

## **STATE (IN) CONCEPTS**

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**Margarita Bofiliou,  
Laure Prouvost, Jonas Staal,  
Alexandros Tzannis  
Zbyněk Baladrán, Filipa César  
Keren Cytter, Cao Fei,  
Basim Magdy**

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**Curated by iLiana Fokianaki**

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**21 October – 17 December**



## State (in) Concepts

Opening October 20, 6 - 9 p.m  
October 21 - December 17, 2017

With: Margarita Bofiliou, Laure Prouvost, Jonas Staal,  
Alexandros Tzannis  
and screenings with Zbyněk Baladrán, Filipa César, Keren  
Cytter, Cao Fei, Basim Magdy  
Curated by: iLiana Fokianaki

PRESS  
RELEASE

Starting from the question ‘what could a European artistic program be?’, **KADIST invites iLiana Fokianaki, Founder and Director of State of Concept, a non-profit institution located in Athens, to present a retrospective of her program that began in 2013.** State of Concept has since its inception focused on solo exhibitions by international and Greek artists (such as *After Europe* by Jonas Staal in 2016, Margarita Bofiliou *Everything’s wrong Xerxes* in May 2015, Laure Prouvost *C’est l’est not ouest* in April 2016, a.o.) whilst inviting international curators to comment on the current socio-political landscape of Greece and beyond. During the last year, the focus of the exhibition program has zoomed into the many European crises. Fokianaki aims her exhibitions to function as agents that operate in between the domain of the political and the artistic, a space in concept, in which core notions that define our understanding of the world can be challenged and redefined. What other classifications, defining our place beyond or parallel to the state, the nation, the city or the community, can be imagined? The question addressed behind the exhibition at KADIST is ‘could a non-profit art institution born into a region of crisis be considered as a sovereign entity?’ What if we considered an art institution as a State in itself?

**Fokianaki revisits the work of Deleuze and Guattari, particularly the notion of *Urstaat*, “the eternal model of everything the State wants to be and desires”<sup>1</sup>.** Primarily the State desires itself to perpetually exist and to refer to its previous existence, and simultaneously there arises a collective desire for its existence by its subjects. Deleuze and Guattari clarify: “we are always brought back to the idea of the State that comes into the world fully formed and rises up in a single stroke, the unconditioned *Urstaat*<sup>2</sup>”. For them, the hypothesis of the *Urstaat*, creates a theory of

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the State-form that identifies its modus operandi, through social production and unconscious production, simultaneously.

In the exhibition, the artists are invited to think of the art institution as a sovereign State. **The front room of KADIST will become the State's headquarters, its parliament, functioning as the core of the exhibition, and hosting discursive events: a new collaborative work by Jonas Staal and Laure Prouvost, *The Aube's cure Parle Ment*,** (Prouvost's proposition for a new phonetic pronunciation of "Obscure Parliament", typical of her play with words throughout her practice, wishes to highlight in French the words "speak" and "lie"). *The Aube's cure Parle Ment* is an alternative parliament for subjectivities that are neither humans nor objects, and as such, not recognized within the established political discourse.

**In dialogue with this installation, Margarita Bofiliou and Alexandros Tzannis present new works.** Bofiliou's painting literally draws the set structures that define our everyday conditions as citizens of nation-states, but also suspends the grim realities we witness by humorously depicting daily urban rituals or mundane habits. Tzannis creates environments that challenge the frontiers of his life in the city. He is particularly interested in the notion of mapping, and will revisit the representation of the banlieues of Paris, and their politically charged signifiers.

***State (in) Concepts* aims at recomposing our understandings of the State—and all that forms it: identify, citizenship and class, within the structures of institutional powers that surround us.**

Here the artists question our perception of the real and depict the different forms of violence that emerge from these structures.

These questions will also be developed in the exhibition space through a screening program in two parts: « Obscure States » will portray the city as a character with works by Basim Magdy and Cao Fei; and « Concepts of States » will zoom into different conceptualizations of citizenship with works from Filipa César, Zbyněk Baladrán and Keren Cytter.

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1983, p. 217-219.

2. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1983, p. 427.

STATE OF CONCEPT HAS BEEN SUPPORTED SINCE ITS INAUGURATION BY OUTSET GREECE.

