

REGARDING NICOLAS CALAS

Regarding Nicolas Calas – An International Symposium Athens School of Fine Arts, 21-22 October 2016

ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

Spylios Argyropoulos: Nicolas Calas and the poetic 'in-between'

In poetry, Nicolas Calas traversed avant-garde styles, before arriving at a unique post-surrealistic, ironic mode, which remains an epitome of modernity. The beginnings of Calas' poetry lie in Futurism and Expressionism, while Greek poets were stuck in the nineteenth-century. Study and time led him to surrealism and he moved to France. There, he joined Breton and the surrealists, starting his international publishing career with a theoretical book on surrealism. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Calas moves, via Lisbon, to New York. He arrives shortly before Breton and a group of Surrealists. Activity is thus transferred to the new world, but soon this process shows signs of regression, what with the return of the surrealists to Europe at the end of the war, and the reaction of local theorists who supported American artists instead. But Calas stayed behind. Over the ensuing years, he submerged himself in American culture while remembering the lessons from Europe. The talk focuses on the post-war developments in his poetry, which led to a unique style that finally reached Greece again in his last years.

Spylios Argyropoulos studied medicine at the University of Athens. Following national service, he left for the UK, where he worked and studied for twenty years, culminating in a PhD and membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He worked in clinical and academic posts and was active in research, sub-specialising in psychopharmacology. Back in Greece, he had eight folios and volumes of poetry published, along with essays in literary magazines. By happy coincidence, he also unearthed unpublished material (poems, letters, a lengthy interview etc.) of Calas, and co-edited two books which aimed to complete the picture of the poetic development of Calas over 50 years. Following a rare autoimmune disease, he retired 4 years ago, remaining active as possible, regarding Calas.

Manolis Arkolakis: Nicolas Calas and Film Theory

From January 1931 to February 1932, four articles on cinema were published in Athenian journals, signed under the name 'M. Spieros'. These texts by Calas come to light at a time when there was a shift in the predominantly negative attitude of Greek intellectuals towards cinema, while, at the same time, Greek cinematic production was on the rise, despite grave technical and aesthetic problems. The watershed event of the time was the technological development of sound. These early texts appear prior to Calas's endorsement of Freudian psychoanalysis and his turn to surrealism, when he takes an interest in the films and theoretical approach of the Soviet avant-garde through a Marxist point of view. Critics have argued that Calas's reception of the Soviet avant-garde was based on French translations of texts by Soviet filmmakers. Yet despite Calas's numerous references to Soviet filmmakers, the only reference to a theoretical work about cinema is to the first book by Paul Rotha, *The Film Till Now: A Survey of the Cinema* (London, 1930). This paper explores the views of Calas and Rotha on cinema, and examines whether and to what extent Calas's views contributed to the theoretical debate on cinema among Greek intellectuals.

Manolis Arkolakis is Adjunct Lecturer in European History at the Hellenic Open University. He holds a PhD on the history of early Greek cinema. Amongst his most recent publications are: "Historiography and Early Greek Cinema" (forthcoming in Greek in a volume on Greek Cinema), and "Entertainment and Leisure in Athens at the Time of Modernity" forthcoming in *Time and Timekeeping in the Balkans*.

Apostolis Artinos: Morphic Affections

In *Foyers d'incendie*, Calas makes frequent references to psychoanalytic theory. His references to psychoanalysis however are limited to a conventional reading of Freudian thought, while his references to Lacan are very few. Suspicious of Freud's psychological fixations but also of the "metapsychological ambitions of psychoanalysis," which open it up to the field of speech, he fails to identify certain critical conceptual distinctions and reasonings of difference that deconstruct established beliefs like the objectivity of the present, of meaning, as well as of egoic consciousness. Calas searches for a new objectivity, or for the recovery of the 'Reality' of the work when the Real is identified in its indisposed and eventual character, in the lack of an object-like perspective; a weakness that also integrates his work into the climate of his era. *Foyers*, to which I principally refer here is neither psychoanalytic, nor surrealist theory; it is an original and idiosyncratic work that belongs solely and exclusively to its creator.

Apostolis Artinos is a writer and independent curator of contemporary art. Together with the visual artist Kostas Christopoulos, he established the art platform, *The symptom projects*, and organised five group exhibitions in the cycle 'The symptom 01 – 05' and two exclusively photographic exhibitions in the cycle 'esoptron 01 – 02'. Artinos has curated many shows in Greece, notably: *The thorn of beauty* (2012), *The transparency of sex* (2013), *Lurking nature* (2013), *The heterotopia of the hut* (2014). He writes frequently for the Athenian press and has published *Vita contemplativa* (1998), *Dora's letters* (2011), *The heterotopia of the hut* (2014), *The Lacan event* (2014). He blogs at: www.leximata.blogspot.gr

Hara Avlonitou: Calas's Art Collection: a Critical Presentation

This paper examines the diverse and often heterogeneous visual trajectories indicated by the 70 works of art in Calas's collection (now held by the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Copenhagen). Moving within Surrealism and Pop Art, Lyrical Abstraction and Abstract Expressionism, Conceptual Art, Geometric Abstraction, or outside of them, the creators of the works are constantly experimenting with art, transforming or recreating reality. By focusing on the works themselves, as signs of a constantly new view of the world, in association with the ideas of the artists who created them, and intersecting with Calas's own research interests, this paper investigates whether these works are eventually bound together by a deeper link that consolidates and strengthens the collection as a whole.

