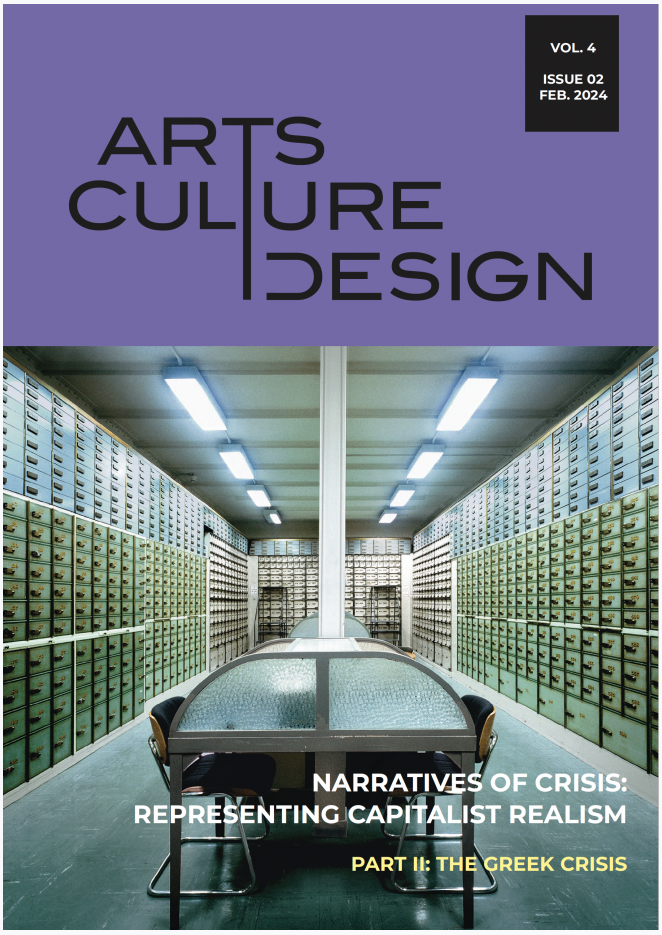
ePublishing

ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΤΕΚΜΗΡΙΩΣΗΣ
EKT
NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

Design/Arts/Culture

Vol 4, No 2 (2024)

NARRATIVES OF CRISIS: REPRESENTING CAPITALIST REALISM PART II: THE GREEK CRISIS



MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS AND THE DYNAMICS OF ARTISTS' DIALOGUE IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL CRISIS

Paraskevi Kertemelidou

doi: 10.12681/dac.34530

Copyright © 2024, Design/Arts/Culture

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0.

To cite this article:

Kertemelidou, P. (2024). MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS AND THE DYNAMICS OF ARTISTS' DIALOGUE IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL CRISIS . *Design/Arts/Culture*, *4*(2), 62–71. https://doi.org/10.12681/dac.34530

https://epublishing.ekt.gr | **e-Publisher:** EKT | **Downloaded at:** 16/08/2025 06:07:09

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS AND THE DYNAMICS OF ARTISTS' DIALOGUE IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL CRISIS

Paraskevi Kertemelidou
1. International Hellenic University
2. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Keywords:
Arte Povera
Museum
Cultural Representation
Social Crisis

ABSTRACT

In April 2012, the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens curated a solo exhibition featuring Jannis Kounellis, a radical artist associated with the Arte Povera movement. This exhibition served as a profound "response" to the economic and social crisis engulfing Greece during that period. Kounellis, renowned for his innovative approach, actively engaged with the museum's space by utilizing raw materials and commonplace objects. These objects, sourced from thrift stores in Athens, bore little resemblance to traditional works of art and were chosen deliberately to comment on the prevailing socio-economic conditions. Kounellis's exhibition revolved around the common person who had been profoundly affected by the social and economic turmoil, offering a poignant representation of his fears, losses, and aspirations.

