

Large -Scale Artwork in the Urban and Natural Space. From the 1960s to the 21st century, Private Publication, 2012, Paperback.

p. 434, ISBN:978-618-80139-1-9

BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE BOOK

The book is divided into seven richly illustrated chapters.

The **first chapter**, after a short historical flashback on past large- scale artwork, focuses on the artistic movements of the 20th century that went in for similar trials, it approaches the main issues that the artists were occupied with and emphasizes on their social sensitization. All the following chapters concern movements and works of art after 1960, which the writer's research focused on.

The **second chapter** examines the connection between art and nature, whether this is indicated with the use of pure natural material in the work of art or with the form of intervention in the natural environment. In particular, are investigated the ways in which the artists deal with the elements of the natural environment (the land, the plants, the water, the desert, the forest), the ritual character of specific interventions as well as the social dimension attributed to them.

The **third chapter**, which is the longest one, focuses on the art in the structured space and the public places in particular. The issue is approached both from the side of the recipient (parameters of the work understanding and its existence in space). In special sub- chapters are analysed the ways in which a large- scale artwork is integrated in the public space, as part of an architectural structure, as artistic intervention in the outdoor urban space and as its functional sculptural landscaping.

The **fourth chapter** is dedicated to artists that have developed activity in the framework of the ecological movement and have made artistic interventions of similar type.

In the **fifth chapter** is examined the comeback of several artists after 1960 to archetypal forms and symbolism which show an interest in the ultimate past of human kind and in new interpretative approaches in history.

The **sixth chapter** deals with the large- scale works of art.(multi-dimensional structures, grand spectacles etc.) that were created with the aid of the new media offered by contemporary technology.

In the **seventh chapter** is presented the institutional framework about the participation of artists in works of public interest, participation which allows the artists to become a space creator with aesthetic and functional character and not just a creator of artwork. It is particularly examined the related legislation in England, France and the USA and it is pointed that there is no such legislation in our country.

In the **Epilogue**, the writer reaches the conclusion that the use of large scale by the artists of our era aims at the wider social range of the artwork and creates better perspective for its more effective accession to the modern society.

This publication, first for the Greek bibliography, has been designed for everybody who would like to be informed about a relatively new field of art research, the connection of the art with the environment. The book presents a wide spectrum of evidence on the artistic activities of the past four decades of the 20th century, which indicate new orientation in the search of communicative ways between the creators and the wider public, through the accession of large- scale artwork to the natural and public urban space. The numerous artists cited in this book are presented to follow a common route, to act with sensitivity and environmental awareness towards the problems of natural degradation and social alienation, trying through the large- scale artwork to alter the living space itself to reveal its poetic side and create new opportunities for new space- time experience, so that the person reassess their presence and potentials in it.

Publication of part of the book presentation by Giannis Kolokotronis, Art History Professor in Demokriton Thrace University, in the "Art News" in March 2013.

Relating to Eleni Polychronatou's book, I have to notice the following:

1. It's a bulky, condensed and tasteful book, which will remain in history and which will be referred to by many art historians, architects, artists, art lovers and all these people who wish to be informed about how civilization in public space evolves.
2. Written with great sensitivity, the writer has tried, as thoroughly as possible, to give all the possible dimensions of a public work of art in relation to a) the urban space, b) the natural environment, c) the technological space, d) the legislation which allows it to integrate or not into the society.
3. In brief, we would say that Eleni Polychronatou's love for the human being and their environment led her apart from her artistic property to the research of the history of forms, the most contemporary history, the one we all participate in.
4. Her choice from the 60s till our days, includes the following parameters:
 - a) the deep understanding of what is going on in the big capitals of art compared to what is not happening in our country or what is happening randomly
 - b) the writers conviction that art is not only an intellectual action of human beings, whose product is simply integrated into the commercial art system, but a way of living: the better the urban environment we live is formed, the more completed human beings are as psychosomatic unit of society, as entity.
5. Her approach is not characterized by a Greek- centered obsession, but by an international understanding for the art or even better, by a supranational conception based on which the public work of art is a product of the society. Such studies "open our eyes" and oblige us to wonder about our misfortune and our conservatism, when 80%- 90% of public works in Greece are busts and heroes, as if Greece is the only place with heroes in the world.
6. The structure of the study obliges the writer to see in every chapter the social dimension of the work of art, because no human activity is isolated from the society, even the attitude of ascetics and people who choose to leave far from the society. When the modern architecture borrows the forms of sculpture and painting and constructs buildings as works of art, i.e the Museum of Modern Islamic Art in Qatar, which is an applied cubist building of Picasso, then we

can talk about the fortunate identification between the architectural thought and the artist's thought.

7. In her study it becomes absolutely understandable with a lot of examples that the taxpaying citizens, the Administrative Authorities and the artists should have an equal role in the formation of the place we live in and that today's accepted multiformity and the multiple expression of human beings remains a constantly open communication system which is renewed, enriched and which creates its future, as long as we are good recipients and transmitters. When the different sectors communicate smoothly, can be limited the artistic irregularities and abuse of public space and can be seriously considered the needs of the public, who will necessarily live on a daily basis with the visual experience of the particular work of art.
8. We have to admit that the artistic movements after the '60s have not only enhanced human self-awareness, but have also demanded that the citizen develop critical skills so as to express their opinion about issues of vital importance, thus being responsible for their choices. And it is really unfair, through marketing mechanisms, to admire the financial value of the artwork and forget about the content of the artistic creation.