

Mystery 42 Futuring Waters

A research project by Jenny Marketou

Interdisciplinary and interartistic meetings
May 29 - June 28, 2023

Open Call

From May 29 to June 28, 2023 Eleusis European Capital of Culture and the international artist and educator **Jenny Marketou** organize **Mystery 42 Futuring Waters**, a series of **public interdisciplinary and interartistic gatherings** (workshops, lectures, performances, podcasts, site visits, etc.) which will contribute to **the creation of a manifesto for the rights of the waters in Elefsina** exploring potential socio-ecological futures. “A Speculative Manifesto Claiming the Water Rights for Elefsina” will be presented **between September 15 and October 2**, within the framework of **Ecoculture Festival** and will be accompanied by an exhibition as well as a special printed edition.

Jenny Marketou transforms the **Canteen art hub** on the waterfront of Elefsina into a **Wet Lab** with the help of Greek and international scientists, artists, curators, architects, archaeologists, activists and active citizens of Elefsina, among others. Through this original convergence of co-creators, Marketou attempts to propose solutions to ecological issues, to raise awareness and to re-imagine the waters of Elefsina in an era of intense climatic and social change. It is a complex exercise of co-authorship in which the local community and especially young people have an active role.

Mystery 42 Futuring Waters is part of Jenny Marketou's year-long interdisciplinary research that examines ways of dealing with climate change, which is linked to abusive human interventions in the environment. After careful research and a combination of art and design, Marketou creates sculptural ecosystems that give access to clean water using oysters as raw material. In addition, oysters provide food for human and non-human organisms and act as a powerful metaphor for redefining both environmental and social justice. Marketou works internationally on the aforementioned issues concerning the wider field of “hydropolitics”, a complex political thought around water. Her artistic practice is exemplified by her collaboration with scientists, activists, academics and boat builders as part of The Billion Oyster Project and the Swale Lab on Governors Island in New York, where she lives and works. Thus, during Mystery 42 Futuring Waters, Marketou will transmit the knowledge, methods and techniques she has acquired in her long-term

artistic research, enriching and creating new collaborative methods of knowledge production that respond to the increased needs of asserting water rights in Elefsina.

The first part of the Futuring Waters modular project process consists of three thematic gatherings that contribute to the creation of the manifesto:

Meeting 1

Feminist subjectivity, watered: Liquid Communities in the Making

May 29 - 31, June 1 - 2 & 13, 2023

The first gathering in the process of mapping the “hydroscene”, under the title “Feminist subjectivity, watered: Liquid Communities in the Making”, with the invited curators Blanca de la Torre, Eleni Riga and artists Joulia Strauss and Jenny Marketou, focuses on an amalgam of ecological and feminist approaches using fictional and ritualistic tools to reimagine the interdependent relationships between bodies of water and the ways we deal with ecological grief.

Meeting 2

Hydropolitics: Water Sovereignty, the Imaginary and Gaiapolitics

June 7 - 10, 2023

The second meeting entitled “Hydropolitics: Water Sovereignty, the Imaginary and Gaiapolitics”, with curator Denis Maksimov-Gupta and the contribution of the artist and educator Jenis Marketou is an attempt reclaim of the epic work of Hesiod's Theogony, a long composition around the Cosmogony putting the water element at the center. This new narrative process urges us to perceive water as an active agent in shaping public engagement and public space.

Meeting 3

Thallasotopies: Between the Wet/Dry Divide; Regeneration, Transformation, Purification, Biodiversity

June 15 - 17, 18, 20, 22, 23 - 25, 26 - 27 & 28, 2023

The third encounter, “Thallasotopies: Between the Wet/Dry Divide; Regeneration, Transformation, Purification, Biodiversity”, which will equally inform the manifesto involves co-creators from the fields of art, science, archeology and architecture (Nicolas Anastasopoulos, Angela YT Chan, Niki Diogou, Dimitra Ioannou, Ariana Kalliga, Jenny Marketou, Panagis Marketos, Michael Skoullou, Tatiana Theodoropoulou). In this gathering, the participants will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves and enrich the theoretical and practical existing knowledge tools through the local perspectives and lived experiences of the coastal city of Elefsina. Here, marine biology, zooarchaeology, mapping and surveillance technologies are organically combined with poetry and the creation of sculptures with oysters.