PARASKEVI KERTEMELIDOU earned a B.A. (Hons) in Interior Architecture (University of West Attica) and a Diploma in Architecture (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki). She has a PgD/MA in Museology (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and a Phd (National Technical University of Athens). She is an assistant professor at the International Hellenic University, Department of Interior Architecture and visiting professor at the School of Fine Arts, Department of Film Studies, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She lectures in the MA "Education Sciences" and MA "Museology - Cultural Management" at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She lectures also in the MSc "Management of Cultural Units" at the Hellenic Open University and in the MA "Sustainable Design of Architectural Space" at the University of West Attica. She practices architecture and exhibition design. She has published two books and more than 100 articles and scholarly papers in the areas of Museology, Architecture and Industrial Design. Her research interests are in Cultural Management, Museology, Exhibition/Museum Design, and Material Culture with an emphasis on everyday industrial object.

1. INTRODUCTION

While the institution of the museum has its origins in the 18th century, the interaction between avant-garde artists and museums as spaces for exhibiting contemporary art took on a new and intricate dimension during the 20th century. This relationship evolved into something more complex and multifaceted, representing not just the dialogue artists engaged in with museums, but also reflecting the evolutionary trajectory of the museum itself. Museums began to play a pivotal role in the development of contemporary art, and their perception of the future transformed as they became integral to the production and dissemination of knowledge.

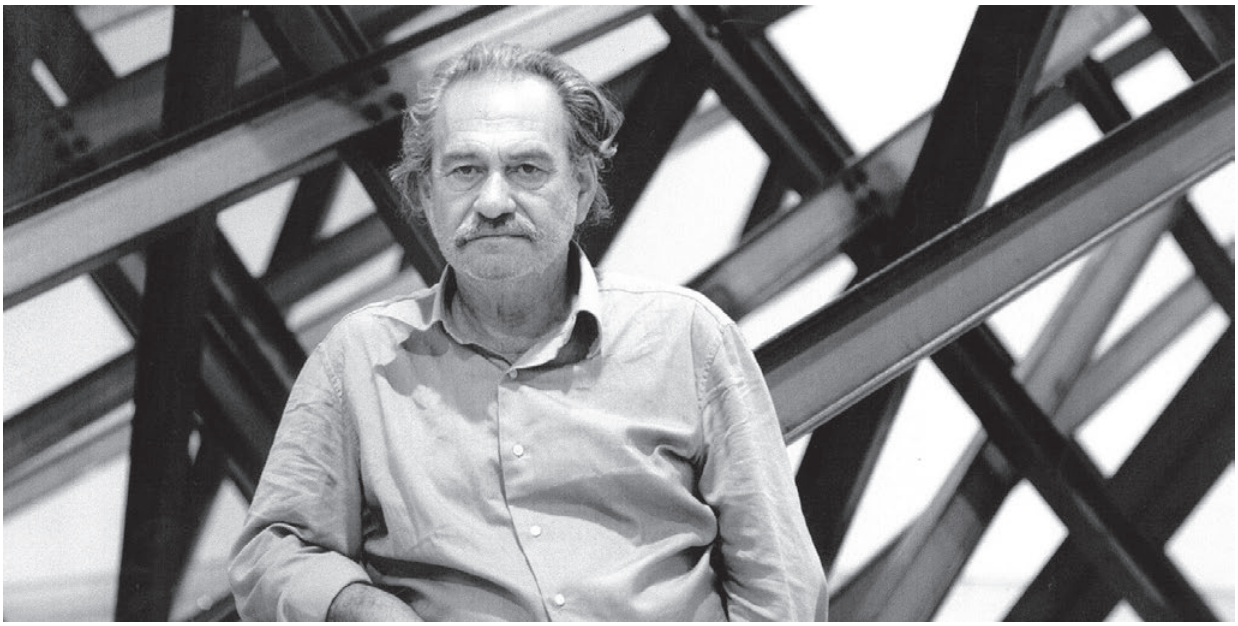


Figure 1: Jannis Kounellis, Athens, 2004. (photo © Manolis Baboussis / Adagp)

