

REGARDING NICOLAS CALAS

Regarding Nicolas Calas Symposium CFP

Poet, critic, curator, and theoretician Nicolas Calas's interdisciplinary work spanned the shaping of modernism in Greece and beyond, the theoretical and political orientation of French Surrealism in the late 1930s, Surrealism's American interlude in the 1940s, and the directions of postwar art in the US. This symposium seeks to open Calas's theories and practice to a broader public and to invite proposals from scholars and creative artists to reflect upon the contexts of his theoretical, critical, poetic output, as well as his curatorial practice and involvement within the art world. Addressing this important yet for a time neglected or mythologised figure of the transcontinental avant-garde, this symposium aims to reappraise Calas and present new work on under-researched angles and hitherto unexplored connections with artists, critics, and scholars of his own time. The intention is to explore the important interfaces of Calas's writings on art, theory, his poetry, and politics and engage with him as a 'nomadic sage' moving across and within different cultures and critical idioms.

Parallel events will also comprise a series of workshops and an exhibition that will be hosted at the Athens School of Fine Arts. The workshops will invite practicing artists who work in different media to respond to the diverse contexts of Calas's work and engage with The Elena and Nicholas Calas archive that is held in The Nordic Library at Athens. The symposium will coincide with the opening of the exhibition that will present work produced in the workshops.

Possible lines of enquiry 'regarding Nicolas Calas' may include:

- The turbulent years of the 1930s in Greece and his interventions on modernist literature and art.
- Politics, poetry and psychoanalysis and their influence on Calas's thought and practice
- Surrealist affinities and Calas's eclecticism and unique voice
- The American art scene, McCarthyism, the Cold War and Calas's actions from the 1940s onwards
- The contexts of Abstract Expressionism, Calas's participation at The Club, his exchange with Barnett Newman and other up-and-coming artists of the European and American art scenes such as Jasper Johns, Marcel Broodthaers, Chryssa, Takis, George Brecht, Fluxus artists, John Cage et al.
- Calas's writings for art magazines such as *View*, *Tiger's Eye*, *Artforum*, *Art Magazine* et al.
- Calas's art lectures and his art history teaching in various Universities in the United States and Europe
- The influence of anthropology and his collaborations with Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict
- Calas's relation to Breton
- Calas's relation to Bataille and the *Collège de sociologie*
- Calas as collector, curator and art director of various galleries, including his close relationship with Peggy Guggenheim, Marian Goodman, Lawrence Alloway, and other gallerists, curators and collectors
- His unfinished magnum opus on Hieronymus Bosch
- Calas's rich correspondence and his personal collection and archives kept in Greece, the US and Denmark
- Calas across and against the grain: affiliations and genealogies from St Paul and Augustine to the Beats
- Calas and the archive