Maria Loboda, *Perilous seat with a rabbit trap. Perilous seat with a pheasant trap*, 2011, wood, water color, acrylic, rabbit trap, pheasant trap, 39⅜ x 117¾".

exhibition was a hint-dropping exercise in which seemingly disastrous outcomes could be discerned. Danger, fear, trauma, and catastrophe are always waiting, though rarely visible, for they are concealed behind the carefully constructed screen of the object world. The artist is interested in the deceptive peace of the decades between the two world wars. It was during these years that science and culture reached the peak of their frantic ambitions, almost in the middle of modernity's cataclysm. In *Perilous seat with a rabbit trap. Perilous seat with a pheasant trap* (all works 2011), Loboda has carved out of a wooden plank an image of two teenagers sitting comfortably in a pair of lounge chairs. The source of the work is an image found in London's Geffrye Museum, an institution devoted to the history of British middle-class interiors, and it evokes the paradigm of well-being, embodied by the boys as they recline on the loungers, unaware of any possible danger. Many of Loboda's main concerns are here at their most literal: the confrontation of the unconscious, the unattainable, and sheer reality; the fate of history; daily life—all seasoned with a broad range of cultural references.

On a more abstract level were three works—*Turkish Agate over British drag*, *Spanish moiré over French Curl*, and *Polish trocadero over neo Italian*—in which Loboda had digitally printed images of various kinds of marble on roughly three-foot-square nylon sheets. Arguably the best works in the show, these light pieces of fabric were spread on the floor in superimposed pairs. Loboda is interested in marble as a symbol of both power and permanence, in counterpoint to the notions of temporality that are a recurrent motif in her work. By the superimposition of the two sheets, as specified in the works' titles, she ironically evokes a past marked by political tensions that frequently led to military conflict.

Other works bridge language and representation in fruitful connections. This by no means implies that legibility is always explicit. On the contrary, content often slips out, frequently overtly eclipsed by ornament. Each letter in the title of *The Messenger (Peril is the absence of any awareness of peril. Like the night before a war)* is individually and successively portrayed before the camera in a strangely engaging video work. One would have to avoid being distracted by the sheer attractiveness of the letters in order to grasp its meaning. It's hard to read, beautiful, and maybe also hideous.

—Javier Hontoria

Antonio Ballester Moreno

LA CASA ENCENDIDA

The question of the relationship between children's art and that of adults has long interested Antonio Ballester Moreno. At a previous exhibition here, titled "No Future," he showed drawings he himself had made as a child. The background to "No School," his most recent show, was a workshop that Ballester Moreno gave, in which participants attempted to do away with learned technique and acquired sophistication in order to make something much simpler, something more akin to the art of children.

"No School" featured the pieces made by participants in the workshop along with a single sculpture. Just as in a show of student art at the end of the school year, the drawings were hung on the walls of two hallways. All are on A2 paper (about sixteen by twenty-three inches), and they cover an array of themes: self-portraits, still lifes, Nativity scenes, landscapes, and trees, as well as purely ornamental motifs. Their individual makers were not identified at the entrance to the exhibition the sculpture was: a life-size bronze titled *Girl*, 2011, which Ballester Moreno made in the spirit of the workshop, though it is obviously much more complex in technique, and neither its spirit nor its appearance suggests a lack of sophistication.

In speaking of his wish to recover the purity of expression and technique that he finds in children's drawings, Ballester Moreno refers to Picasso, who said that when he was young he could draw like Raphael but then spent a lifetime learning to draw like a child. Of course, this approach was the basis of much modern art, not only for Picasso but also for artists such as Dubuffet and Basquiat. And what's true of children's art is also true of works by the mentally ill or from non-Western cultures: It has a kind of purity that many artists hope to recover, or to achieve through a process of unlearning that others might call learning. This impulse goes back to the Pre-Raphaelites or even to the German Nazarenes.

View of "Antonio Ballester Moreno," 2011.

In any case, the works in "No School" are very revealing, mainly because a visitor who is not privy to the premise of the project might think that they were actually made by children (though this is offset by the evident influence of Picasso, Matisse, and Hockney in some of the works). The first phase of the project, then, seems to have been a success: It is in fact possible to create like a child and to be as expressive as children are. And although there were some attractive abstractions, this was particularly true of the self-portraits, which are the most powerful of the works. Some of them, especially those that focus on the subject's eyes, are enormously communicative. This, in turn, leads to another question: Is a work better if its creator is personally involved in its theme? The answer suggested here is yes, since the creators of the largely unconvincing Christmas-themed works seem not to have known how to handle their subject. Another question concerns the affinity between direct expression and technique. As said above, the unknowing viewer might think that the works on paper were made by children. But this is not the case with Ballester Moreno's sculpture—yet he seems to want us to be able to make the backward leap from the highly skilled processes involved in the work's realization to the childlike spirit in which it was conceived.

—Pablo Llorca

Translated from Spanish by Jane Brodie.

ATHENS/RETHYMNO, CRETE/LONDON

Kalliopi Lemos

BENAKI MUSEUM/IBRAHIM KHAN MOSQUE/
THE CRYPT GALLERY, ST. PANCRAS CHURCH

"Navigating in the Dark," a trilogy of exhibitions by Kalliopi Lemos, was installed in three far-flung locations, suitable to its theme of psychic and geographic exploration. Curated by Maria Marangou, director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete and curator of the Greek Pavilion at last year's Venice Biennale, it was initiated at the Benaki Museum in Athens, where four large-scale biomorphic steel sculptures were placed around a honeycomb-shaped pool of water dotted with steel-mesh human heads slowly attaining various patinas. *Bear All Crawl*, 2009, is a wriggling larva split to reveal russet ribs; in *Reaching Up High*, 2009, a plantlike shoot performs a sinuous dance out of a pod, ending in a pincer resembling a Venus flytrap. The sleek black steel is textured with sensual details, such as the prickly seams on the ribs forming *Space Within*, 2010, a feminine shape with a welcoming womb that provokes shivers down the spine.