The museum, being a fundamentally public space shaped by its social and historical context, serves both a formative and a reflective role in societal relations. It mirrors the visitor's perception of the prevailing social circumstances, while the visitor, in turn, expects these perceptions to be validated by the museum. Consequently, in its pursuit to broaden its audience, the museum formulates policies designed to attract visitors, including those who were historically excluded from its premises due to economic and social barriers. The greater the emphasis on public engagement, the more "open" the exhibitions organized by the museum become, necessitating a closer alignment with the desires and expectations of its audience (Bounia, 2006: 161). Furthermore, artists, moving beyond the idealized neutrality of the traditional white interior space or "white cube," engage with the museum by actively intervening in and transforming its exhibition spaces. They introduce contemporary issues related to wealth, privilege, and societal dynamics through their subject matter and artistic techniques. This dynamic process results in artworks, like other exhibits, becoming objects with historical specificity and intrinsic exhibition value.

The Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens, under the leadership of its president Sandra Marinopoulou, embarked on a mission to curate a politically-themed exhibition. To achieve this goal, they extended an invitation to Jannis Kounellis to engage in a creative dialogue with the museum. The outcome was a remarkable new art installation that served as a thought-provoking response to the economic and social crisis gripping Greece in 2012. Jannis Kounellis' artwork spanned the entirety of the neoclassical building on Vasilissis Olgas Street, known as the Stathatos Mansion. This historical mansion had been constructed alongside the aspirations of Greece's urban elite. Kounellis' intervention involved the transformation of the existing architectural and decorative elements within the building, as well as a reimagining of the museum's showcases. These alterations collectively provided a diverse array of stimuli for visitors, enriching their experience within the museum environment and culminating in a thought-provoking encounter with the artwork.

2. THE ARTIST JANNIS KOUNELLIS

Jannis Kounellis was born in Piraeus in 1936 and relocated to Italy in 1956, where he settled in Rome to study Fine Arts. In the late 60s he joined the Italian art movement of Arte Povera. He began his artistic career by creating paintings that incorporated arrows, numbers and typographic symbols, while at the same time experimented strongly with the juxtaposition of objects and actions, using disparate materials such as stone, cotton, gunnysacks, charcoal, as well as objects such as eyeglass frames, coats and shoes. Kounellis' work exudes a profound sense of poetry. His first ground breaking exhibition, a live installation featuring horses, aimed to metamorphose the exhibition space into a theater, blurring the boundaries between real life and artistic imagination. His experimentation with unorthodox combinations of materials and objects has persisted and evolved over the years, as exemplified in this particular exhibition we will explore in-depth below.

3. CONTEMPORARY ART AND SOCIAL REALITY

In every historical period, art as the reflective and guiding consciousness of its era existing independently and concurrently with empirical reality, essentially mirrors and embodies that reality. Art is itself an empirical social reality as an expressive and aesthetic possibility. Arnold Hauser, in his widely acclaimed books "The Social History of Art" (1951) and "Sociology of Art" (1974), while acknowledging the aesthetic significance of artworks, emphasizes their social function. He underscores the crucial role of the social context, which is shaped by various factors including political and economic variables, institutional frameworks, public opinion, and more. Similarly, Timothy Clark (1974) has positioned the social, political, and ideological contexts of artworks, as well as the conditions of their production, at the forefront of contemporary art discourse. According to Theodor Adorno (1970), the transition of artistic practice from material and form to the aesthetic expression of modern society marks the transformation of art from a spiritual state to a conscious self-determination of society. Wassily Kandinsky (2006) in the first chapter of his book "Concerning the Spiritual in Art" writes that the work of art is a child of its time and has as its historical mission, being at the top of the pyramid of evolution, to transform yesterday into today and today into tomorrow and thus push forward the whole of society. Modernism promoted the work of art from a simple representation and expression of an era (Kunstwollen) to a conscious and targeted socio-political action. This is how this relationship between art and reality came to be nowadays the main, and sometimes unique, axis and driving force of artistic production and aesthetic reflection.

