

The Cyprus Pavilion Biennale Arte 2024

20 April – 24 November 2024

Preview

17 – 19 April 2024

Opening

18 April 2024, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

La Biennale di Venezia

60. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

On a wildflower-lined gravel track
off a quiet thoroughfare...

Lower Levant Company

Peter Eramian
Emiddio Vasquez

Haig Aivazian

Endrosia Collective

Andreas Andronikou
Marina Ashioti
Niki Charalambous
Doris Mari Demetriadou
Irina Khenkin
Rafailia Tsiridou
Alexandros Xenophontos

...a parked black van scans its surroundings for personal devices to send out a thumbnail from the account of a recently deceased person. Captioned "OMG! Have you seen this?!", it reaches three unsuspecting acquaintances. In disbelief, the first recipient takes the bait and clicks the link. The second fails to see the notification as it drowns in a sea of information debris. The third – no longer friends with the 'sender' and unaware of their passing – sees the message and opts not to answer, effectively ghosting them. [...] So our ghost story goes, and so it echoes: On which side of the screen lies the ghost?

From this seemingly benign anecdote and through layers of parafictional schemes, **Lower Levant Company** (Peter Eramian, Emiddio Vasquez), **Endrosia Collective** (Andreas Andronikou, Marina Ashioti, Niki Charalambous, Doris Mari Demetriadou, Irini Khenkin, Rafailia Tsiridou, Alexandros Xenophontos), and **Haig Aivazian**, sidestep the superstitious provenance of ghosts to speculate on present sociotechnical and material forms of **ghosting**.

As agitators of social memory, ghosts insist on unresolved grievances, rewriting them until retribution. It is through this confluence of haunting and historical memory that the pavilion focuses on Cyprus' vicinity in the Middle East, itself a factory of revenants, to re-examine the island's orientation vis-a-vis the Levant. Across four interconnected spaces, the exhibition conjures a portal into the histories, narratives and myths that linger within new modes of communication, computational logics and platform economies, all of which produce their own spectres. Beyond incurring the hauntings of such a world, the project proposes ghosting as a paradoxical act of withdrawal and persistence. This form of vigilance requires an adjustment of attention; a recalibration of the senses; a commitment not only to staying with the problem of ghosts, but to drawing alliances with them and, entrusted with their agitation, dismantling and building worlds anew.

The exhibition title takes its cue from the opening sentence of a 2019 Forbes article that exposes a covert spyware operation run out of a black van, parked along an inconspicuous gravel track in the coastal city of Larnaca. With this entry point into the histories of transmission and interference that render the island a 'quiet thoroughfare' for clandestine operations and intelligence interception on a global scale, the pavilion assumes the parafictional front of an agency named **Forever Informed**, both as physical address and as virtual presence on social media.

The works on show are a direct outcome of collaborative research, group excursions, and a collective approach to curation. Accompanying the exhibition, a publication designed by Miquel Hervás Gómez, Doris Mari Demetriadou and Andreas Andronikou, co-published with **Archive Books**, brings together a collection of historical, fictional and analytical writings authored by the artists, each text appearing in English, Cypriot Greek, Cypriot Turkish and Arabic.

Alongside sculptural, audiovisual and spatial interventions, a vigil workspace is integrated within the exhibition, reconfiguring the labour of invigilation – a seemingly passive art world gig – into an active motor of the project. Eschewing the need for pavilion invigilators as invisible guards, invited researchers, along with the exhibiting artists, are prompted to hold a space of reflection and remembrance throughout the duration of the Biennale Arte 2024. Their gathered reflections on the implications of bodily presence, rituals of vigil and the politics of remaining vigilant today, as well as notions more widely connected to the scope of the project, will inform the content of a second publication made available prior to the Biennale's closure.

Organiser



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The Cyprus Pavilion

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Opening Hours

Tuesday – Sunday

11 am – 7 pm, 20 April – 30 September

10 am – 6 pm, 1 October – 24 November