A Speculative Manifesto Claiming the Water Rights for Elefsina

The aforementioned gatherings reflect the rich historical, scientific and cultural role of the waters of Elefsina and form a spirit that moves away from the anthropocentric view of the world by favoring a network of relationships of fluid and hybrid harmonious coexistence. In the second part of the project, Marketou draws inspiration from the constitutions of some countries that already attribute legal rights to Nature such as Ecuador (2008) and Bolivia (2009), as well as the legal rights of the Whanganui rivers in New Zealand and Damodar in India and offers a new speculation situated at Elefsina that is inscribed in the global efforts to defend the personhood of nature and especially of water bodies. The manifesto, A Speculative Manifesto Claiming the Water Rights for Elefsina captures the results of a collective effort to design an active political space in Elefsina to ensure a sustainable and inclusive future, protect biodiversity, and the right of democratic access to clean water for all bodies of water.

Detailed Programme:

Meeting 1

Feminist subjectivity, watered: Liquid Communities in the Making

Ecofeminist Aquapoetics: There is some truth in legends and some legend in all truths
Blanca de la Torre

Dates: May 29 - 31, 2023

Hours:

29 May: 4 - 8 p.m.

30 May: 5 - 9 p.m.

31 May: 5 - 8 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

The curator Blanca de La Torre proposes a three-chapter workshop taking into consideration the politics of location focused on the the water as a Mediterranean entity, employs collective thinking and storytelling combined with critical materialism theories and examines both the ecofeminist commons in the everyday life and the importance of mythologies in contemporary Elefsina. We will imagine water in relation to the future and subjectivity that are fluid and inclusive of other bodies - both human and non-human. The workshop will lead to a co-authored chanting/whispering procession along the sea waters of Elefsina and a soccer game by an all- women team.

Reclaim the Myth

Eleni Riga

Dates: June 1 - 2, 2023

Hours:

June 1: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

June 2: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Language: Greek

A workshop led by the visual arts curator and curatorial consultant of Mystery 42 Futuring Waters, Eleni Riga around ecofeminism theory and praxis and the myth as a tool for social and environmental justice that will lead to a collective oral rewriting of the myth of Demeter in inclusive and posthuman terms. During the workshop, participants and participants will become familiar with local customs such as polysporia as tangible examples of folk knowledge and ecofeminist practices that connect land cultivation with water rights.

Rituals of Environmental Grief
Julia Strauss

Dates: June 13, 2023

Hours: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

Julia Strauss, artist and activist will show how indigenous communities who suffer climate catastrophe cope with the use of rituals. A new ritual of mourning for the ecocide of Elefsina will be created to celebrate what is left from it.

Meeting 2

Hydropolitics: Water Sovereignty, the Imaginary and Gaiapolitics

Hydropolitics: Water Sovereignty, the Imaginary and Gaiapolitics
Denis Maksimov-Gupta with Jenny Marketou

Dates: June 7-10, 2023

Hours: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

This workshop by the curator Denis Maksimov-Gupta with the help of the artist and educator Jenny Marketou attempts to reappropriate the epic poem Theogony by Hesiod, a long composition around the Cosmogony, placing the water element at the epicenter. This new narrative process urges us to perceive water as an active agent in shaping civil society and public space.

Meeting 3

Thalassotopies: Between the Wet/Dry Divide; Regeneration, Transformation, Purification, Biodiversity

Storytelling Interconnectedness

Angela YT Chan

Dates: June 15 - 17, 2023

Hours:

June 15 : 5 - 8 p.m.