Today, the primary hallmark of contemporary art isn't just the freedom to choose expressive means but rather its connectionand interaction with the social milieuand reality. This privileged relationship with social becoming, the beginnings of which are identified with the birth of modernism in the middle of the 19th century, marked during the 20th century most of the avant-garde currents that contributed decisively to the transformation of the very concept and function of contemporary art. Artistic creation is today considered as an activity equal to all those intellectual and scientific discoveries that promote the evolution and progress of human society, and the work of art is considered not only an aesthetic object but an innovative historical event.

4. COMMON OBJECTS, SOCIAL CRITICISM AND AVANT-GARDE ART MOVEMENTS

The avant-garde and experimental move-ments of the 20th century modern art showed that art no longer imitates nature but through the aesthetic proposal "constructs" a social reality. The world is no longer a solid perceptual object but a continuous communicative situation for all that we are experiencing or cannot express in words. And the use of common objects in the history of art has always gone hand in hand with judgments of urban aesthetics and urban society in general.

Initially it was Marcel Duchamp with his readymades. Dada was perhaps the most violent and subversive movement, created as a reaction to the irrationality of the First World War and was the requiem of a greedy and completely materialistic society. It proposed actions intended to turn society against its own methods by using the things it valued in an irrational and contradictory way (Argan, 1975: 393). Duchamp, operating on the fringes

Figures 2-3: Jannis Kounellis. The human body seems to be absent but it is palpably present in almost all pictorial positions (author's photos)

of Dada and Surrealism, extracted various humble objects that had no artistic value, from their functional and commercial context, and presented them as works of art, giving them a conceptual dimension. Duchamp's readymades contained the proposition that the artist invents nothing and only uses, shapes, reshapes and repositions what history provides him; that the artist does not create, he simply "takes" what already exists which can be a waste, i.e. garbage.

Surrealism inherited from Dada the hostility towards the bourgeoisie while formulating theories and principles. In the same category with readymades are the objets-trouvés which were various useless, old, strange, broken or incomprehensible objects found by chance by the surrealist artist. The fact that they were originally mere commodities, products of capitalist production, which over time had lost their luster along with their usefulness or had undergone successive transformations by their users, made them ideal to reveal through artistic intervention "the sediment of human alienation, social objectification and cultural reification" (Lehmann, 2007: 28). Kurt Schwitters, between Dada and Constructivism, collects and deposits in the Merzbau, one of the most important works of modern art, the most disparate things; buttons, strings, stoppers, tram tickets, letters compose the first versions of the Merzbau as "small, mutilated disjointed testimonies of an amorphous, dull, messy daily chronicle (...)" (Argan, 1975: 397).

The years following the end of the Second World War brought the flourishing of North American art together with the Cold War and the fear of nuclear destruction, the prospect of a new era of technological progress, austerity and deprivation in England and the countries of Europe, in contrast with the promise of abundance represented by America's mass culture. Academic Modernism and especially Abstract Expressionism which was the dominant painting trend of the time became the target of the avant-garde movements of the time such as the Independent Group and the Pop Art movement. The products of the consumer society, or rather its residues, the garbage, were the means used by the Nouveau Réalistes with Arman as the main representative, but also by Claes Oldenburg who, commenting on the American Dream, had already turned his interest to waste as raw material in his installations and happenings. Pop Art artists externalized the individual's discomfort with the homogeneity of consumer society by reconciling the object of painting with the painting-object. Through the depiction of branded objects (brands), Pop Art itself became a "branded" and "consumable" object (Baudrillard, 2000: 132).

