

ART AGENDA



Akademie der Künste presents Kalliopi Lemos Akademie der Künste, Berlin / Germany

September 30, 2009



“AT CROSSROADS”
by Kalliopi Lemos
October 12-30, 2009

ART AGENDA

(Berlin, Germany)

<http://www.adk.de>

<http://www.kalliopilemos.com>

Installation AT CROSSROADS by Kalliopi Lemos, October 12-30, 2009

in front of the Brandenburg Gate/on the Platz des 18. März (Berlin, Germany)

The Akademie der Künste (Academy of Fine Arts) is pleased to present the installation “At Crossroads”, by the Greek artist Kalliopi Lemos, on the Platz des 18. März, in front of the Brandenburg Gate (Berlin). It is the third part of a trilogy of public artworks, begun in 2006 and installed in the cities of Eleusis, Istanbul and now Berlin. The work will be on view from October 12-30, 2009, in connection with the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It appears under the auspices of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and was organized in collaboration with the Hellenic Migration Policy Institute in Athens. A documentation of the complete project with photos and a film will be exhibited in the Akademie der Künste.

Through this interdisciplinary art project that reaches out to countries, institutions and the migrant within each one of us, Kalliopi Lemos seeks to bring the issue of migration to the public’s attention. Pressing home the sensitive issue of illegal migration by using the actual boats that carried the illegal migrants in their crossings from East to West, Lemos creates an unparalleled trilogy of installations, which convey universal values of solidarity while investigating crossings from country to country, from life to death and the potential of these crossings as a source of regeneration.

The simple, wooden, Turkish boats used by migrants still bear a palpable historical, emotional and conceptual freight that makes the work an ode to human suffering. The artist herself has come to see the boats as truly sacred objects. By treating the public space occupied by the boats as a stage for the tragedy of the human condition and for the historical dimension of the migration issue, Lemos has been able to initiate a dialogue between the works, their particular sites and their viewers.

For the culmination of the series in the final Berlin installation, the artist will present nine authentic boats. Four boats at the bottom of the installation form a cross symbolizing Berlin as a crossroads of policy making and migration in Europe. The impressive size of the installation – it will be 13 meters tall and occupy a space of 180 sqm. – is essential to its effectiveness in a public space. The fragile objects from which it is built are linked closely to the tragic journeys that are often organized by human traffickers and cause 3,000 to 4,000 deaths every year.

The project began with the work “Crossing” (2006-2009) in Eleusis, near the site where a shrine of the goddess Demeter was once worshipped. This installation was burned in a private ritual in July. “Round Voyage” (2007-2009, see photos above for both works) followed at the Contemporary Art Centre santralistanbul, at the tip of the Golden Horn in Istanbul.

Johannes Odenthal, responsible for coordinating the program of events of the Akademie der Künste, described the unique strategy behind Kalliopi Lemos’ work: “Her monuments are no less political than poetic, no less contemporary than timeless. They affirm a rigorous and emotional tradition of remembrance and critique in Western thought.”

“At Crossroads”, open 24 hours daily from the 12th to the 30th of October, 2009, adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate (Platz des 18. März), Berlin.

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