Hara Avlonitou studied Archaeology and Art History at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and holds a Master's degree in the History of Art from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Ioannina, researching art collecting. She has participated in the organisation of exhibitions of the Archaeological Receipts Fund, and of the Ministry of Culture, in Greece and in Italy and has edited catalogues. She took part in the P.I.S.A Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Heritage Project of European Commission. She has worked as the scientific supervisor of a group of partners in charge of the documentation and organisation of the collections of the State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki.

Mary Ann Caws is Distinguished Professor of Comparative Literature, English, and French at the Graduate School of the City University of New York, and on the faculty of the Women's Studies and Film Certificate Programs. Professor Caws was co-Director of the Henri Peyre French Institute from 1980 to 2002. She is an Officer of the Palmes Académiques (awarded by the French Minister of Education) and a former Trustee of the Alliance Française (Washington, D.C.). Her many areas of interest in twentieth-century avant-garde literature and art include Surrealism, poets René Char and André Breton, Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury group, and artists Robert Motherwell, Joseph Cornell, and Pablo Picasso. Conceptually, one of her primary themes has been the relationship between image and text. She has widely translated from the French and published widely in the fields of modernism, surrealism, word and image relations, French and American art, Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group.

Etienne Charrière: On Transnational Avant-Gardes: Nicolas Calas and Portugal

Writing from New York in 1942, Nicolas Calas states that "in Portugal, as in most European states economically turned into semi-colonies, cultural life has shrunk to a spiritual regionalism." Despite this state of affairs, Calas believes in the enduring power of images and notes that "some of the ones [he] came across in Portugal convinced [him] that, in deeply hidden regions of the Portuguese soul, life ... only awaits a change in social conditions to manifest itself." Calas's stay in the Portuguese capital has received relatively little attention, yet, in spite of its relative brevity, it can be read as a pivotal moment in that it constituted an intermediary stage between his activities as a European surrealist in the 1930s and his later production as a US-based art critic and theoretician. In *Confound the Wise* (1942), Calas's impressions of Portugal's monuments sparked his interest in the Baroque, as both an aesthetic and a mode of thinking and creating. Calas also encountered the avant-garde circles of Lisbon at a time when a new literary and artistic modernity struggled to make its voice heard in the repressive context of the Salazarian regime. Particular attention will be paid to Calas's friendship with Portuguese surrealist author and artist Antonio Pedro who, shortly after Calas, would leave Europe for the Americas (in his case, Brazil) and establish durable contacts with the local avant-garde. By analysing Pedro's 1942 surrealist text "Apenas uma narrativa" against the backdrop of Calas's own output from the same period this paper asks whether a comparative study of the trajectories of two authors who came of age at opposite ends of the European cultural "periphery" before becoming part of a transnational network, might help us rethink the mechanisms at play in the internationalisation of the avant-gardes in the middle of the twentieth century and challenge entrenched notions of "centrality" and "marginality."

Etienne Charrière holds a BA and MA in Modern Greek Studies, French, and Armenian Studies at the University of Geneva (Switzerland). He is a Ph.D candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan. During 2016-17, he is a resident research fellow at the Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations in Istanbul. He works on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Greek, Armenian, Turkish, French, and Portuguese literatures.

Alexandra Deligiorgi: Nicolas Calas's Dialogue with Wittgenstein

In his attempt to deepen his aesthetic prism and broaden his perspective on poetry and the visual arts, Calas never ceased to engage in a fruitful dialogue with artists, theoreticians and philosophers. This paper discusses Calas's reconsideration of artistic language through Wittgenstein's prism imposing limits on language, while Surrealism seemed to sweep them away. However, Calas clarifies that he turns to the second period of Wittgenstein's thought, referring to one's own reality, in opposition to the reality of symbolic logic that unfolds through chains of metaphors and metonymies. In "Games," "Reading Arakawa," "Art Intervenes-Anti-Art Interrupts," and "Freedom, Love, and Poetry," Calas focuses on Wittgenstein's rejection of aesthetics both as a field of experimental psychology and as an ideal language whose conditions and proposals would "reveal to us without ambivalence the logical form of the data they refer to." By seeing art, in anti-structuralist and anti-linguistic terms, as "the cultivated man's book of revelations," Calas reflects on the possibility of rethinking objective, expressionist and pragmatic aesthetic theories in terms of verbal games of metaphysical and moral significance whose pragmatic rules are still operative. Calas's idea of art as a game does not contradict his conception of the artwork as the result of the artist's struggle to fulfil his desire against the obstacles raised both by social and psychical structures.