One of Duchamp's last works, 'Boîte-en-valise' (1935-41), became a starting point for the reflections of the Fluxus group. Fluxus equated the work with the context, the object with the container, placing the production of the artwork squarely within the realm of consumer culture (Foster et al. 2009: 458). The

Figure 4: Jannis Kounellis. At the inception of the exhibition, a marble the size of a tombstone rests atop a stack of sacks and dirt (author's photo)

total allegiance of Fluxus artistic production to the realm of objects, led to a perpetual dialectical flux between object production and performance. The conditions in post-war Germany of the "economic miracle" on one hand and the crisis of historical memory on the other, and at the same time the rapid advance of consumption with the simultaneous elimination of the individual and social history of the subject, led Joseph Beuys to the creation of his symbolic installations (Foster et al. 2009: 481-82). After 1965 the artists emphasize the process rather than the object itself, giving priority to speech for the dissemination and perception of the work. Ideas can be works of art, as Conceptual Art has shown.

The need for artists to be part of political and social events was certainly one of the main components of the movement that Germano Celant called Arte Povera. With roots in common with Fluxus as well as Minimal and Conceptual Art movements, the generation of Arte Povera artists incorporated conceptual inquiry into material presence. Arte Povera discourse with the viewer through fragments of materials, concepts and words. Raw, insignificant and cheap materials such as stones and old newspapers are transformed into aesthetic products with spiritual energy. One of the main characteristics of Arte Povera was the idealistic belief in the ability of the artist and the work of art to dissolve the separation between art and life. This creative drive to bridge the gap between art and life automatically fueled the desire to become part of history, to engage with history in its making. In many ways Arte Povera was a highly politicized movement. Its positions and actions did not differ much from fellow artists of American and European Conceptual Art, Performance Art and Land Art such as Joseph Beuys or Richard Long. But in contrast to Beuys, the goal is not the political transformation of society but the sensory experience and critical approach of the artistic practice. And the viewer is invited, often with an autobiographical charge, to redefine his attitude towards them by activating memories and exploiting associations.

The exhibition of various collected micro-objects of industrial or even organic origin, which have little to do with what we traditionally consider a work of art, has led some critics to speak of "post-object" art, an art that has to do more with the activity of the artistic praxis. This modern art obliterates any boundary between the exhibit and the viewer and, removing the need for the frame or plinth, encouraging immediacy and informality

.

5. GREEK FINANCIAL CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT ON CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS: A SYNOPSIS

The financial crisis in Greece, spanning from 2010 to 2018, originated with the country's debt default following the global crash of 2008, garnered extensive discussion and analysis both domestically and internationally, drawing global attention due to the severe austerity measures implemented. These measures resulted in a contraction of the country's GDP by 25 percent, widespread unemployment, the imposition of capital controls, and a significant exodus of young professionals. The recession had a broad impact, affecting health and welfare systems, various economic activities, and other aspects of Greek society (Tziovas, 2017: 15). The crisis and its policies had also a significant impact on incomes, inequality, crime, poverty and the fertility rates; it affected in more than one way the lives of most Greeks. It also led to the rise of Euroscepticism among locals, well above the European average, due to the involvement of the European Commission and the E.C.B. in the imposed austerity programme. The crisis was seen as a national trauma, a retrogression, cancelling the prospect of a continuous development and prosperity.

The impact of the economic crisis on cultural institutions was severe and immediate. From 2009 onwards, efforts to reduce public spending led to substantial cuts in funds allocated to the cultural sector. By the year 2012 the Ministry of Culture budget dropped by 30 per cent and as a result almost all the museums reduced opening hours, closed part of their exhibition areas or even shut down altogether, for periods of a few weeks up to a couple of months. The reduction in temporary personnel, like guards, forced many archaeological sites to completely shut off, to the dismay of visiting tourists.

In the private cultural sector, even large private museums like the Benaki Museum or the Museum of Cycladic Art suffered, as they were also relying on the Ministry's budget to partly cover operational costs and salaries. They had to take measures like reduction in salaries, dismissal of staff members, fewer opening hours to the public, only four days the week. But, being more flexible in terms of management than their public counterparts came up with some innovative ideas for attracting visitors and increases their revenue. The Benaki Museum, for example, launched a 'Support Campaign for the Benaki Museum' as well as an 'Adoption' programme, which enables donors to 'adopt' and support a specific activity from within the museum's departments financially. The Museum of Cycladic Art in turn, introduced a series of measures in order to attract visitors, including reduced prices, free entrance to temporary exhibitions on specific days, special offers to tourists etc. In fact all these measures are reminiscent of those taken by the British museums in the Thatcher era, when they were faced with similar reductions in funding by the Government. In the public sector, several public museum directors have realized the advantages of alliances and synergies, forming 'networks of museums' like the five museums of Thessaloniki. But only a handful of public museums have been given a special regional service status, allowing them to do their own planning, the Acropolis Museum (2009) being the most exceptional case in terms of autonomy and independence.

