



Still from "Fabula I" (1999) by K. Kana

display 2

Evanthia Tselika, Educator, Artist, Curator.

A/M 1749 | Κατερίνα Κανά, *Fabula 1, 2, 3* (1999)

Artwork 1749

ΜΗΤΡΩΟ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΗΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗΣ ΕΡΓΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΗΣ												
Αύξων Αρ.	Όνομα Καλλιτέχνη	Τίτλος Έργου	Είδος	Υλικό	Ημερομηνία Εκτέλεσης	Διαστάσεις	Αξία	Τιμή Αγοράς	Αριθμός Εντάλματος Πληρωμής	Ημερομηνία Απόκτησης	Όνομα Δωρητή	Αρ. Ηλεκτ. Υπολ.
11332	ΟΙΚΟΔΕΜΕΛΗΣ ΔΕΣΣΑΛΙΣ	ΧΟΡΙΣ ΤΙΤΛΟ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΤΣΙΜΚΟΤ	1998	15 x 20	1	1	0532220	29/6/99		
11339	ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ ΑΝΝΑ	ΧΡΗΣΙ ΤΙΤΛΟ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΞΥΛΟ, ΠΑΡΑΠΛΗ	1999	150 x 20 x 20	1	1	0531203	6/12/99		
11340	ΣΑΚΚΙΝΗΣ ΣΥΜΠΛΩΣΗ	"ΔΙΑΒΑΣΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΑ ΚΥΡΑΤΑ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΚΑΡΤΟΝ	1999	59 x 63	1	1	0531203	6/12/99		
11341	ΒΕΡΕΤΣΑ ΧΟΡΙΣ	"INVISIBLE WEIGHT I"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΚΑΡΤΟΝ	9.3.99	42 x 30	1	1	0531202	6/12/99		
11342	ΒΕΡΕΤΣΑ ΧΟΡΙΣ	"INVISIBLE WEIGHT II"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΚΑΡΤΟΝ	9.3.99	42 x 30	1	1	0531202	6/12/99		
11343	ΤΟΡΟΚΙΑΝ ΧΑΡΙΣ	COMBUSTED	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ ΣΕ ΜΑΡΜΑ	1999	140 x 140	1	1	0531202	6/12/99		
11344	ΜΕΛΑΝΗ ΜΑΡΤΙΝ	ΣΥΣΤΗΜΑ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ ΣΕ ΜΑΡΜΑ	1999	85 x 83	1	1	0531202	6/12/99		
11345	ΜΕΛΑΝΗ ΣΑΒΑΡΑ	ΑΤΙΤΛΟ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1999	47 x 41	1	1	0531201	6/12/99		
11346	ΜΕΛΑΝΗ ΣΑΒΑΡΑ	ΑΤΙΤΛΟ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1999	47 x 41	1	1	0531201	6/12/99		
11347	ΑΣΠΕΡΤΣΙΣ ΑΝΔΡΕΑΣ	"ΤΑΙΟ - ΒΕΙΚΟΛΟΓΕΙ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1980-85	83 x 53	1	1	0531205	6/12/99		
11348	ΑΣΠΕΡΤΣΙΣ ΑΝΔΡΕΑΣ	"ΤΑΙΟ - ΒΕΙΚΟΛΟΓΕΙ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1980-85	83 x 55	1	1	0531205	6/12/99		
11349	ΚΑΝΑ ΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ	FABULA 1, 2, 3	ΚΑΤΑΣΚΕΥΗ	ΚΑΡΤΟΝ	1999	—	1	1	0531210	6/12/99		
11350	ΣΤΕΦΑΝΙΔΟΥ ΚΑΙΤΗ	ΑΤΙΤΛΟ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1995	140 x 46	1	1	0531209	6/12/99		
11351	ΣΤΕΦΑΝΙΔΟΥ ΤΑΣΟΣ	ΟΥΡΑΝΟΙ I	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1981	102 x 102	1	1	0531209	6/12/99		
11352	ΣΤΕΦΑΝΙΔΟΥ ΤΑΣΟΣ	ΝΟΚΤΟΥΡΝΑΛ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1969	73 x 142	1	1	0531209	6/12/99		
11353	ΣΑΡΑΦΑΝΤΣΗ ΒΑΚΧΙΑΝΗ	ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΗ ΣΤΡΟΓΓΥΛΗ ΠΟΛΥΚΕΝΤΡΗ	ΚΕΡΑΜΙΚΗ	ΠΟΛΥΚΕΝΤΡΗ	1999	50 x 20 x 6	1	1	0531208	6/12/99		
11354	ΣΑΡΑΦΑΝΤΣΗ ΒΑΚΧΙΑΝΗ	"ΚΟΝΔ"	ΚΕΡΑΜΙΚΗ	ΠΟΛΥΚΕΝΤΡΗ	1999	70 x 40	1	1	0531208	6/12/99		
11355	ΦΑΡΜΑΚΑ ΔΕΡΑ	"ΣΤΡΑΤΕΙΑ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1962	65 x 55	1	1	0531207	6/12/99		
11356	ΦΑΡΜΑΚΑ ΔΕΡΑ	"ΔΙΟ ΚΟΡΡΕΙ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1964	70 x 100	1	1	0531207	6/12/99		
11357	ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ ΙΣΑΒΕΛΛΗ	"ΣΥΝΔΕΚΤΙΚΟ ΚΑΡΑΒΙ II"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΚΑΡΤΟΝ	1991	32 x 20 x 4	1	1	0531206	6/12/99		
11358	ΔΕΛΕΠΑΣ ΖΗΚΕΝΑΣ	"Ο ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΟΥΡΩΝ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1999	131 x 126	1	1	0531204	6/12/99		
11359	ΒΑΚΧΙΑΝΗ ΚΥΚΙΑ	ΟΡΦΙΚΗ ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑ	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1996	38 x 48	1	1	0531213	6/12/99		
11360	ΒΑΚΧΙΑΝΗ ΚΥΚΙΑ	"ΣΥΝΔΕΚΤΙΚΟ"	ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ	ΑΚΡΥΛΙΚΟ	1996	35 x 49	1	1	0531213	6/12/99		
11361	ΚΟΥΡΟΥΣΗΣ ΤΩΝ	ΑΝΙΣΤΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΩΝ ΨΥΧΩΝ	ΚΕΡΑΜΙΚΗ	—	1992	32 x 56	1	1	0531223	6/12/99		
11362	ΚΟΥΡΟΥΣΗΣ ΤΩΝ	ΑΝΙΣΤΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΩΝ ΨΥΧΩΝ	ΚΕΡΑΜΙΚΗ	—	1992	32 x 56	1	1	0531223	6/12/99		
11363	ΚΟΥΡΟΥΣΗΣ ΤΩΝ	ΑΝΙΣΤΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΩΝ ΨΥΧΩΝ	ΚΕΡΑΜΙΚΗ	—	1992	32 x 56	1	1	0531223	6/12/99		