Alexandra Deligiorgi is Emerita Professor of Philosophy at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She was awarded the national prize for essay in 1998 for *Α-οστων ήμαρ [Hanoston emar]*, and the Nikos Themelis prize for her novel *Tender Companion* in 2012. She has published *Androgys* (1980), two collections of short stories, *The Voices* (1982), and *One's own Life* (2008), and the novels *Golden Moon* (1986), *Stories of a minimal age* (1991), *Women or Dark Matter* (2004) and *Homeless* (2014). Her literary work was the subject of a PhD thesis that was published in German (M. Prinzing, *Mythen, Metaphoren und Metamorphosen*, ed. Verlag, J.B.Metzler, 1997). Her work has been translated and included in German and Dutch anthologies of Greek Literature and one of her novels was translated into Spanish.

Lilia Diamantopoulou: Mirrors of the Mind: Nicolas Calas through the Looking-Glass

In 1929 Nicolas Calas photographed himself in a wardrobe mirror, in a room in Tinos with a hand-held camera (E/AIA L003.124). The camera is not visible at first sight, as Calas tries to 'hide' it, positioning it in front of his tie. This self-portrait can be compared to other modernist self-portraits of the time, especially the ones, where the camera is not visible but somehow hidden in the shadow (e.g. Lotte Jacobi, 'Autoportrait', 1937). As this paper will show, mirrors are a constant motif in Calas's poetry and prose. Of special interest is the connection between mirrors and translation, as, for example, in the correspondence with Williams Carlos Williams regarding the English translations of Calas's French poems 'Wrested from Mirrors', 'The Agony Among the Crowd', 'Narcissus in the Desert' and 'To Regain the Day Again.' Williams borrows the metaphor of the mirror from Calas, thematising thereby the translator as the other, as a reflection of the original. By analysing the metaphor of the mirror, we may also reconsider the use of the Calas's pseudonyms as reflections of himself. I will conclude with a reconsideration of 'Mirrors of the Mind,' the portfolio of prints and objects by eleven artists (Vincenzo Agnetti, Arakawa, Joseph Beuys, Marcel Broodthaers, Richard Hamilton, Roy Lichtenstein, Bruce Nauman, Meret Oppenheim, Robert Rauschenberg, Man Ray, James Rosenquist) that Calas edited and wrote an introduction for, in 1975.

Lilia Diamantopoulou received her PhD in Comparative and Modern Greek Studies from the University of Munich and is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies of the University of Vienna. Her doctoral thesis examines Greek visual poetry and her actual research focuses on fake, forgery, and authorial mystification. She was a member of LMU Excellence and an Erasmus visiting professor at Masaryk University in Brno and the University of Patras. In 2011, she was awarded the Panagiotis Moullas prize of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation (MIET) for a study of a visual poem for King Otto I by Neofytos Doukas. In Spring 2017, she will be visiting research fellow at the Center of Hellenic Studies at Princeton University.

Joseph Dreiss:

A) A Greek Bearing Gifts: Nicolas Calas in Academia

"A Ph.D. is to the poet what the corpse is to the assassin." Nicolas Calas

Beginning with his appointment as an Associate Professor of Art in 1963 and continuing up until his retirement from teaching in 1975, Nicolas Calas taught a variety of courses in art history and criticism at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Rutherford, New Jersey. As the only full time art history professor at FDU, Calas taught courses from all periods of Western Art. As a major in the history of art at Fairleigh Dickinson University from 1969 until 1972, I took virtually my entire art history major with Nicolas Calas, who also served as mentor for my senior year individual study. Further, Calas's mentorship continued after I graduated, as I maintained a relationship with him during the 1970s and 1980s. While providing some information about the courses that Calas taught and their specific content, the real focus of this paper will be on the values that Calas promoted and the methodologies that he espoused in this academic setting. I will argue that as a Surrealist poet and art critic with a deep commitment to revolutionary social change, Calas used the platform of university teaching to champion values that were radically different from and significantly opposed to, those that were standard within academia. Further, I will demonstrate that due to his conception of the nature of art, the methodological approaches embodied in his teaching were fundamentally at odds with, and indeed served to undermine, the standard and accepted methods of mainstream academic art history and criticism.

