

The

metals

Public Exhibition on the Northern Mediterranean Shore

Unsolicited contribution to documenta 14

Alejandro

Simón



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Μεσόγειος

Θάλασσα

Σούνιο

Ε Λ Λ ά δ α



Not seeing the seeing in words, we numb our senses.

Cecilia Vicuña, Language is migrant.

The

metals



- 1 **"Before the entrance to the sanctuary of Olympian Zeus — Hadrian the Roman emperor dedicated the temple and the statue, one worth seeing, which in size exceeds all other statues save the colossi at Rhodes and Rome, and is made of ivory and gold with an artistic skill which is remarkable when the size is taken into account — before the entrance, I say, stand statues of Hadrian, two of Thasian stone, two of Egyptian. Before the pillars stand bronze statues which the Athenians call "colonies." The whole circumference of the precincts is about four stades, and they are full of statues; for every city has dedicated a likeness of the emperor Hadrian, and the Athenians have surpassed them in dedicating, behind the temple, the remarkable colossus."**



- 2 **An open-air museum, with catenaries, marked paths and scarce trees. Before us, an overwhelming ruin.**

What is between them? And between them and that ruin? They hold still for a few seconds and then they shift, slowly, into a new form. When we arrived, they were kissing each other in an embrace. They are positions that come from afar, truly ancient.

That afternoon was very hot; we shelter under the trees and watch them from afar. It might be the first kiss and embrace between men that we have seen in a public space since we arrived to this city. We felt how, in that embrace, the metal melted. The same metal that could have caused the destruction of the temple, the metal that was asked of us at the entrance and the one that unified this old continent which is today crippled by debt. Now they are in front of us; the ruin and the past calmly adapt to their bodies.



3 The positions that connect could be bodies squeezed into the tympanum of an architectural pediment, from its centre to the narrowest part:

**pouring wine whilst he is helping
standing waving to the sky
he looks to the earth
lying down while he seems to escape...**

The postures are always presented in a dialogue between the ruins and ourselves, to later undo them, transforming them into new ones, thus avoiding any front-on image or interested gesture: without allowing for solidity, they become mineral again.

These images are not any totality, they accompany an incomplete landscape.

What are we doing here?



- 4 **Far from fleshing out the gods, Prinz and Gholam conjure up some concrete works. They extract the materials from certain sources, often pictorial but also textual, putting them to work through the body to activate the non-verbal language of a heritage. 'My sweet country' takes its name from George Rouault's painting 'My sweet country where are you?', 1927. In the following image one of the gestures of this painting can be seen: a lying position, but with abdominal tension. Another of the paintings, 'Greek exiles look over their lost fatherland' 1825, by Ary Scheffer. Also Delacroix, 'Entry of the crusaders in Constantinople', 1840, and 'Hamlet terrified by the ghost of his father' 1843.**

The positions occur, bringing images to the present from an ancient time. Like the ivy that sticks tight to a wall, they stick to a gesture.





6 They get gradually closer, and surround them. It seems like an exercise of completion. The other actors in the painting appear. We approach them and the temperature rises. The heat that day is suffocating, and we worry about their uncovered body parts being exposed to the sun.

The rhythm being marked by the gestures gives us the space to encounter some images. The force of bringing them up, perhaps already disappeared, or relegated to daily gestures before the novelty of gestural production, sets in motion different temporalities.

**There was a time of exile. There was a time of fatherland,
another of war**

**There is a time of exile. There is a time of refuge. There is a time of war
Today the dawn was sunny**

**And they are recorded again in digital files and they are stopped again.
So that they do not stop we write here below.**



7 **metallicities**
 here, a form
 fluid



- 8 **"He wants to burn this painting whose subject enchants and exasperates him all at once... Not destroy it, but perpetually set it alight, because the inner fire devouring the painting is not sufficiently expressed, and because he knows that his colors risk fading. He wants to burn himself as Sardanapalus in a moment of extraordinary luxuriousness, to denounce the world's darkness, and light it up like a torch, or, if you would, like a beacon; Baudelaire's verse will allow us to plant green firs on the hills that rise above Galata, and Weber's music will there reveal countless knight-errant huntsmen: 'Delacroix, lake of blood haunted by evil angels, / Under the shadow of a green forest of firs, / Where, under a gloomy sky, strange fanfares / Pass, like a muffled sigh of Weber...'"**

The ruins have not perished



9 **Pay the debt in kind.**

The problem is not mineral, but rather the hard forms it adopts.