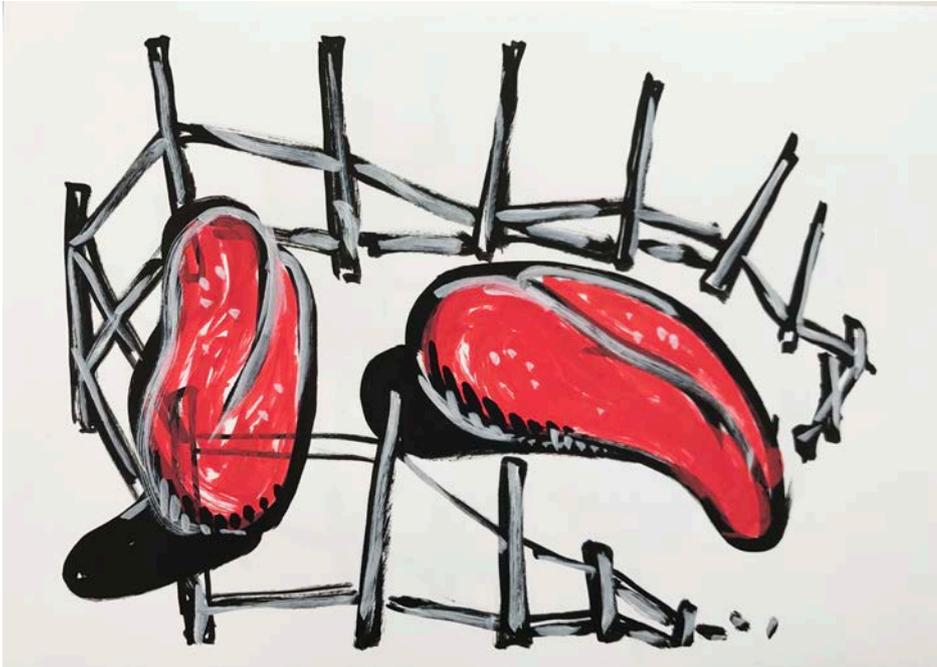
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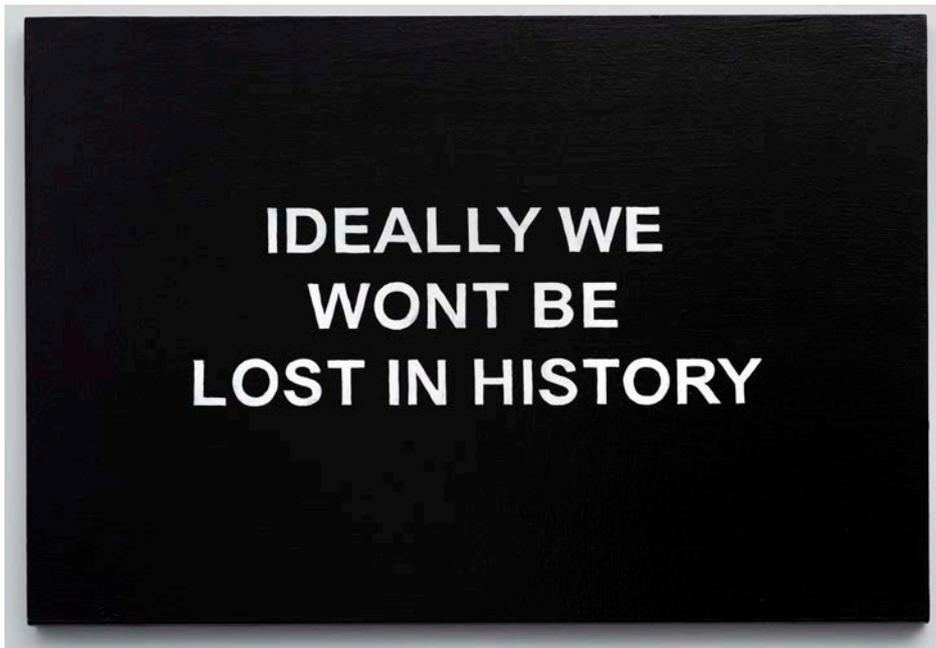
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**OPENING HOURS**  
**Thursday to Sunday**  
**from 2 to 7 pm**  
**or by appointment**  
Metro stations: Abbesses (12)  
Anvers (2)

## AVAILABLE IMAGES



*The Aube's cure Parle Ment, 2017, Study by Jonas Staal*  
For a work in coproduction with Laure Prouvost  
Commissioned by State of Concept, Athens and KADIST, Paris



Laure Prouvost, IDEALLY WE WON'T BE LOST IN HISTORY, 2014, oil, collage and varnish on board, 30x40cm

### ***The Aube's cure Parle Ment***

Laure Prouvost and Jonas Staal, in their first artistic collaboration, present the parliament of the *State (in) Concepts*. It cannot but be an obscure Parliament; the parliament of Deleuze and Guattari's *Urstaat*, that assembles the disembodied parts of institutions and citizens alike.