June 16: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. & 4 - 7 p.m.

June 17: 5 - 8 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

Merging analogue story pieces with an existing digital map, the artist and curator Angela YT Chan explores how land and waterscapes are impacted by climate change and the power structures that shape dominant narratives. This workshop attempts to create multispecies and multi-landscaped climate change stories that blend imagination and facts within a real world setting.

Crafting Futures

Nicholas Anastasopoulos

Dates: June 18, 2023

Hours: 12 - 3 p.m. & 5 - 8 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

A participatory workshop of collective brainstorming on envisioning possible futures for Elefsina incorporating methodologies for visualizing and consensus building by Dr. Nicholas Anastasopoulos, Assistant Professor at School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens.

What's Next for Water? From the local to the global and the global from the local

Michael J. Scoullos

Dates: June 20, 2023

Hours: 6 - 9 p.m.

Language: Greek

As part of Action in the city Dr. Scoullos who was raised in Elefsina will discuss the role of water for global peace and stability and the access to clean water as a human right for all.

He will to connect his experiences from the Gulf of Elefsina to the waterways of the world in a lively participatory discussion about what is next big steps for water, looking to how environmentalists, artists, activists, politicians, scientists, can find new forms of collaboration and reflect on how we can deliver fast water action in the coming years.

Co-designing a Hatchery: Speculative Design, Borders and Ecological Justice
Arianna Kalliga with Jenny Marketou

Dates: June 22, 2023

Hours: 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

A public discussion between the curator Ariana Kalliga and Jenny Marketou and will delve into Marketou's research on waterways, oyster ecosystems, and collective practices of co-design, exploring the possibilities of creating a "Hatchery" - a breeding place or incubator for transformation. The discussion will be followed by a Q&A.

The Hatchery: What about figuring out how to design for the water and how it can contribute to its restoration ? How do we artists empower ourselves to make living things which create space and habitats for other things to come back into life to clear the waterbody?

Jenny Marketou with Panagis Marketos

Dates: June 23 - 25, 2023

Hours:

June 23 & 24: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. & 4 - 8 p.m.

June 25: 4 - 8 p.m.

Language: English & Greek

In this hands-on workshop on tabby, mixture of dead oyster shells, sand, seaweeds and water, the artist Jenny Marketou and the architect Panagis Marketos invite activists, artists, youth, and publics from Elefsina to collaborate with her by allowing their imagination to think ecologically as co makers to prototype ideas and draw proposals to be used as prototypes to build the sculptural structures made out of " tabby". Some of those ideas will be fabricated on-site in response to Elefsina's unique waterfront location and will become vibrant sculptural structures of life placed where the edges of land and water meet, the riparian zone and coastline of Elefsina. The tabby structures will function not only as visual markers pointing to the polluted waters but also will become water purifier and porous reparation structures which allow other species to use them as habitats thus contributing to the biodiversity of the riparian zone of Elefsina.

Re-Shell: Re-Sharing Elefsina's Littoral Life
Tatiana Theodoropoulou

Dates: June 26 - 27, 2023

Hours: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 5 - 8 p.m.

Language: English and Greek

Tatiana Theodoropoulou, zooarchaeologist, invites the community of Elefsina to regain access and knowledge of the coastal area of Elefsina. The workshop will start with a 'ritual of initiation' to the world of sea shells and the biodiversity of molluscs. Then, a playful storytelling writing/artistic session will take place to deepen the understanding of sea shells in ancient everyday life and recent traditions. The workshop will resume with an engaged discussion on changing seascapes and on how the citizens of Elefsina can regain an experienced and meaningful contact with the coastal zone.

Water Time

Dimitra Ioannou (textlab)

Dates: June 28, 2023

Hours: 6 - 9 p.m.

Language: Greek

A workshop of experimental writing and performative reading based on contemporary eco-poems translated for the first time into Greek with the aim of activating our water consciousness and recovering, poetically, the sea of Elefsina.