The olive. The south of the Iberian peninsula was turned into a huge field of olive trees by the Romans in order to satisfy the demand of the empire's metropolis; changing hectares of forest into monoculture.

Florins.



- 10 **Different modes of exchange were taken from indigenous peoples. The potlatch was persecuted by the government of Canada. The masks, coppers, insignias, headgear, were required by their legitimate owners, who were in prison, to win their freedom. The objects were then exhibited and photographed in the church hall of Alter Bay in 1921, as evidence of colonial power by means of the archive.**



11 These masks observe each other. They are in a circle, looking in.

Others are in a circle looking out, they observe the world. Their functions force a dialogue in the room with those of Greek theatre.

An assembly of masks.



12 The young singers of the copper cross sing a solemn Sunday song. They watch a video where some men, older than them, melt the copper. The artist narrates their biography. They hold to their chest the metal cross of Katanga that worked as currency, as dowry and talisman.

The forms of religion are tied to those of money.

After the independence of the Congo from the Belgians, Katanga was separated for three years. Three crosses appeared on its flag.

The forms of the homeland are completed with religion.



13 Students approaching a gamete. They enter into the materiality of the painting.

They are titled:

Libidinal Economy 2010

Fiscal Stimulus Faltering

Fluid Membership

Numbered

Rogue Economics

Neoliberal Musings



14 **Can you spare me a dime?**

Thank you!



15 The arm raised and the hand extended, a motif founded in the tradition of the western machine.

The plaster casts that the academy exported with its Rome-bound scholars multiplied one body by a thousand.

Casts.

Now you can get your body printed: imagine that!



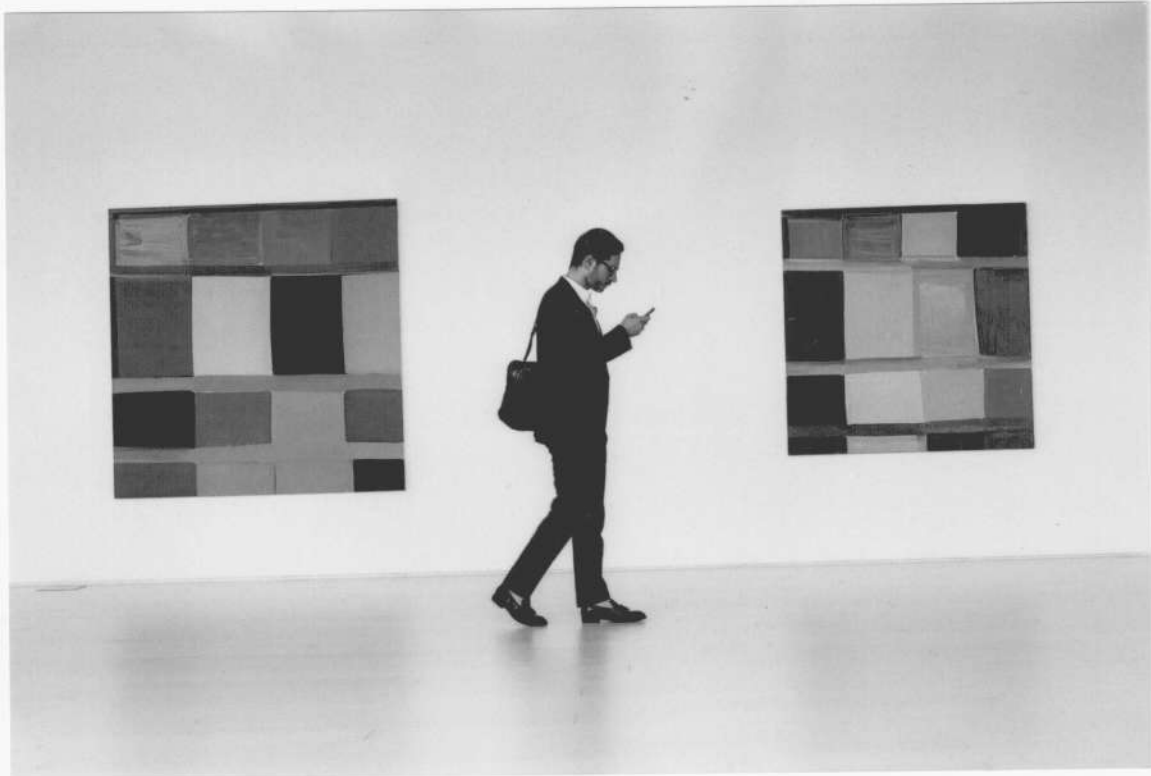
16 Administrative aesthetics. The cheque, the form, the application, the signature.