The "Greek Crisis" has been the subject of a great number of books, articles or reports by scholars, financial and political analysts, philosophers and journalists. A two-year research project titled "The cultural politics of the Greek Crisis", funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), culminated in a book edited by D. Tziovas (2017). The project investigates the implications of the economic crisis on Greek culture and identity, exploring how the crisis was captured and portrayed through art and literature. As Tziovas put it "culture, like sport, is a shared experience. It encourages community and solidarity, something vital in testing times, challenging arguments about funding for cultural activities being a luxury in an age of austerity" (Tziovas, 2017: 17). According to Rebecca Bramall creativity in a period of crisis can be seen "not as a temporary measure for dealing with government debt, but as an enduring commitment to reshape social relationships" (Tziovas, 2017: 18). Some argued that austerity may promote a kind of creativity which is about resourcefulness and a desire to restore what is lost. It also led some people to engage in a critical discussion about a new 'narrative' for Greece, a departure from the failed practices of the past, the need for a national catharsis and replenishment with a re-examination of certainties of the past (Tziovas, 2017: 34).Thus, the role of history and its connection to the recent crisis has been thoroughly examined, leading scholars like Stathis Kalyvas to trace a recurring pattern or Alain Badiou to see crisis as an event, a rupture that creates an opportunity "to rethink the dominant social order" that has encouraged a re-examination and a creative re-thinking of the past, inviting Greeks and non-Greeks to reflect on the role of cultural heritage (Tziovas, 2017: 35). As Tziovas concluded, "the crisis has made the past more public, more controversial and more relevant" (Tziovas, 2017: 71).

6. THE ARTIST'S DISCOURSE ABOUT HIS WORK

During the press conference held on April 4, 2012, in conjunction with the opening of the exhibition at the Museum of Cycladic Art, Jannis Kounellis made a poignant remark, stating that "At this juncture, an ordinary art exhibition in Greece would be unthinkable." For Kounellis, the Greek financial crisis transcends mere numerical statistics and percentages. His concern lies in the profound impact this crisis has on individuals and their surroundings. The artist emphasizes, "Nothing is worth more than the man himself," highlighting the significant effort required to support human dignity amidst these trying circumstances: "Today, of course, this economic culture no longer centers on humanity but rather on the oligarchy, a shift

Figure 5: Jannis Kounellis. The main exhibit, a huge iron easel with coats sewn together (author's photo)

that lacks a fundamental human aspect" (Kounellis, 2012). Focusing on humanity as its core, he crafts an exhibition where, even though the human body may appear to be absent, its palpable presence permeates nearly every pictorial composition. This centrality of the human element serves as the foundational pillar of Kounellis's artistic oeuvre (Lumley, 2004: 34). Acting within the pictorial space - which he considers as a public space - he wants to participate in the real world, in the theater of real life, the everyday and at the same time the extremely unique. Kounellis's entire body of work constitutes a voyage that traverses the realms of memory, history, and the contemporary reality. Through his art, he narrates the tales of ordinary, everyday, and common laborers who grapple with a pervasive sense that "the ship is sinking." This sentiment is strikingly underscored by his connection of a pensioner's tragic suicide at Constitution Square to his art, symbolized by a hovering knife that serves as a poignant punctuation mark within the exhibition space. Kounellis's art, marked by its unpredictability and profound connections with life and the present day, embodies the very essence of reality itself.

