

Gulf's Settlers

In a discreet yet discernible way, Maria Andrikopoulou, Thalia Gatzouli, Konstantina Dounia, and Julia Charalampous communicate people's attention during their attempt to sense the historical and architectural environment in Alatzá Imaret, which they explore step by step.

The fact that each "Gulf Settler's" exhibit has a substantial and researching character is just partly why this exhibition stands out in this context. Their collective achievement in finding their own reasons of being extra muros- that is, way out of academic or other institutions- complements the reasons why the exhibition stands out; let alone that this achievement happens in the rare monument Alatzá Imaret and the historical, architectural and social context of the city where it belongs.

Is it a place of prayer, teaching, or harvesting? Is it a place where the drama of material culture takes place or even the drama of waiting in a queue for some distributed food? Or is it a religious, cosmic, habitual ritual space?

Their exhibition turns the space into these concepts altogether and fills it with echoes; memory echoes. Memories concerning both the past and the present, bound though to front the future.

In Maria's Andrikopoulou case, the remembrance of nature turns into memory and a setting of the most primitive element. The elements of Earth and Fire infiltrate into Alatzá Imaret, where the deepest culture and script roots lay. Thalia Gatzouli reminds the biological perspective of human body, while on the other hand she recalls poetically a human state in anguish; the body itself is in anguish – though it is no longer present- anticipating the order and even some justice patiently. Konstantina's Dounia art recalls human body, too. However, this time the body is shredded instead of a whole, artificial instead of "natural", misshapen instead of "regular", organic and inorganic at the same time. Julia Charalambous represents the constant quest of the material world, and the possibilities that its destruction "born"; this becomes the remembrance of a dramatic version of painting and/or sculpture.

Regarding that the anatomy of different human states met at Alatzá Imaret is the common context connecting the artistic research of four young artists, the roads unfolding vary. The road goes back to the primitive, biological forces that the Earth, Nature and Bodies have; and up to the poetic force of material and experience- personal, social, and cultural. Their medium consists of the interest in the quality of the materials, the constructive capabilities, and the abstract expression of an artistic language.

Somebody could argue that their exhibits have always been there. Well, that is not true. But they do search for an echo. They enter the space like a vibrating chord. Meanwhile, they carry a sensation that bears this beat along with the shed light, the tones, and the traces in time, the human and artistic empathy; in order to return it already experienced to the visitor throughout this diffusion and these echoes.

Their gathering adds up to the historical value that the monument has. Simultaneously, it captures the anguish for a contemporary expressive force in art, in the territory of an already experienced time.

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