Installed in the seventeenth-century Ibrahim Khan Mosque in Rethymno, Crete, the second show was both more visceral and more otherworldly: An enormous glowing ovoid containing hallucinatory pink aliens waving reddened phalluses, evoking something between Paul McCarthy and Louise Bourgeois, *The Big Egg and the Hairy Goddesses*, 2007–11, was placed under the mosque's spectacular dome, surrounded by various vessels representing rites of passage. To one side was a fleet of open, light-reflecting white pods that portrayed a tender innocence; on the other, slender black specters stood like somber sentries at the gates of hell, their burnished surfaces achieved through repeated burning and scraping followed by the application of a wax finish. A smoothly honed trunk of chestnut wood with grain resembling waves and arranged with human heads made of salt—slowly transmogrifying as condensation and then evaporation literally return sea to sky—was placed like a sacrificial altar in front of the prayer niche. Previously a Venetian church, the highly charged sacred space is a historically layered relic of the continual invasions of the island, at the border between East and West; Lemos transformed it into an occult temple that traversed the liminal territory between physical consciousness and transcendence.

Kalliopi Lemos, *The Big Egg and the Hairy Goddesses*, 2007–11, mild steel and two-way acrylic mirror; papier-mâché, animal hair, 13' 1½" x 8' 10¾" x 8' 10¾". Ibrahim Khan Mosque, Rethymno, Crete.

In the vaulted underground crypt of London's St. Pancras Church, the third exhibition entailed an uncanny funereal journey to the afterlife. Three bare Greek fishing boats, arranged along a narrow corridor, each contained seven ethereal creatures rendered in black steel mesh: first writhing serpents, then faceless refugees—the vessel elevated in a sort of limbo—and finally ravens, some hovering ominously like vultures in a gothic scene straight out of Poe. Down another corridor, gorgeous giant bees fashioned of white Japanese paper fluttered like angelic souls, and a nook filled with an impenetrable Arcadian field of wheat fronds beckoned like unattainable desire, both reminders of the fecund pleasures of the living earth.

A deeply moving performance one evening in the space, titled *Il Deserto*, 2011, and made in collaboration with Greek theater director Theodoros Terzopoulos, contributed bone-chilling immediacy to the eldritch context. The viscerally meditative incantation by Italian actor Paolo Musio portrayed words as both instruments of survival and evidence of their own futility and ultimate meaninglessness. Altogether this wake for civilization was a profoundly comforting reminder of the eventual obliteration of everything and the incumbent urgency to address the nowness of life: "The one who fears death is already dead." It could also be a metaphor for the current situation in the artist's homeland—and the world—which is testing the limits of spiritual strength in the face of economic and environmental disaster.

—Cathryn Drake

TOKYO

"Metabolism: City in the Future"

MORI ART MUSEUM

This exhibition is the first ever to provide a comprehensive overview of Metabolism, the internationally acclaimed Japanese avant-garde architectural movement of the 1960s. With a spectacular installation of more than five hundred objects and documents representing some eighty projects, it provides plural contexts for interpreting the movement. The exhibition's main thesis is that Metabolism inherited the "nation-building" spirit from prewar land-development projects and postwar reconstruction plans for Japanese cities, including Kenzo Tange and others' master plan for Hiroshima and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in 1955. This primarily suggests Metabolism's renewed relevance for the restoration of Japanese national life after the Tohoku earthquake of last March, though the generous showing of primary materials also offers many alternative ways of understanding Metabolism's contemporary significance.

Metabolism, formed by seven members—critic Noboru Kawazoe; architects Kiyonori Kikutake, Kisho Kurokawa, Masato Otaka, and Fumihiko Maki; industrial designer Kenji Ekuan; and graphic designer Kiyoshi Awazu—was launched on the occasion of the World Design Conference in Tokyo in May 1960 with the aim of redefining architecture as a means to construct a new urban space. In "Metabolism/1960," the manifesto distributed at the conference, the seven announced their purposes specifically as (1) to provide a vision of a future society, (2) to treat design and technology as extensions of the generative power of human life—as part of the universal process of becoming, and (3) to promote the "metabolic transformation of history." In the same manifesto, the architects presented their urbanist plans. Kikutake gave details of architectural projects such as Tower Shape Community, 1958, presenting the basic Metabolist architectural model that combines a core structure (often called a megastructure)—in this case, a gigantic pillar—with movable units that could be added or taken away to expand or condense the city. He also showed its minimum embodiment in Sky House (Kikutake's own one-room dwelling, built in 1958) and his proposal for "Movenets," raised high above the irregular ground with pillars. Kurokawa presented Agricultural City Project, 1960, in which clusters of built structures hover over agricultural areas; Maki and Otaka's collaborative project for the redevelopment of the Shinjuku Terminal train station led to their proposal "Toward Group Form" (1960), which envisaged urban development through the flexible relations of loosely grouped buildings.

From the original members' drawings, statements, architectural plans, and models, one can infer the progressive nature of Metabolism's ideas and methods. They embraced mutability as a conceptual principle, assuming both architecture and cities could coalesce and dissipate like living organisms; the accumulation of cell-like units represented by Kikutake's housing projects and Kurokawa's capsule buildings, and the organic development of Maki and Otaka's group buildings reflect the

Kiyonori Kikutake, *Marine City 1963*, ca. 1985. Model. From "Metabolism: City in the Future."