Kounellis engages in a form of "communication" not only with the museum but also with the broader context of what is transpiring around us. He does so through his distinctive personal artistic language, which he has cultivated over time, utilizing a diverse array of objects, encompassing both industrial and natural products. Kounellis enables the inherent "weight" of the foundational materials he employs to serve as a voice, addressing the preoccupying issue of identity and the "linguistic challenges" associated with interpreting each of his works. In his own words, "For me, being born in Greece, I perceive that the current issue isn't solely about the economy; it's about the loss of our identity." He goes on to assert that this loss of identity can be attributed to an unchecked and uncritical embrace of Americanism. Kounellis contends that the establishment of boundaries and the recognition of the "other" are essential components in critically evaluating our actions and, by extension, our collective identity (Kounellis, 2012).

Newspapers, charcoal, burlap sacks, worn-out shoes and eyeglasses, coats, soil and iron serve as the raw materials for his compositions. These materials, obtained through diligent searches in thrift stores and Athens' flea markets, starkly contrast with the neoclassical building's ambiance where he displays them. Consequently, personal narratives intertwine with the historical fabric of the place, offering insight into contemporary Athens. These objects serve as vessels for the city's multifaceted story, marked by successive

Figure 6: Jannis Kounellis. A black cloth covers the chandelier of the central space (author's photo)

demographic shifts, evolving ideologies, fluctuations in prosperity, and, notably, recent dramatic transformations.

"Tough art, yes, but not mournful," insists Jannis Kounellis. However, the black cloths, a symbol of mourning for what is happening in his two homelands, Greece and Italy, are everywhere and a marble the size of a tombstone on a pile of sacks and dirt is "at the beginning of the exhibition like a cross". And he adds about what Art can offer in these conditions of cultural crisis, "Art, like poetry, is born from shortage (...) Sometimes you have to suffer to create something with a poetic power" (Kounellis, 2012).

The journey through Kounellis' exhibition begins on the ground floor, where artworks convey a relatively more representational language. As visitors ascend to the upper floor, they are gradually immersed in a heightened and more dramatized expressive vocabulary. This personal, experiential narrative evolves into a visual alphabet with a universally comprehensible character, fostering a captivating progression of artistic expression. Always with humble, common and used materials, is the transfusion of the crisis's image in the museum space, the simultaneous presentation of one reality within another, a new aesthetic which, as we have already mentioned, is in complete contrast to the aesthetic of the refined building. The artist transforms the museum space into an integral part of the final work, a theater stage where space and visitors participate in a performance "Because these works are also dramaturgies (...)"(Kounellis, 2012).

This exhibition was the distillation of several important themes that consistently run through Kounellis' work. He often combines his previous works into new arrangements while introducing new pieces at the same time. The materials, forms and their interplay together serve as a comprehensive representation of socio-economic reality. On the ground floor, the installations emanate great intensity from the famous burlap sacks full of coal in the role of the tragic dance, which this time enclose, sometimes a stack of eyeglasses recalling the macabre memory of the holocaust, sometimes fragments of casts with contemporary newspaper sheets and sometimes soil. The main exhibit, a huge iron easel with coats sewn together bring to mind the painting surface of Kounellis which always consists of the dark sheets of a certain size, which due to shape, size and color accents bring to mind Kazimir Malevich's Black Square (Roelstraete, D. 2002: 26).

The violent gesture, with which Kounellis hangs a black cloth to cover the chandelier in the central space, resembles the vigor of Jackson Pollock's action painting to which the artist often refers to. Pollock's decision to abandon the wall as a supporting surface of the work opened new horizons in the pictorial space. Painting now became part of reality, itself a reality, rather than merely representing it through the 'critical distance' of easel painting. Kounellis's brand of realism is synonymous with his assertion that his paintings are a reflection of reality itself. He endeavors to shatter the barrier that separates art from life by actualizing what his paintings convey.