B) Magic Icons: Nicolas Calas as Collector

“To establish communication with a picture in our day it is necessary to own it.” Nicolas Calas Calas’s involvement with the Parisian avant-garde during the 1930s and his later activities as apologist for Surrealism in America and as a prominent New York critic resulted in him establishing close relationships with many important artists of the mid 20th century. It is not surprising that many of these artists, perhaps to affirm and strengthen the rapport that they shared with him, presented Calas with gifts of their work. By the end of his life, Calas had amassed a substantial collection of artworks by prominent European and American artists including such major figures as Marcel Duchamp, Jasper Johns, Yves Tanguy, Arshile Gorky, Alex Katz, Larry Rivers, Joan Miro, James Rosenquist and Roberto Matta. Many of the works given to Calas were displayed in his New York apartment at 210 East 68th Street where I saw them when I visited him during the 1970s and 1980s. At the time of his death, the Calas collection, which at that time numbered 73 works in a variety of media, was left to the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk, Denmark where it resides today. This paper will present an overview of the Calas Collection with an emphasis on its most important holdings. It will also involve a discussion of the relationship between the works in the Calas collection and his published art criticism. Calas’s ownership of these works not only impacted his interpretation of the work of these artists but, more importantly, possessing these objects helped foster his radical theoretical claim that works of art are inherently magical in nature.

Joseph Dreiss is Professor of Art History and Co-Chair for Art History at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia where he teaches modern and contemporary art and contemporary architecture. Dreiss received a B.A. from Fairleigh Dickinson University (1972), an M.A. from Rutgers University (1974) and a Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Binghamton (1980). As an undergraduate art history major at the Fairleigh Dickinson University between 1969 and 1972, Dreiss took virtually his entire art history major with Nicolas Calas, who also supervised his senior individual study project. His association with Calas continued during semi-annual visits to New York during the 1970s and 1980s. His relationship with Calas is documented by a correspondence that is part of the Nicolas and Elena Calas Archive in The Nordic Library at Athens. As a staff writer for the New York based *Arts Magazine* between 1974 and 1983, he initially wrote a monthly column and later contributed on a periodic basis. Dreiss has also published exhibition reviews in the *Art Papers* and has written catalogue essays for numerous museum and gallery exhibitions. More recently, he has presented papers at conferences on the art of Leon Golub and Andy Goldsworthy and also on topics involving the relationship between neuroscience and art, especially with regard to the implications of neuroplasticity for our understanding of the transformative potential of aesthetic experience. Dreiss is the author of *Gari Melchers: His Works in the Belmont Collection*, University Press of Virginia (1984).

Leonidas Embiricos: Andreas Embiricos’ 1940 Prose Work ‘Ta Tektainomena’ as a Source Regarding his Friendship with Niki Kalamaris and its Historical Context.

This paper will analyse Andreas Embiricos’ prose work ‘Ta Tektainomena’ with particular emphasis on the extended section about Ivan: the name, among others, given by certain friends of his in Athens to Niki Kalamaris, later Nicolas Calas. This intense text is at once a hymn to Kalamaris, a summing up of a close friendship that was abruptly broken, and a letter that never reached its intended recipient. Although it was excluded for personal reasons from the collection *Writings, or Personal Mythology*, Embiricos tried to salvage it in the 1970s, altering the personal facts it contained, in order to preserve and secure, among other things, its message to Ivan. However, he did not succeed, and the text remained silent.

Leonidas Embiricos studied Philosophy and History in Paris at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS). He was previously employed at the Centre for Asia Minor Studies and is currently researching minority groups in contemporary Greece. Since 1980 he has been involved in the publication of Andreas Embiricos’s unpublished work of which he is the custodian.

Elena Hamalidi: Calas & Takis: art, science and “poetic truth” in the “age of contradiction”

This paper examines Calas' attitude toward the emerging convergence of art with science in certain art movements since the mid-1950s, through a reconsideration of his relationship with Takis (Vassilakis) and of the reception of the sculptor's work. In 1968, in his essay “Art in the age of risk”, and while Takis was pursuing his research at CAVS, MIT, Calas expressed his reservation toward the reduction of art in “structures”, in the stimulation of sensory perception and in the use of means of mechanical reproduction. In 1981, in a symposium organised by the Association for Contemporary Art in Athens, Calas defined art as “text” and saw parallels between an inventor and an artist. He, however, still distinguished between invention and art by applying the criterion of “creation”, namely, of “poetry.” On the other hand, since the early 1960s, Calas wrote numerous pieces of art criticism on Takis' work in art magazines and exhibition catalogues, included him in *Icons and Images of the Sixties* (1971), and wrote the first monograph on *Takis* (1984) in collaboration with Elena Calas. In the case of Takis, Calas seems to be interested in the poetic and metaphysical dimension of the sculptor's work and in gestures such as the withdrawal of his *Tele-Sculpture* from the famous MoMa, “Machine”, exhibition (1969), or the Dadaist origin of his *L'homme dans l'espace* (1960). The collaboration and exchange of ideas between Calas and Takis, as reflected also in their correspondence (1960-1983), held at the Calas Archive at the Nordic Library in Athens), will be related to the cultural and ideological context of the controversial decades of the 1960s and 1970s.