17 **A break. There are transactions to complete. The empire does not build itself.**



18 He documents everything on his phone.



19 **While you look at your screen, the colours surround you. An abstraction with tonalities archived in boxes hoards the meaning of a myth.**

James Brown's Sacrifice to Apollo

Friends and Neighbours

Gift to Athena

No to Life in Prison

Outsider

Whitman's City



20 **Necessary effort against mechanisms of the exhibition, against the unstoppable transaction, gold watches, handbags... You are invited to the foundry.**

The choice of place felt descended into nonsense. For the director, it was the place where the dissidents of the government of the Military Junta were tortured, which for Athens is an open wound. "The survivors still struggle to talk about it," they told us.

The structure overshadowed the political intention from within. An opportunity missed. Those summoned did not hear the call. The parliament was ignored because of the absence of the summoned bodies.



21 Her hands stained with fossil fuel, she makes shadows of animals appear. A sparrow and two mares. Her body is present.

Animal

Lead beta



22 **Opinions on artworks sometimes depend on the nation state where your look has been educated. "Living and dying with Eva Braun" was perceived as mere frivolity by visitors from central Europe, as an ambiguous and aesthetic exercise on the dictator's partner, something that the reparation policies have put to an end. The invitation to empathise with her generated pain.**

Bruises.



23 In these display cabinets you could see a collection of tourist items; souvenirs, yarns, bottles, sunglasses... These objects transmit anxiety, tricks of the conscience that reset whoever looks at them. The anthropology dissolves.



24 **Bio machine. Male fluids form a diagram of sovereign power.**



25 **Before some tragic images. Drawn with trembling fingers, you can perceive its breathing, the movement of the hand, the arm. The image comes out from the coal. In front of this blurred tunnel, company is needed.**

Coal here is an emotional fuel. Memories, dreams, fears, they set the engine in motion. With the whole body, drawn at each heartbeat.



26 **Original phrasing of Greenland.**



27 **Live from the Parthenon. The German and Greek parliaments speak to their people at the same time.**



28 **Data from the Greek stock exchange passes in front of us in LED lights.
A farewell song embraces us.**



29 The conservatory auditorium becomes a crypt where we attend the wake of the treasury.



30 **The cities, involuntary narratives, silver crystals.**



31 Gallery openings are interior decoration.



32 From the desks we can see them inaugurating. The oracle of Delphi is invoked by the African body. A missing link.



33 **Blind as the mother tongue. A video that we all wanted to see.**

He holds to his chin an *adaptation tool* that he made by hand. Built with mirrors facing different points. He crosses his diaspora once again, crossing the European borders. In constant balance, he holds it to his chin. Looking at the sky, the tool brought him details of the ground, the landscape, a body... to this situation he gave the name

pre-image.



34 **Bodies carried,**



35 **piled up,**



36 **ordered.**



37 **Lifeless. They had mirrors on their faces, which were tilted towards the audience so that they could look at themselves. When the dance appeared, the force of voodoo force was made present. As full-on as your reflection.**



38 ***Strange Fruit* by Billie Holiday was played.**





40 **Waste. The ruins of capital are embedded into blank books, using a press. A crude way of writing, residual: heavy metals.**



41 The audience bought the newly-written editions.



42 **Furniture is a musical instrument.**



43 **A concert of interiors, chamber music.**



44 The flamenco dancer crawled down the stairs of the Numismatic Museum. This building was the palace built by Heinrich Schliemann, the Prussian millionaire who, after amassing his fortune, devoted his life to his dream, archaeology.

Sophia Schliemann, with the gold from Priam's treasure, was immortalised as the heiress of Helen of Troy, from a lineage of beauty, canon and power. Of the body and currency.

The metals.



45 **Gypsy girl, you're bound to be
just like the fake coin,
passed from hand to hand, you see, ,
and not kept by any boy.**

(Copla, La Falsa Monea, R.P.R.)

He dances hitting the ground, the planet is a flamenco box drum.