### **LAURE PROUVOST (B.1986 IN ANTWERPEN, FRANCE). LIVES AND WORKS BETWEEN SAWNSEA AND MOLENBECK.**

She practices making video, songs, sounds and daughter, objects and installation. here a long list of museum and institutions. a line, interesting things, a coma, a line, a list of residencies and prizes. A Selection of solo projects including: a New Museum for Grand dad in Milano, A tearoom for grand ma in Derry, a karaoke room in Brussels, a new octopus ink vodka bar for Gregor in Rotterdam, A travel agency for an Uncle in Frankfurt, a lobby for love among the artists in the Hague and Luzern... tea bags, and wet floors.

### **JONAS STAAL (B. 1981 IN ZWOLLE, NETHERLANDS). LIVES AND WORKS IN ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS.**

Jonas Staal's work includes interventions in public space, exhibitions, theater plays, publications and lectures, focusing on the relationship between art, democracy and propaganda. Staal is the founder of the artistic and political organization New World Summit, for which he invited blacklisted members of terrorist organisations or unrecognised states, and their lawyers and representatives, to form alternative parliaments. Together with BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht (NL), he founded the New World Academy.

Jonas Staal has studied monumental art in Enschede (NL) and Boston (US) and currently works on his PhD research entitled Art and Propaganda in the 21st Century at PhDArts program of the University of Leiden (NL). Recent exhibitions include: After Europe, State of Concept, Athens (2016); Oslo Architecture Triennial (2016); Art of the Stateless State, Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana (2015); New World Academy, Centraal Museum, Utrecht (2015).



*The Aube's cure Parle Ment*, 2017, Study by Jonas Staal for a work in coproduction with Laure Prouvost, commissioned by State of Concept, Athens and KADIST, Paris

**Margarita Bofiliou** and **Alexandros Tzannis** accompany the Aube's cure *Parle Ment* as agents of a State in Concepts. If Prouvost and Staal propose its parliament, Bofiliou represents its citizens and Tzannis is its mapmaker: the cartographer of new states to come.

## **MARGARITA BOFILIOU (B.1979 IN ATHENS, GREECE). LIVES AND WORKS IN ATHENS, GREECE.**

Bofiliou's work uses symbols, social practices, experience and memory, primeval mysticism and contemporary inwardness as tools for her work. She investigates the way through which the socio-political system forms symbols that can include stereotypes, behaviours and roles to its benefit. The construction and elaboration of human and environmental nature, in conjunction to a personal experience, are also of interest to the artist.

Margarita Bofiliou holds a MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art, London (2005). Selected solo and group exhibitions include among others: *Sensual Abstraction*, ReMap4, Athens (2013); *Innate memories*, Art Athina, State of Concept, Athens, (2013); *Parnassos*, Literary Society Parnassos, Athens (2012); *The Forgotten Bar*, Galerie Utopia, ReMap3, Athens (2011).

## **ALEXANDROS TZANNIS (B.1979 IN ATHENS, GREECE). LIVES AND WORKS IN ATHENS, GREECE.**

Tzannis' work combines figurative and abstract elements, idealistic and symbolic characteristics, decorative and allegorical connotations, whilst it references hieroglyphics and science-fiction iconography. His work operates on one basic axon: that our contemporary historical situation demands archaeologies for the future and not prophesies of the past.

Alexandros Tzannis holds an MFA from the Goldsmiths College, London. He studied at the Athens School of Fine Arts and at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna, Austria. Selected solo and group exhibitions include among others: *Blue-black layer over the White city*, State of Concept, Athens (2017); *Christina Michalis, Arthur Ou, Alexandros Tzannis, Eleni Koroneou* Gallery, Athens (2014); *Sensual Abstraction*, Remap 4, Athens, (2013); *Contemporary Treasures*, Ileana Tounta Art Center, Athens (2013); *Flying*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2012); *Garden of Eden*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012).