Elena Hamalidi is Assistant Professor at the Audio-Visual Department of the Ionian University. She is a graduate of the Department of History, Archaeology and History of Art at the University of Athens (B.A., Ph.D.) and of the Kunsthistorisches Institut, University of Cologne (M.A.). Her thesis focused on the *Reception of Modernism in Greek Art and Literary Magazines (1930-40)*. She has published on Greek art, especially on the reception of modernism and of the avant-gardes during the 1930s and the 1960 and 1970s, and on the representation of gender in Greek women's art. Her research interests also include video art as a *filmic art*. She has been co-editor of *Contemporary Greek Artists* (Athens, 2004), and has written a monograph on the Greek contemporary artist, Niki Kanagini (2009). She is a member of the European Network for Avant-garde and Modernism Studies (EAM) and a member of its steering committee.

Nicos Hadjinicolaou: Hitler as Leader of a New Romanticism

Based on the correspondence between Calas and Breton in January 1942, where the Greek poet and critic defends, although hesitantly, Hitler as a leading figure of a new Romanticism, I will present a few reflections concerning the attitude not only of Calas himself but of the surrealist movement as a whole regarding national-socialism and the war during the years 1941-1943.

Nicos Hadjinicolaou studied art history in Berlin, Freiburg, Munich, and Paris. He is Docteur des lettres of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, (1980). He is Emeritus Professor at the University of Crete where he taught for twenty years (1985-2005). He was visiting Associate Professor at UCLA, at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, at the University of Hamburg, at the University of Buenos Aires, the University of Cyprus, and the Humboldt University in Berlin. Among his most important publications are: *National Art and the Ideology of Avantgardism* (1982), *Meanings of an Image* (1994), *From Moliere to Goya* (2003), and the exhibition catalogues for *Domenicos Theotocopoulos* (1990), *El Greco in Italy and Italian Art* (1995), *Alexander the Great in European Art* (1997), *The Death of “Che” Guevara* (2002), *Greco and his workshop* (2007) *Valias Semertzides* (1911-1983) (2012), *Domenicos Theotocopoulos between Venice and Rome* (2014) και *Greco's circle of friends in Toledo* (2014). He has published numerous articles in international journals.

Lena Hoff: Why Not Pop Art?

Calas's work covered many different and diverse fields of interest and he has alternately been labelled a poet, art critic, surrealist and polemicist. Although not always a surrealist poet himself, there is no doubt that he was a surrealist champion and a tireless disseminator of surrealism. This is also why his involvement with Pop Art has baffled so many surrealists and scholars of surrealism. Indeed, for a period of time in the 1960s Calas was very much going against the grain of his fellow surrealists in his exploration of Pop Art, often in juxtaposition with surrealism. In a series of articles, he sought to define the differences (more than the similarities) of these apparently opposing art movements, focusing on the diverging questions of ethics, ambiguity, pictorial language and the artists' attitude to society. Although a self-proclaimed surrealist, Calas was also an advocate of Pop Art and befriended many of its most important artists – something that is reflected in his own art collection which includes works of art by Alex Katz, Allan D'Arcangelo, Jasper Johns, James Rosenquist and Jim Dine. In this paper I will explore the origins and reasons for Calas's interest in Pop Art as well as offer an explanation for his involvement with the movement from his point of view as a surrealist. I will also discuss his attempt to inspire a renewed surrealist movement incorporating ideas from Pop Art and why his fellow surrealist affiliates regarded it a highly contentious proposal.

Lena Hoff received her Ph.D in 2006 and her thesis "Surrealism and the Art of Criticism: The Cultural Politics of Nicolas Calas" won The Hellenic Foundation Award for best doctoral thesis. Her research has centred on Calas since 2000 when she organized the Calas Archives at the Danish Institute/Nordic Library at Athens. Apart from editing the political correspondence between Calas and Michalis Raptis in 2002 (Agra Publications, Athens), she has written many articles on Calas for journals such as the *Scandinavian Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* and the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*. Her *Nicolas Calas and the Challenge of Surrealism*, was published in 2014 (Museum Tusulanum Press, Copenhagen).

Nikolas Kakkoufa: From Athens to New York: Calas' transcontinental quest for identity

'Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself. I am large; I contain multitudes' writes Walt Whitman in "Song of Myself." These verses perfectly sum up Calas' poetic, critical and theoretical work. These 'contradictions' and his polemical attitude have led Greek critics especially, to either misunderstand or narrow down the importance of his work but also to neglect his key contribution in creating a new route of writing and understanding poetry and art in general – Nikitas Randos street. This paper aims at re-constructing Calas' identity by focusing on his poetic journey from Athens to New York in connection to his own theoretical approaches on the inter-relations between image(ry) and poetry. On the one hand, I will focus on his unexplored Greek affiliation and genealogies before and during the 1930s in regards to writing about the liminal Athenian urban locale, while he was still living in Athens, and on the other hand, I will focus on how his time in New York's art scene alters his thought and transforms his poetic tropes. My reading of the poems will also be informed by Simmel's notion of the stranger and by theoretical approaches on hybridity, mostly by Robertson (1992), Gilroy (1993), Dubois (1996) and Pieterse (2004).