While the installations on the ground floor contribute to resolving "the language problem," namely, how his work will be interpreted by visitors, the "empty space" on the floor, adorned with forsaken shoes, coats, and hats, symbolizing a pronounced aesthetic of disappearance, may initially appear to represent the catastrophic loss of a bygone era characterized by humanist culture. However, upon closer examination, these items also express a sense of hope for the resurgence of such a golden age. As Kounellis aptly notes, "We are now saying in Greece that everything is lost. We said the same after the Second World War and the Civil

War, but the country was not lost" (Kounellis, 2012). This sentiment underlines the resilience of the Greek people and the potential for the revival of cultural and humanistic values even in the face of adversity.

7. THE PERCEPTION OF KOUNELLIS' EXHIBITION BY THE VISITORS

Greece underwent a period of profound turmoil, marked by a severe economic recession that had far-reaching social and political implications. This period ushered in a new perspective on self-identity, be it at an individual or national level. Jannis Kounellis's exhibition serves as a reflection of contemporary culture, society, and its people. Denys Zacharopoulos (Kounellis, 2012) aptly describes it as a contemporary "anthropological museum," with its central focus on the ordinary person, the laborer who toils and bears the brunt of these challenges. Remarkably, Kounellis's exhibition offers a direct and unfiltered glimpse into modern Greek reality, possibly more so than journalistic reports or television broadcasts. With a discerning eye, Kounellis paints a vivid picture of society, laying bare its vulnerabilities, anxieties, losses, and also its hopes.

Visitors find themselves among everyday objects, all more or less worn, broken, unused, along with the iconic black sails. Worn coats and shoes, sacks, empty bottles, wake them up and create mixed feelings of embarrassment, discomfort, annoyance. Looking at the works, viewers establish a connection between the remnants of human presence and the materials, such as coal sacks or other utilitarian fabrics, now ensnared within iron frameworks, emptied and compressed to the zero point of its previous existence. A structured narrative is thus constructed and this experiential approach actively engages the visitor as an interpretive participant (Bounia, 2006). In Kounellis's compositions, much like examining the refuse within a household to gain insights into its occupants, we scrutinize the "discard" of a nation's political and economic system during times of crisis. The visitor might feel overwhelmed by the burden of the surrounding tragic daily existence, yet within Jannis Kounellis' humanistic approach, there appears to be a glimmer of hope.

REFERENCES

Adorno, T. W. (1970) *Théorie Esthétique*. Paris: Klincksieck.
Argan G. C. (1975). *L' Arte Moderna 1770/1970*. Firenze: Sansoni.
Bois Y.A. Foster H., Krauss R., & Buchloh, B. (2004). *Art Since 1900. Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*. New York: Thames and Hudson.
Bounia, A. (2006). *Museums and objects: "constructing" the world*. In D. Papageorgiou, N. Boubaris, E. Mirivili (eds) Cultural Representation, (pp. 141-164) Athens: Kritiki.
Christov-Bakargiev C. (1999). *Arte Povera*. London: Phaidon.
Clark, T.J. (1974). The Conditions of Artistic Creation, *Times Library Supplement,* 24 May, pp.561-2
Hauser, A. (1951). *The social history of art.* New York: Knopf.
Hauser, A. (1974). *Sociology of ar*t. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Kandinsky, W. (2006). *Concerning the spiritual in art*. London : Tate.
Kounellis, Y. (2012). Interviewed by Denys Zacharopoulos for Museum of Cycladic Art, 5 April. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icZcuP4-LUw (Accessed: 6 September 2023).
Lehmann, U. (2007). The Uncommon Object. In G. Wood, (ed.), *Surreal Things: Surrealism and Design*, (pp. 19-37). London: V&A Publications.
Lumley R. (2004). *Arte povera*. London: Tate Pub.
Roelstraete, D. (2002). Rhapsody of the Real. Mapping the Art of Jannis Kounellis. In D. Roelstraete, *Kounellis* (pp. 13-38). Milano: Charta.
Tziovas, D. (ed.) (2017). *Greece in Crisis. The Cultural Politics of Austerity*. London & NY: I.B. TAURIS.