*Samsara*, 2017, acrylic gouache, acrylic, vinyl colour and inox on canvas, 200 cm x 500cm. Courtesy of the artist and State of Concept Athens



*Blue-black layers over the White City*, 2016-2017, installation view © State of Concept, 2017

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The second part of the exhibition consists of film screenings that explore the notion of the State through two of its components: that of the city and that of the citizen. In the first chapter, entitled “**Obscure States**” we look into the obscurity of the state apparatus. In the second chapter of films, entitled “**Concepts of States**,” the focus is on lateral manifestations of citizenship through exclusion, discrimination and (colonial) violence.

## OBSCURE STATES

Basim Magdy, *The Dent*, 2014, 19’02.

Cao Fei, *La Town*, 2014, 41’58.

## CONCEPTS OF STATES

Filipa Cesar, *Transmission from the Liberated Zones*, 2015, 30’.

Zbyněk Baladrán, *To be framed*, 2016, 8’11.

Keren Cytter, *Nightmare*, 2007, 12’21.

## **BASIM MAGDY (B.1977 IN ASSIUT, EGYPT). LIVES AND WORKS IN BASEL, SWITZERLAND, AND CAIRO, EGYPT.**

Basim Magdy has created a multifaceted oeuvre encompassing film, photography, slide projections, installations, and works on paper. At the center of his works are structures of seeing, remembering, and archiving. Many of his works, which are based on observations of reality, are akin to surreal tales full of cryptic humor. With paintings and assemblies boasting psychedelic-looking colors, the artist investigates collective utopias and formulates his doubts in dogmas and ideologies. In *The Dent*, Magdy narrates the story of an anonymous city that desires to host the Olympics but fatally fails to do so.

Basim Magdy has participated in numerous international group exhibitions, including the Sharjah Biennial (2017), Jeu de Paume, Paris (2016), Surround Audience, New Museum Triennial (2015), *Lest The Two Seas Meet*, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (2015), La Biennale de Montréal and MEDIACITY Seoul Biennial (2014).

## SCREENING PROGRAM



Basim Magdy, *The Dent*, 2014, Super 16mm film transferred to Full HD video, 19’02”.

## CAO FEI (B.1978 IN GUANGZHOU, CHINA). LIVES AND WORKS IN BEIJING, CHINA.

Cao Fei mixes social commentary, popular aesthetics, references to Surrealism, and documentary conventions in her films and installations. Her works reflect on the rapid and chaotic changes that are occurring in Chinese society today. In *La Town*, Cao Fei portrays a city of absolute violence and disaster, a densely depicted chaos, with dissident and corrupted citizens, acting outside of the confines of the State's power apparatus.

Cao Fei studied at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts. Selected solo and group exhibitions include among others: *Diorama*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2017); *.com/ .cn*, K11 Art Foundation and MoMA PS1, Hong Kong (2017); *Cao Fei*, MoMA PS1, New York (2016); *Cao Fei: Shadow Plays*, The Mistake Room, Los Angeles (2015); *Cao Fei: Splendid River*, Secession, Vienna (2015). In 2016 Cao Fei received the Best Artist Award from Chinese Contemporary Art Award (CCAA).



Cao Fei, *La Town*, 2014, single channel video, 16:9, color, with sound, 41' 56"

## FILIPA CÉSAR (B.1975 IN PORTO, PORTUGAL). LIVES AND WORKS IN BERLIN, GERMANY.

Filipa César is an artist and filmmaker interested in the fictional aspects of the documentary, the porous borders between cinema and its reception, and the politics and poetics inherent to moving image. Since 2011, she has been looking into the origins of the cinema of the African Liberation Movement in Guinea Bissau as a laboratory of resistance to ruling epistemologies.

*Transmission from the Liberated Zones* refers to one of the many pages of colonial histories of her native Portugal via a visual experimentation, departing from the concept of "Liberated Zones" used to describe areas freed from colonial domination in Guinea.

César premiered her first feature length essay-film *Spell Reel* at the Forum section of the 67. Berlinale, 2017. Selected exhibitions and screenings have taken place at: 29th São Paulo Biennial, 2010; Manifesta 8, Cartagena, 2010; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 2011-15; Jeu de Paume, Paris, 2012; Khiasma, Paris, 2011-2015; Kunstwerke, Berlin, 2013; SAAVY Contemporary, Berlin 2014-15; Tensta konsthall, Spånga, 2015; Mumok, Vienna, 2016; Contour 8 Biennial, Mechelen and Gasworks, London; MoMA, New York, 2017.