47 Like an upside-down insect looking at the sky.





49 He dances atop of a pile of euro-cent coins; they shot out all over the patio.



50 **STD on Sierpes street.**

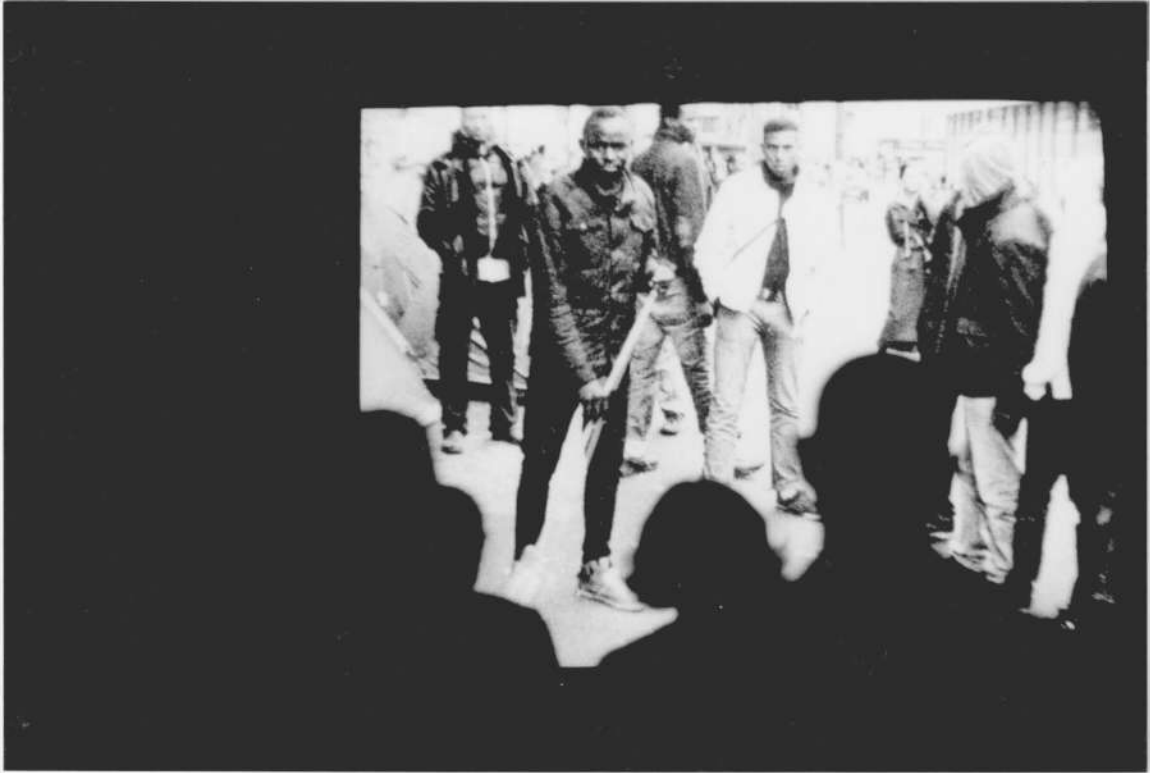






53 **Material investigations.**

Matanzas is the Athens of Cuba.



54 **Contempt.**





56 **Where there are no trees, there was extraction.**



57 **Fleeces of indigo blue sheep, natural dye. Each animal a flag of an African nation state.**

Angola, Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Swaziland, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



58 **Metal wheat**

Athens April / June 2017
Shooting during the exhibition

Temple of Olympian Zeus

- 1 **Prinz and Gholam in embrace, bringing their mouths close together, sitting on the ground in front of the columns of the Temple of Olympian Zeus. "My sweet country". Description of Greece. Books I-II. Pausanias. Editorial Gredos, 1994.**
- 2 **An olympic composition in front of the temple. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam.**
- 3 **Looking at the ground while he greets the Temple. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam.**
- 4 **Lying down, he seems to fit into an architectural pediment while the other seems to run away. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam.**
- 5 **They could be the centre of the pediment, the cameras approach them. It is very hot. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam.**
- 6 **Sitting between his legs, he protects his back as they look towards the same place. They are surrounded. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam.**
- 7 **Very close, they hug each other and kiss again. The metal melts. The column is on the ground. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam.**
- 8 **Lying down, he watches him, and he raises his head to look at the Temple from afar. "My sweet country" Prinz Gholam. Excerpts from Michel Butor, "Le jeune incendiaire", in Dialogue with Eugène Delacroix on "L'entrée des croisés à Constantinople" (Saint-Étienne: S'printer, 1991). Selected by Pierre Le Blanc.**