When asked to participate in the *displays* project I visited the premises of the State Art Gallery and the warehouse, where the majority of the collection is held, with no preconceived ideas of what I would select to be presented at Point Contemporary Arts Centre. Instead I had decided that I would let the collection, the archive and the records of the art works guide me in choosing. I opened several of the big blue 'Register' books in which the details of the purchases of the works are enclosed. My eyes skimmed over the rows, the dates, the names, the purchase prices and the medium descriptions. I went through the pages and in the column where the medium was stated I read over and over again: prints, oil paintings, sculptures, ceramics, wood, plaster, drawing, mixed media... Suddenly when I turned to the page where the purchases of the year 1999 were listed, for the first time I saw the word 'Video' besides the phrase mixed media. This is the first use of the

word video in the Register of the State Art Collection. It would seem then that this is the first new media art work that the Cypriot State purchased. Art work 1749 was bought on the 6th of December 1999. The name of the work is *Fabula 1,2,3* and it is by the female Cypriot artist Katerina Kana.

Once bought the piece was placed in the warehouse where the State Art Collection is stored. However it was included in the exhibition 'Images Mobiles' (Moving Image) curated by Sohpie Duplaix and Dr Androula Michael at the Nicosia Municipal Art Centre in 2000- 2001. This work is a Video Art piece made in three parts and it is presented in a small wooden cabin, in which the viewer has to enter to view the work. Michael in the 'Images Mobiles' exhibition catalogue writes that the presentation of the video within this 'intimate space',¹ allows the spectator to 'participate in the artist's experience'.² This video installation therefore that is presented in this intimate space and which encloses the viewer in the moving image world of the artist triggered a series of thoughts and reflections in relation to the notion of collecting and how collections incorporate the latest contemporary art patterns within their purchasing trends. A State (Government) Art Collection is expected to also be a collection of its time. By this I mean that it should represent the best of the contemporary art production of the country in line with both local and international art developments. Art Collections are shaped by an array of factors, incorporating aspects such as different time periods, styles, tastes and the potential of investment. The importance of having a state art collection that has a vision, a fair representational structure and which keeps in line with the trends and tendencies of the time becomes highlighted. Inevitably, therefore, issues revolving around a State's Art policy are raised, and the need for a well structured policy to be developed, so as to ensure that the highest quality of contemporary art is purchased to become part of a collection. A well structured Arts Policy can also ensure that the collection is accessible and that the community, its youth, its experts and its academic institutions are involved with its life and development. This is after all a collection that belongs to the people of the state of Cyprus, as it is public property which has been acquired with money paid by the Cypriot tax payers.

