyprus. The idea behind this exhibition is that photographs can work just as effectively to communicate an academic analysis. Quite possibly they work even more intuitively.

## Seminar

On 23 January 2016, at 18:30, before the opening of the exhibition, NeMe has organised a seminar to stimulate further reflection. This seminar, **Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male** will be in English. It is open to the public and will take place at the Photography Lab Room at Heroes' square (at the corner of Pavlou Mela and Vasilou Makedonos, Limassol). Speakers are Vayia Karaiskou, Aysu Arsoy and Chrystalleni Loizidou. The moderator is Vicky Triga.

## Dates

- Exhibition: Iconoclastic Controversies: A visual sociology of statues and commemoration sites in the southern regions of Cyprus
  - Venue: NeMe Arts Centre, Limassol, Cyprus
  - Opening: 23/1/2016, 8.30pm
  - Duration: 23/1-6/2/2016
  - Opening Times
    - Tuesday-Friday: 17:30-20:30
    - Saturday: 10:00-13:00
- Seminar: Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male
  - Venue: CUT Photography Lab Room at Heroes' square, Limassol, Cyprus
  - Date/Time: 23/1/2016, 6pm-8pm

Η έκθεση στο NeMe Arts Centre αποτελείται από 20 φωτογραφίες, που συνοδεύονται από κείμενα και οκτώ σημεία ακρόασης μαγνητοφωνημένων συνεντεύξεων που ερευνούν τα μνημεία, τα σημεία αναφοράς και τα γλυπτά που αποτελούν μέρος της καθημερινής ζωής των Ελληνοκυπρίων. *"Τα γλυπτά είναι οχήματα επικοινωνίας. Πρόκειται για οχήματα ιδεολογίας και πληροφοριών"*, εξηγεί ο Nico Carpentier, *"και μας βοηθούν να σκεφτούμε το παρελθόν, το παρόν και το μέλλον."*

Οι φωτογραφίες χρησιμοποιούνται για την ανάλυση του τρόπου που τα γλυπτά στην Ελληνοκυπριακή κοινότητα αφηγούνται και πλαισιώνουν το Κυπριακό πρόβλημα, και πως σε πολλές περιπτώσεις περιέχουν αναφορές στον "Εαυτό" και στους "άλλους". Παρουσιάζουν ένα ηρωικό "Εαυτό" στην "δική" μας κοινότητα, ή δείχνουν τον πόνο του "Εαυτού". Όμως, η έκθεση διερευνά επίσης το πώς μερικά (κατ' εξαίρεση) γλυπτά υπονομεύουν αυτήν την παραδοσιακή παρουσίαση του "Εαυτού" και προσφέρουν μια διαφορετική αφήγηση του προβλήματος, καθώς και την ταυτότητα των εμπλεκόμενων ατόμων.

Οι φωτογραφίες τραβήχτηκαν κατά τη διάρκεια της παραμονής του Carpentier στη Κύπρο, από τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2013 έως τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2014. Αυτή η πρωτοποριακή έρευνα απομακρύνεται από τα παραδοσιακά ακαδημαϊκά κείμενα για να εξετάσει και να αναλύσει περίπλοκα κοινωνικά φαινόμενα, όπως αυτά που παράγονται από την πολιτική κατάσταση στην Κύπρο. Η ιδέα πίσω από αυτήν την έκθεση είναι ότι οι φωτογραφίες μπορεί να λειτουργήσουν εξίσου αποτελεσματικά στη επικοινωνία της ακαδημαϊκής ανάλυσης. Πολύ πιθανόν να λειτουργήσει ακόμη πιο διαισθητικά.

## Ημερίδα

Στις 23 Ιανουαρίου 2016 στις 18:30, πριν από την έναρξη της έκθεσης, το NeMe έχει οργανώσει ένα σεμινάριο με τίτλο **Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male**. Είναι ανοικτή για το κοινό και θα πραγματοποιηθεί στο Εργαστήριο φωτογραφίας του ΤΕΠΑΚ στην πλατεία Ηρώων (γωνία Παύλου Μελά και Βασιλείου Μακεδόνος, Λεμεσός). Ομιλητές είναι Βάγια Καραϊσκού, Aysu Arsoy και Χρυσταλλένη Λοϊζίδου και συντονιστή τη Βίκυ Τρίγκα.

## Ημερομηνίες

- Έκθεση: Iconoclastic Controversies: A visual sociology of statues and commemoration sites in the southern regions of Cyprus
  - Τόπος: NeMe Arts Centre, Λεμεσός, Κύπρος
  - Εγκαίνια: 23/1/2016, 20:30
  - Διάρκεια: 23/1-6/2/2016
  - Ώρες λειτουργίας
    - Τρίτη-Παρασκευή: 17:30-20:30
    - Σάββατο: 10:00-13:00
- Ημερίδα: Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male
  - Τόπος: Εργαστήριο φωτογραφίας του ΤΕΠΑΚ στην πλατεία Ηρώων (γωνία Παύλου Μελά και Βασιλείου Μακεδόνος, Λεμεσός)
  - Ημερομηνία/Ωρα: 23/1 18:00 – 20:30

## Seminar: Monuments and Memorials as rhetoric / Objectivity as male

At Cyprus University of Technology Photography Lab Room situated in Heroes' square, Limassol, Cyprus

23/1/2016, 6pm-8pm

*"Memories are not ready-made reflections of the past, but eclectic, selective reconstructions based on subsequent actions and perceptions and on ever-changing codes by which we delineate, symbolise, and classify the world around us."* (David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*; Cambridge University press, 1985, p. 210.)

The recent renewed interest in what may be seen as augmenting a Cypriot collective memory through examining our public history is fed by the desire to improve the relations between the two main communities in Cyprus. Negotiation and (possible) reconciliation about a shared past, in combination with education, then become significant tools to turn this desire into a cultural reality.

Understanding the loaded narratives of public monuments and memorials, since mainly all are commissioned by political parties in power and not private individuals, is a fundamental area for analysis and reflection. It is worth noting that commemorating heroes of past conflict means privileging some versions of history and discounting others. As such, memorials and monuments are a means of forgetting as well as remembering.

Art historian and critic Arthur Danto states a relevant clarification that the term 'monument' signifies celebration, positive remembrance, and the eternal present, while the term 'memorial' denotes the sacred, mourning, and the finality of the past. Danto's definition together with the 80's feminist slogan: Objectivity is male subjectivity frame the seminar's discussion about the dominant ideas on patriotism, heroism, service and sacrifice. In nearly all cases, the masculine interpretation becomes the voice of our idea of history because patriarchy had the means to create this visual legacy of public commemoration. Traditional commemorative representational memorials, using socially unconnected modernist formalism, promote a rhetoric which is a synthetic version of a past reality. They are carefully crafted to promote a heroic translation of events and are equally imbued with a subtext expressing not the imitation of actual reality but a desired reality or political outcome fraught with historical contingency.

Nietzsche in his *"On the Utility and Liability of History for Life"* states that history inscribed in the physicality of monuments represents "a belief in the coherence and continuity of what is great in all ages, it is a protest against the change of generations and against transitoriness". History, of course, and especially very recent history in our immediate region, has proved that the concepts of continuity and coherence of place or ideals have been replaced with a forceful scale of insecurity and transitoriness.

- Speakers: Vayia Karaïskou, Aysu Arsoy and Chrystalleni Loizidou.
- Moderator: Vicky Triga

## **Thanks**

Yiannis Christidis, Vaia Doudaki and Fatma Nazli Köksal