Nikolas P. Kakkoufa holds a B.A. in Classical Studies and Philosophy (2008) and an M.A. in Modern Greek Philology (2010) from the University of Cyprus. In 2015 he was awarded the title of Doctor of Philosophy in Modern Greek Studies by King's College London with the thesis titled 'Athens – most foreign of capitals': urban estrangement in Greek poetry, 1912-1993. He is currently employed as a Special Scientist Staff at the University of Cyprus and as an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Nicosia. His research interests include the comparative examination of Modern Greek and English/American literature (mostly Oscar Wilde and Walt Whitman), the image of the city in literature and translation theory. He has given presentations on the work of Vitsenzo Kornaros, Oscar Wilde, Kostis Palamas, C.P. Cavafy, Kostas Karyotakis, Nicolas Calas, Lefteris Poullos, Michalis Ganas and others.

Dorothea Konteletzidou: From the Icon to the Image

Nicolas Calas defines the "now" in Robert Rauschenberg's work by evoking the destruction of the musical moment by John Cage, claiming that what was at work was an "immense happening," through which time emerged as an absolute "newness." Calas refers to the "now" as the arresting of time within time, the negation of a past and a future temporality, drawing attention to the modality of perception of the work of art. The work, for Calas, operates as a poetic image, primarily an image of the image itself.

Dorothea Konteletzidou holds a PhD in art theory from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She has curated numerous exhibitions, including "Personal and Collective Mythologies," Re-Culture 3 (Patras), Biennale 2 και 1 (Thessaloniki), Athina by Art, the Greek participation at the festival, Vidéo Art Bandits-Mages (Bourges, France), Nikos Kessanlis and Niki Lioudaki, in the context of the exhibition "Aspects of Greek Photography" at the Museum of Modern Art in Nice (France). She has participated in FORUM, Cultural Exchanges with Southeast Europe (2000, 2002) in Thessaloniki. She has worked with V. Fioravante in *Towards a New Anthropology: Art Criticism and a Critique of Globalisation*. Her book *Idea as Matter, Matter as Idea* was published in 2014, and her *Greek Artists in Paris from 1960 to 1980* was published by Epikentro. She has taught history of contemporary art since 1990 in the French Institute of Thessaloniki, at the Annex of St Etienne School of Fine Art, and at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She is a member of AICA, of the Macedonian Museum of Modern Art and of the Association of Greek Art Historians.

Irini Marinaki: On Hieronymus Bosch: A Ramble through the Garden of Earthly Delights

Nicolas Calas explored Hieronymus Bosch's work for more than four decades of his life. Until the end, Calas believed he had discovered the key texts to solve the enigmas of Bosch's magic icons and their complex system of pictorial puns, especially Bosch's masterpiece *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, created around 1500 and housed in the Museo del Prado in Madrid. My talk will be a first attempt to present the historical context of Calas's research along with his unpublished texts on Bosch's painting. It will also form a succinct introduction to my current re/search for his 'lost book' on the artist's work.

Irini Marinaki is an art historian. She studied photography at Focus (BA) in Athens and History of Art in London at Camberwell College of Arts (BA), Goldsmiths College (MA) and The London Consortium, University of London (PhD). Her PhD thesis entitled *Nicolas Calas: Critic and Curator* (2011) explored Calas's work as art critic, curator and lecturer. Amongst various cultural projects, Irini co-curated the interdisciplinary events *Take a deep Breath* (2007) and *Shortness: A very short conference and a very long dinner* (2009) both held at Tate Modern in London. She is currently researching Calas's unpublished texts on Hieronymus Bosch, preparing a book based on her thesis on Nicolas Calas (forthcoming Routledge 2017-18), co-curating the re-staging of the *Mirrors of the Mind (Multiples) exhibition by Nicolas Calas* at Zoumboulakis Gallery and a co-organiser of *Regarding Nicolas Calas*.

Savvas Michael: Nicolas Calas and Super-heroism: Beyond Socrates and Nietzsche

In 1938, on the eve of World War II, when "it was midnight in the century" as Victor Serge put it, Nicolas Calas published *Foyers d'Incendie*. It was a crucial contribution in an international debate among the most vanguard minds of the epoch: situated at the intersection of emancipatory experiences, against the backdrop of the October Revolution, the emergence of psychoanalysis, and surrealism. At the climax and conclusion of this work, Calas's "super-heroism" is set off against both the supremacy of reason personified by Socrates as well as against an anti-Socratic Nietzsche who, with his "superman," "reduces revolution to the level of palace coup." Nicolas Calas' super-heroism calls for a permanent revolution to achieve an unbounded life, "a life where every desire becomes Life."