EMST

- 9 **Capturing the payment of olives. Marta Minujín wants to pay. "Payment of the Greek debt to Germany with olives and art".**
- 10 **The masks from Beau Dick's "Atlakim" series surround us. Text: (page 215 Reader, document 14)**
- 11 **They watch you. Beau Dick, in the background the children sing.**
- 12 **Sammy Boloji, EMST. "Tales from the Garden of the Cross of Copper: Episode I" Coins, ceramics, copper, photography and video of the metal moved by workers in a factory in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The children accompany the visitors in the viewing of the video.**
- 13 **Students enter the painting of Ashley Hans Scheirl.**
- 14 **Tomislav Gotovac "Garbage collected at the Brotherhood and Unity Square in Zagreb during the performance on May 28, 1981, between 4-8 pm."**
-
- 15 **Taking notes to study "The Disasters of War, Metics Akademia" by Daniel García Andujar.**
- 16 **Text: Curzio Malaparte, Colpo di Stato Technique, 1931. Marie Cool Fabio Balducci.**
- 17 **Vertical desks. Marie Cool Fabio Balducci.**
- 18 **The columns of the museum are "Caryatids". Tracey Rose.**
- 19 **Staley Whitney paints "Sacrifice of James Brown to Apollo", "Friend and neighbors", "Gift to Athenea", "No to life in prison", "Stranger" and "City of Whitman". He documents everything on his phone.**

Parliament of the bodies

- 20 **Attempt of open forms. Society of friends. 34 exercises of freedom... Parko Eleftherias.**

Benaki Museum

- 21 **He photographs a charcoal horse, by Miriam Cahn.**
- 22 **Live and die like Eva Braun. Roe Rosen.**
- 23 **The new museology. El Hadji Sy.**
- 24 **War machine. Sergio Zevallos.**
- 25 **Coal and fingers. Miriam Cahn.**

Odeion

- 26 **Different visitors listen to Uyarakq + Tarrak in the installation of Joar Nango "European everything"**
- 27 **David Lamelas. "Time as Activity: Live Athens-Berlin"**
- 28 **The way that earthly things go. Emeka Ogboh**

- 29 **The stock beats slowly. A song of Pleiades accompanies her singing: When I forget, I'm glad. Emeka Ogboh**
- 30 **Passages, involuntary narratives and the sound of crowded spaces Akinbode Akinbiyi.**
- 31 **Interior Decoration. Beatriz González.**
- 32 **Searching for the missing link, learning to decolonize. Pélagie Gbaguidi.**
- 33 **Hiwa K. Blind as the mother tongue.**
- 34 **Ketly Noël is transported in a wheelbarrow.**
- 35 **Zombification. Ketly Noël**
- 36 **Lying bodies. Ketly Noël**

- 37 **Ebola crisis. Ketly Noël**
- 38 **Voodoo. Hung on Bamboo sticks. Ketly Noël**
- 39 **Heavy metals. Daniel Knorr**
- 40 **Materialization. Daniel Knorr**
- 41 **Materialization. Daniel Knorr**
- 42 **Music room. Nevin Aladag**
- 43 **Chamber music. Nevin Aladag**
- Numismatic Museum
- 44 **The flamenco dancer crawls out of the numismatic museum. La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**
- 45 **Picabia's Flamenca against the ground. La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche. Lyrics from the copla "La Falsa Moneda" by Ramón Perelló Ródenas.**
- 46 **He sings. La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**
- 47 **He dances, looking at the sky. La falsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**
- 48 **Heartbeat. La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**
- 49 **Dance of the coins. La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**
- 50 **Niño sings for Sierpes street, "some catch syphilis and others herpes." La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**
- 51 **Barefoot, Bobote dances with Israel. La farsa monea, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván, Niño de Elche.**

- ASFA
- 52 **Bonita Ely, "Plastikus Progressus: Memento Mori."**
- 53 **María Magdalena Campos-Pons and Neil Leonard "Matanzas Sound Map."**
- 54 **Artur Żmijewski. Glimpse**
- 55 **Building in the ASFA.**
- University of Agriculture of Athens
- 56 **Greenhouse at the University of Agriculture in Athens.**
- 57 **Sheep dyed in indigo blue. Aboubaka Fofana. Univeristy of Agriculture of Athens.**
- 58 **Fence with corn ear motif at the University of Agriculture of Athens.**

READINGS

Pausanias, "Description of Greece I Atica and Megaride" Loeb Classical Library, Translated by W.H.S Jones.

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Alejandro Simón

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