

# freymond- guth Ltd. fine ARTS

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Wed - Sat 14 - 18hrs  
Saturday 12 - 17hrs

Or by appointment

## YORGOS SAPOUNTZIS „Sculptures and Mirrors“

21 January - 19 February 2011  
Opening Thursday, 20 January, 1800hrs

Performance, „The Door The Gates,“ Wednesday 26 January 2011, 20.30hrs,  
Kunsthau Zürich, in collaboration with Mirjam Varadinis, curator for contemporary art  
at Kunsthau Zürich

We are very pleased to announce the first solo exhibition of Yorgos Sapountzis (\*1976, Athens, lives in Berlin) in Switzerland, after the presentation of his work *The Heritage of its Architecture* at the gallery in last year's film series *One Film, One Week*. The scrutiny of sculpture and the appearance of the body in space are sources of the videos, performances and sculptures of Yorgos Sapountzis.

### Order and Chaos

Sapountzis' interest in experimenting with sculpture and its impact and signification in public space roots perhaps in the richness of antique monuments in his native city of Athens. The constant confrontation with his cultural heritage also accompanies in his video-installation that he created for his nomination of the 2009 DESTE Prize at the Athens Museum of Cycladic Arts. For the video *The Heritage of its Architecture* (2009) Yorgos Sapountzis had himself filmed at night inside the museum by surveillance cameras while constructing a new installation of colored cloths and aluminum tubes between the vitrines with pre-historic sculptures. Sapountzis mixed the video of the surveillance cameras with his own recordings: quickly altering perspectives blend with the reflections of cycladic vases and figures in the glass of the vitrines and the color plains of the cloths. Hard electro sound amplifies the confusions of the view.

For the presentation of the film Sapountzis built a tent-like construction of colorful cloths and projected the video onto two walls of fabric. Doing so, the nightly performance, the video and the installation aggregate to a single complex system in which forms repeat and reformat, pre-historic objects meet the formal vocabulary of modernism. This might appear chaotic at first glance. But through almost choreographed movements Sapountzis creates new combinations and motion sequences: "I create chaos to create order." In fact, Sapountzis' diverse bodies of works are interconnected, they condition one another and evolve: the installations are formed through their function as displays for the video projection or remain as a relict of a performance and the videos again are recordings of the performances. Also, the colorful, handmade posters made of painted newspapers that he embroiders with letters serve as announcements of a performance or an exhibition.

### Techné

In the making of all of Sapountzis' works handcraft is a distinctive factor. Sapountzis applies material that he can work, install and transport himself. The originally Greek term of τέχνη (techné) [tékh'ne:] - the ability, artifice, craft - does not distinguish between today's categories of art and technique. In Sapountzis' works the technique the medium is often constitutive of the form: e.g. in the use of surveillance or web cameras for the recording of his performances at night, in the construction of projection screens for the videos, in the electronic music that accompanies his films (and performances). Yorgos Sapountzis has also developed a group of aluminum-paper sculptures from the form of bicycle frames. For all his works he repeatedly uses the same materials: colored cloths, aluminum or elastic plastic tubes, adhesive tape, string, newspaper. All these materials share certain qualities: they are light, flexible, ductile, their volumes can be reduced, they are easily transportable. Materials that can be moved with the human body - fabrics and ribbons - used for example by gymnasts for their exercises.

### Eternity and Lightness

Accordingly the materials in a certain way become determinant of the structure of the performances: "When I effect a performance, there are always several elements- eg the materials - that are clearly defined from the beginning. Between those I try to react, make contact with the audience and use the creativity of the moment." The performances of Yorgos Sapountzis resonate with the idea of a dance, a procession, a poem: a dance because the movements are subject to rhythm, repetition, constitution of form, steps, luffing, nodding - going back and forth. A procession because the viewers are included: newspaper hats, colored gowns or aluminum tubes are distributed, as in the performance *The Distances Between Teeth and Street* that Isabella Bortolozzi Gallery, Berlin presented 2010. For *Field Trip*, 2010 - an exhibition in the form of a promenade through the Humboldt

University Berlin, Sapountzis handed out branches and limbs of trees so that the procession moved like a wandering forest through the halls, aisles and corridors of the university. Of a poem as the performances bundle an immense concentration, as well as the condensation and the tension that arises from the voidage.

In the spontaneous appropriations and occupancy of the public space and in the undermining of existing structures and authorities, one can find parallels to certain forms of streetart may be seen: e.g. the way skateboarders, breakdancers or traceurs illegally use public space (and it's monuments) for their jumps, turns and parkours.

Sapountzis achieves to create a tension, a connection between viewer and performer and the public space. With his performances he opens up a new perspective on common spaces and environments. Everyday movements and noises are noticed suddenly more delicately, spaces are redefined: "In my performances I'm always concerned with building something, constructing something. It is like the dance of the sculptor around his work of art."  
-Christiane Rekade

for more information and images please contact the gallery at  
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Extract from the text „Yorgos Sapountzis: The Sculptor's Dance“ by Christiane Rekade, which is published in full length in Kunstbulletin 1/2, 2011. [www.kunstbulletin.ch](http://www.kunstbulletin.ch)  
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Translated from German by Lawrence Holland Guernsey.

#### **Yorgos Sapountzis: selected exhibitions and projects:**

2011: Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin DE (s), Louisiana Museum, Kopenhagen DK (g), Fondazione Maurizio Morra Greco, Naples, IT (r, p), Kunstraum Innsbruck, AT (p),

2010: Loraini Alimantiri Gazonrouge, Athens, GR (s), Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, ES, (s), Fondo Mole Vanvitelliana, Ancona, IT (g), Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster DE, (g) Loraini Alimantiri Gazonrouge, Athens, GR (s),

2009 Hermes und der Pfau, Stuttgart, DE (s), Kunstverein Arnsberg DE, (g), Temporäre Kunsthalle Berlin DE (g), Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin DE (g), DESTÉ Foundation, at the Museum of Cycladic Art Athens GR (g). Margari Foundation / Beltsios Collection, Amfilohia GR (g) Contour 2009, Mechelen, Brussels BE (g)

2008: ART BASEL 2008, STATEMENTS with Loraini Alimantiri Gazonrouge, Basel CH, (s), Künstlerhaus Stuttgart DE (g), Mariano Pichler Collection, Micamoca, Berlin DE (g, p), National Theatre, Athens GR (p),

2007: National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens GR (g), ARGOS, Brussels BE, (g), 1st Athens Biennale GR (g), Klingental, Basel CH, (g, p),

2006: Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin, DE (s), Magazzino d'arte, Rome IT (g), Kunstverein Heidelberg DE (g) Nikos Alexiou Collection, Mac Gallery, XXXII International Festival Sarajevo, Sarajevo BIH (g)

s=solo, g= group, p= performance, r=residency