Filipa César, *Transmission from the Liberated Zones*, 2015

## ZBYNĚK BALADRÁN (B.1973 IN PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA). LIVES AND WORKS IN PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC.

In his works, Zbyněk Baladrán investigates territories that are occupied by Western civilization. Using methodologies similar to those used by anthropologists and sociologists, this post-humanist “archaeologist” digs up the remnants of a not-so-distant past. He searches for spatial “pockets” where a way of life is reflected with its systems, and for the objects through which humanity is arranging the image of its past and future. Zbyněk Baladrán filmed *To be framed* on the premises of a former military base. The film discusses symbolic violence, playing with the “normative” portrait of childhood representative of innocence.

Zbyněk Baladrán studied art history in the Philosophy Department of Charles University and at the Academy of Fine Arts, both in Prague. In 2001 he co-founded Display, a space for contemporary art, which in 2007 became Tranzitdisplay where he is responsible for the exhibitions program. He participated in the 56th Biennale di Venezia (2013). In 2008, together with Vit Havránek, he curated Monument to Transformation, a three-year long research project on social and political transformations since the fall of the Iron Curtain.



Zbyněk Baladrán, *To be framed*, 2016, full HD, 8'28". Courtesy the artist.

## KEREN CYTTER (B.1977 IN TEL AVIV, ISRAEL). LIVES AND WORKS IN NEW YORK, USA.

Keren Cytter creates films, video installations, and drawings that represent social realities through experimental modes of storytelling. Characterised by a non-linear, cyclical logic Cytter's films consist of multiple layers of images; conversation; monologue, and narration systematically composed to undermine linguistic conventions and traditional interpretation schemata.

In *Nightmare*, Keren Cytter replays the scenario of murder between a couple. The surreal use of repetition gives an accurate portrayal of the violent power dynamics between the primal formation of organized humanity; that of the couple.

Keren Cytter studied at The Avni Institute in Tel Aviv and received her degree from de Ateliers in Amsterdam. Selected solo exhibitions include: *Ocean*, Pilar Corrias, London (2016); *Panoramas*, Mathew Gallery, New York (2016); *Keren Cytter Selection*, Künstlerhaus Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz (2016); *Keren Cytter*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2015), *Here and There*, Noga Gallery, Tel Aviv (2015), *Rose Garden*, Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art, Indianapolis (2015).



Keren Cytter, *Nightmare*, 2007. Digital video, black & white, sound, 12' 21". Courtesy of the artist and Pilar Corrias Gallery

## **ILIANA FOKIANAKI (B.1980 IN GREECE). LIVES AND WORKS IN ATHENS, GREECE AND ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.**

iLiana Fokianaki is a writer and a curator. Her main project is the creation of State of Concept Athens, a non-profit gallery operating since 2013. The non-profit institution promotes Greek and international artists through solo exhibitions, and through inviting international curators to curate group exhibitions with both greek and international artists thus familiarizing international professionals with the greek art scene. Her latest project is *Future Climates*, an independent research platform co-founded with curator Antonia Alampi. It aims to propose viable future solutions to the current climates affecting the life of small-scale organizations and the precarity of cultural workers.

iLiana Fokianaki has studied in London and read for an MA at City University London (Arts Criticism and Management). She lived in London until 2005, where she worked for institutions and galleries. She is currently working on her PhD research on politics, performativity, identity and economy. Since March 2017 she is curator at Kunsthall Extra City, Antwerp, Belgium.

Selected independent exhibitions include among others : *ExtraCitizen*, Kunsthall Extra City (Antwerp, 2017); *The Kids Want Communism*, Visual Culture Research Center, Kyiv, Ukraine, and MoBY, Tel Aviv, Israël (2016-2017); *Balconies*, REMAP 3 (Athens, 2011); *Land of Promise*, REMAP 2 and 2nd Athens Biennial (Athens, 2009).

## ABOUT THE CURATOR

# KADIST

is a non-profit organization that believes the arts make a fundamental contribution to a progressive society. Its programs actively encourage the engagement of artists, often represented in its collection, with the important issues of today. Kadist's collections and productions reflect the global scope of contemporary art, and its programs develop collaborations with artists, curators and many art organizations around the world. Local programs in Kadist's hubs of Paris and San Francisco include exhibitions, public events, residencies and educational initiatives: complemented by an online reach to an international audience, they aim at creating vibrant conversations about contemporary art and ideas.