Savvas Michael is the author of numerous books and articles on philosophy, political and social theory, art theory and literary theory. His more recent books are *Musica ex Nihilo- Essays on Poetry, Life, Death and Justice* (Agra, 2013) and *Homo Faber- Essays on Epoche, Poetry and Freedom* (Agra, 2016). His writings have been translated into English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian and Turkish. He teaches in the Cultural and Film Studies Department of the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Marilena Neokleous: Towards a freudo-marxist aesthetics? On Nicolas Calas's literary articles in the cultural magazines of the inter-war period in Greece

"I believe I was one of the first, at least in Greece, who showed interest in marxism and psychoanalysis, [...]. I find that marxism and psychoanalysis can be reconciled, they both have the same effect. Whether the cause is psychic unhappiness or economic misfortune, we observe that in a way they coincide" (quoted in M. Mike, 1984: 353). This retrospective view of Calas is in conflict with the critics' notion that Greece lacks a strong freudo-marxist current. This paper investigates this notion by examining the conjunctions between these two fields in Calas's literary criticism in texts that appeared in Greek magazines of the 1930s, predominantly of left persuasion (*Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι, Νέα Επιθέωρηση*) as well as in the issue of the literary magazine *Kyklos* devoted to C.P. Cavafy (1932). I will attempt to map the shift of Calas' thought from a pure marxist theory of literature to the articulation of a "freudo-marxist aesthetics" and how such freudo-marxist ideas such as the denial of the universality of the Oedipus complex or Calas' early anthropological interest in Malinowski's work are bridged with his views on individualism in art, the dismissal of realism and the affirmation of symbol and sublimation.

Marilena Neocleous is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Cyprus. In her dissertation, she examines the perception of psychoanalysis in literature and literary criticism of the interwar and the immediate post-war period in Greece. She was awarded a scholarship by the School Board of Nicosia Greek schools for the completion of her Bachelor studies at the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies in the University of Cyprus (2007). She obtained her MA in Modern Greek Studies from the same Department in 2010. For the past five years she has been teaching Greek language and literature in the English School in Nicosia. Her research interests include the relationship between Surrealism and psychoanalysis, freedomarxism and psychoanalytic readings of literature.

Effie Rentzou: "Nicolas Calas, the Avant-Garde, and the Rhetoric of Error

Nicolas Calas has written in Greek, French and English across different genres. His writing style in each language has provoked invariably intense criticism that often revolved around the question of accuracy and error: does he know the language he writes (including Greek)? This paper focuses on the relation between Calas's Greek and French texts, and specifically on a few later poems in which the language is deliberately and obsessively dismantled. In these poems Calas invents new words, uses and abuses puns, desiccates and reassembles French and Greek, disorients the reader through intentional errors. The ludic and playful element behind these experimentations is obvious. What I would like to discuss is the implications of this bilingual operation of demolishing and reassembling language. The attempt for a new poetic language echoes the (doomed) general avant-garde desire to create a new universal language of poetry. In the case of Calas, universality is encoded in a trans-lingual pleasure found in the mischief of error, which also activates the poetic potential of language (homophony, paronomasia, catachresis, etc.). The two languages, French and Greek, thus mirror each other and create a space in which the error becomes a creative principle of unity and an unlikely element of avant-garde universal community. I would like to suggest that Calas's process is one that is shared, in various degrees, among writers of the avant-garde (and experimental modernist writers), who often wrote in a language foreign to their mother tongue, which they recreate as an avant-garde idiom through the cultivation of a rhetoric of error.

Effie Rentzou is an Assistant Professor of French Literature in the Department of French and Italian at Princeton University. She studies avant-garde and modernist literature and art, and particularly poetics, the relation between image and text, social analysis of literature, politics and literature, and the internationalization of the avant-garde. Her first book, *Littérature malgré elle: Le surréalisme et la transformation du littéraire* (2010) examines the construction of literary phenomena in the production of an anti-literary movement, surrealism. She is currently working on a second book, tentatively titled *Concepts of the World: Avant-garde and the Idea of the International* that explores the conceptualization of the "world" in the work and activities of writers and artists within and around historical avant-garde movements – futurism, dada, and surrealism – during the period 1900-1940

Kyrillos Sarris was born in 1950 in Nicosia, Cyprus. From an early age he studied under the Cypriot painters, Lefteris Economou and Telemachus Kanthos (1963-1969). He then studied Medicine at the University of Athens (1970-1976), and practices professionally oncology in Athens ever since. His first solo exhibition *Notes* was held at *Nees Morfes* gallery, 1986). At the same time he began participating in exhibitions of Visual Poetry. His works are usually presented as installations containing 'notes' (sketches, drawings, handwritten notes), constructions and video. Some of the books he has edited in collaboration with Agra publications are: Greek translation of *Marcel Duchamp, Ingénieur du temps perdu. Entretiens avec Pierre Cabanne* [Belfont, 1967 (1989, 2008)], [English title: *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* (Viking, 1971 & Da Capo, 1989)], *Art in the age of risk and other essays* by Nicolas Calas [1967 (1997)], *Gallery Bernier* (1998), etc. He has given lectures at universities and has published essays on art. He has had solo exhibitions in Greece and Cyprus and has participated in several group exhibitions in Greece, Cyprus, France and Germany.