State Art Collections are important as they represent the achievements of successive generations of a country's artists. The artworks chosen reflect our culture not only on a national level but on an international level as well and they deserve to be accessible for interpretation through their educational, social and cultural functions. The collection demonstrates an identity and it is important to reflect on what this identity is; how it is decided, by whom, who is represented within it and how new forms of contemporary art can transform it and enrich it. The multiple narratives that the collection could depict depend very much on the accessibility of this collection; the access provided to academics, researchers, students, curators and experts. The issue of access to the collection also brings us to the question of what is the life of the art work after its purchase. Once the works are purchased by the State it is most likely that they will be stored until requested for an exhibition or for display in local governmental buildings or embassies abroad. The way that the collection can be used to develop a thematic group exhibition provides different narratives and levels of engagement in comparison with the chance encounter with an art work placed in a government building locally or diplomatic building abroad. The life of each work should be kept in mind after its purchase through a tracking of how often it has been exhibited since its purchase. The life of *Fabula 1,2,3* seems to have been more active than some other more recent purchases of

¹ Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre, *Moving Image Exhibition Catalogue*. (Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre, Cultural Department of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus, 2000), p. 56.

² Ibid.

contemporary art works of the State Collection. This is in fact the second time the work is being exhibited since its acquisition.

As Simon Sheikh writes 19th century European exhibition making marked 'a display and division of knowledge, power and spectatorship' as well as 'a production of a public'.³ Collecting and displaying 'specific objects and artifacts', represented the writing of specific histories and the 'circulation of certain values and ideas'.⁴ The concept of a state art collection can therefore also be read as the creating of a community, of a specific narrative of history and of forming a specific type of public/audience. The question of what type of community the Cypriot State Art Collection tries to create kept on resurfacing in my mind. The part which is accessible to the public (the display within the State Art Gallery) does not present a moving image artwork. The community that we imagine through this display therefore is quite removed from the narratives which dominate the art world of today. As an imaginary society we seem to appreciate the 'fathers of Cypriot art', perhaps due to our lack of an art historical narrative, but we seem to forget their grandchildren quite quickly. With the obsession that the art world has to exemplify the past and to quickly engulf anything new and exciting, what happens to recent and yet outdated acquisitions? If our State Gallery and our State Collection therefore create an image of a community, what type of community is this?

Fabula 1,2,3 created yet another narrative in my mind, this time one related to community and social imagination. This is of particular importance to me as the focus of my own research and practice is related to Socially Engaged Art practice. The social practice of art, which has gained increasing prominence in recent years, is generally a form of art practice that acts in the interest of the public, of the people, through its emphasis on social issues, building community relations and collaborations and highlighting political activism through the arts. This methodological approach of the social practice of the arts has been explored under variant titles but finds strong links with the collective and collaborative approach that contemporary art production entails. 'New genre public art' for Suzanne Lacy (1995),⁵ for Nicholas Bourriaud the term 'relational aesthetics' (1998),⁶ 'dialogical' for Grant Kester (2004),⁷ and 'participatory' for Claire Bishop (2006),⁸ are only some of the terms that the art world has been exploring so as to iterate some of the shifts that have been inscribed as methods of working in a socially engaged manner. As a wide ranging practice it incorporates a multi media and multi disciplinary approach⁹. When a socially engaged art piece is

³ Simon Sheikh, 'Constitutive Effects: The techniques of the curator' in Paul O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*. (MIT Press: USA, 2012), p. 175.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Suzanne Lacy (ed.) *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995)

⁶ Bourriaud, Nicolas, *Relational Aesthetics*. (Les Presses Du Reel, Franc, 1998)

⁷ Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*. (University of California Press: Berkeley and London, 2004).

⁸ Claire Bishop, (ed.) *Participation: Documents in Contemporary Art*. (Whitechapel Gallery: London, MIT Press: Massachusetts, 2006).

⁹ Readings of the development of the social practice of art trace its influences in the action based, performance and conceptual practices of the early twentieth century. These evolved to artistic practices which were combined with the tendencies of political activism and community organizing in the 1960s which in turn resulted to hybrids of social practice from the late 1960s and 1970s. These were firmly expanded during the 1980s, became institutionalized in 1990s and have come to influence the branding of commercial art galleries and contemporary institutions in the Western art world today. In Cyprus such narratives can be traced in the 1990s but their development is seen more prominently throughout the 2000s.

purchased to become part of a collection, what is essentially bought is the documentation. The development of documentation as the proof of practice is the legacy of action based art of the 1970s. The capturing of live art (performance, action based, social art practice) documentation usually consists of film/video, photography, audio, written descriptions, interviews etc. The way in which the Register and the catalogue describe the works held within the collection at the moment, would not in fact demonstrate if documentation of a live art event was bought (be it photographs or video). Since it is only the medium which is described we would not be able, from the cataloguing and referencing system of the collection, to know if this was actually a video art piece or live, action and social art documentation of practice.

Fabula 1,2,3 and its position as the first Video art piece to be bought by the Cypriot State Art Collection triggered a series of haphazard thoughts in my mind related to issues of critical reflection on the State Contemporary Art Collection of the Republic of Cyprus. To end this text I return to the first question that came to my mind when I realized that this was the first new media art piece bought by the state. What would be the first socially engaged art work that the state would buy to incorporate in its collection?