

Athens, 23 February 2017

Press Release

“Back to basics: Text”

Curator: **Artemis Potamianou**

Artists: **Zavier Ellis, Guerrilla Girls, Joseph Kosuth, Kostas Bassanos, Yoko Ono, Giorgos Papadatos, Nina Papaconstantinou, Artemis Potamianou, Marios Spiliopoulos, Mark Titchner, Alexandros Psychoulis.**

The **ENIA Gallery** presents on **Friday, 31 March 2017** the **group exhibition “Back to basics: Text”, curated by Artemis Potamianou.**

As part of the *Back to Basics* series of exhibitions on some fundamental themes and elements of the artistic practice, the exhibition ***Back to Basics: Text*** aims to explore the objectives behind the artists’ visual use of text and the methods of approaching it.

The written word has been part of visual art since the beginning of art history. Excerpts from texts have been used in artworks in Ancient Greece, Byzantium and the Renaissance, but always in a secondary, auxiliary, supplementary role as aids to resolving potentially unclear points. In these pieces the written word is never a visual work in itself.

Already since the 1st century AD Horace had equated the importance of poetry and painting with the famous phrase “Ut Pictura Poesis”, which has been repeated by many artists over the centuries.

The visual use of texts was established mainly in the early 20th century by artists from many avant-garde movements of modernism, as typified by René Magritte’s *The Treachery of Images* where the statement “*Ceci n’est pas une pipe*” is used as the medium for a surrealist subversion. In the case of Dada artists the written word serves an anti-artistic, anti-aesthetic logic, until it finally acquires a primary role in the late ’60s with conceptual art, where an accompanying image is no longer deemed necessary.

Since 1960 numerous artists have made use of texts in their work, such as Christopher Wool, Barbara Kruger, Douglas Huebler, Jenny Holzer, Lorna Simpson, Robert Indiana, Ed Ruscha and many others. Their research explores and challenges the limits of the text’s logical flow, meaning,

linguistic and structural elements. The texts may be purpose-made or borrowed from pop culture and the social media, and may be used on their own or combined with images or other texts.

The two dimensions of the text are either retained in the artwork or expanded, when the work is three-dimensional or explores its relationship to the space through site-specific renderings.

Naturally, the exhibition ***Back to Basics: Text*** is not able - and does not aspire - to present all aspects of the use of the written word in the history of visual art. The quest is to establish a dialogue among the works of the participants and pose questions about the purpose of introducing text into the production of artworks and its role in them.

The artist participating in the exhibition are: **Zavier Ellis, Guerrilla Girls, Joseph Kosuth, Kostas Bassanos, Yoko Ono, Giorgos Papadatos, Nina Papaconstantinou, Artemis Potamianou, Marios Spiliopoulos, Mark Titchner, Alexandros Psychoulis.**

Admission to the exhibition is free

Official opening: Friday, 31 March 2017 at 20:00

Duration: 31 March to 28 July 2017

Opening hours: Tuesday – Wednesday – Thursday 11:00 – 19:00
Friday 11:00 – 20:00
Saturday 11:00 – 16:00