Nikos Sigalas: Embiricos-Calas: A Conversation about Violence

About 80 years ago, an intense conversation began to unfold in interwar Athens (and also between Athens and Paris, where they travelled from time to time) between two friends, surrealist poets and intellectuals, with an intense interest in psychoanalysis, in international developments, and in politics. At the centre of the conversation, continually avoided and continually returning, was the central crux of political philosophy: violence. The disagreement between Andreas Embiricos and Niki Kalamaris about violence, its nature and its relationship to politics, as it appears in their work and as the key question at the heart of their relationship, is the subject of this talk.

Nikos Sigalas is a historian and a researcher based at the French Institute of Anatolian Studies. He has published on nationalism, the formation of the state, and violence in the late Ottoman Empire and in nineteenth-century Greece, as well as on Modern Greek Literature. Publications include: «Des histoires des sultans à l'histoire de l'État. Une enquête sur le temps du pouvoir ottoman (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles)», in François Georgeon και Frédéric Hitzel (eds.), *Les Ottomans et le temps* (2012), *Andrea Empeirikos and the History of Greek Surrealism*, (2012), «Intention et contingence: L'historiographie de la violence sur les minorités dans son rapport avec le droit», (2011), «Demographic Engineering, Part II: On Intentionalism». «Devlet et État, Du glissement sémantique d'un ancien concept du pouvoir au début du XVIII^e siècle ottoman» (2007), «Historiography and History of practices of writing: A preface to the history of the formation of the concept of greekness in modern greek national historiography (2005) «Hellenism and Hellenization: The formation of the modern greek idea of Hellenism (2001).

Denys Zacharopoulos is a curator, art historian and scholar. He is currently the Artistic Director of the Municipal Gallery, the Museums and Collections of the City of Athens (OPANDA). He studied Music, History and Sociology of Culture, Art History and Aesthetics, in Aix en Provence and Paris under J. Cassou, G. Picon, L. Marin and R. Barthes. He has published numerous essays and catalogues. He has taught in Geneva and Grenoble, and was Professor at the Fine Arts Academy, Vienna, The Rijksacademy Amsterdam, the Aegean University in Lesbos, and the Athens School of Fine Arts. He is the curator of many shows in Europe and the USA, among which Documenta IX, Kassel as co-director by Jan Hoet; the French Pavilion, 48th Venice Biennale. He has created and directed the Domaine de Kerguéhennec in Brittany (1986-1999). General Inspector for Contemporary Art, France, 1999-2001. He assumes since 2006, the Artistic Direction of MMCA Thessaloniki.

Fay Zika: The contribution of Calas to the discussion on the sublime

In December 1948 *The Tiger's Eye* magazine published a special issue dedicated to the question "What is Sublime in Art?" to which Nicolas Calas was one of the contributors. My paper aims to outline and assess Calas' contribution to this discussion. First, I shall consider the role of the short-lived *The Tiger's Eye* magazine (1948-49) in the New York art scene. The main part of my presentation focuses on Calas' own contribution, entitled "Veronica and the Sphinx", which draws on philosophy, psychology, mythology, literature and visual art in order to carve out a place for the sublime "in the microcosmic world of the psyche". This in turn will be analyzed and assessed in the context of the other five contributions by artists and critics Kurt Seligmann, Robert Motherwell, A.D.B. Sylvester, Barnett B. Newman and John Stephan, who was also one of the magazine's editors. The last part of my paper examines the re-emergence of the concept of the sublime in relation to postwar American art, its influence on movements such as Abstract Expressionism and Land Art, its use as opposition to European artistic counterparts, as well as some of its more recent applications in the field of the visual arts.

Fay Zika is Assistant Professor in Philosophy and Theory of Art, Department of Theory and History of Art, Athens School of Fine Arts. Her research interests include colour theory, the senses and multimodal aesthetics, nature and gardens, identity and gender issues, new media and art, the relation between philosophy, science and art, the relation between aesthetics and ethics. She has published articles in Greek and international journals, collected volumes and exhibition catalogues. She is the editor of the collection of essays *Thought, Art, Life: The Aesthetic Philosophy of Alexander Nehamas* (2014), the exhibition catalogue *Absence* (2013) and the Greek translation of David Batchelor's *Chromophobia* (2013).