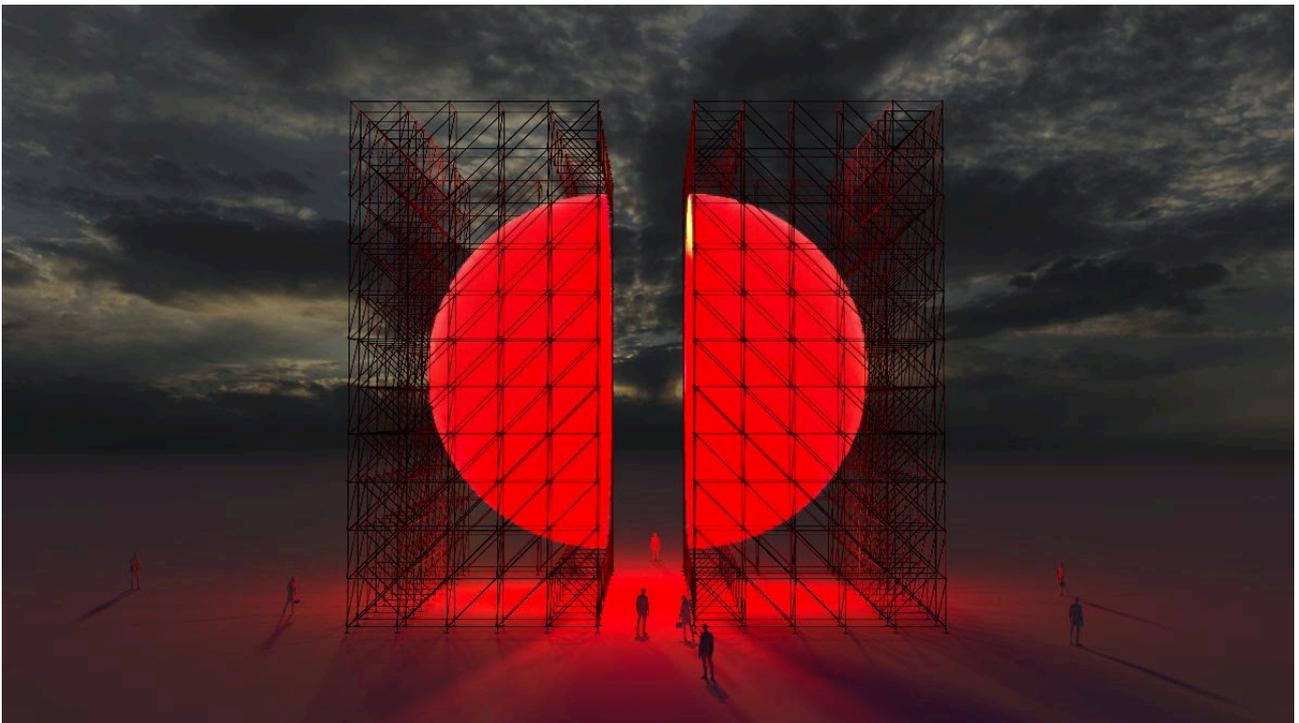


PLÁSMATA: BODIES, DREAMS AND DATA

May 23 – July 10, 2022 | Pedion Areos Park, Athens, Greece | open every night, 18:00 – 23:00

Onassis Stegi introduces 'Plásmata' – Europe's largest open-air digital art exhibition – in Pedion Areos Park, Athens.

Listen to your body. Believe in your dreams. Watch your data.



Earth Divided, SpY 2022, © SpY Studio

With 25 new large-scale works by a range of international artists – mainly site-specific commissions – 'Plásmata', a nocturnal, open-air exhibition promises to turn one of Athens' largest public parks into a kind of 'Midsummer Night's Dream' of art and digital culture, by turns engaging, entertaining and giving pause for thought. The word 'Plasmata' in Greek means 'creatures' but it also has a kind of double meaning, since it comes from the root 'Plasso'- to fabricate or mold. In a world where data is the new clay, how do we use our digital 'hands' to create different types of creatures and identities, to fabricate and re-fabricate ourselves? How can we mold data – this new raw material – to liberate our bodies, celebrate the endless possibilities of the hybrid physical-digital realms while also protecting ourselves from the more sinister side of data harvesting and surveillance. At a

time when we have become both the gods and the slaves of our new creations, how can we use digital culture to connect humanity rather than divide it?

The 20-meter high 'Earth Divided' site-specific installation by the Madrid-based artist SpY epitomizes some of these questions. This image of a huge red planet cut in two points to the fact that we are in an era of polarization across the globe – yet while political, military and social divisions rage, often exacerbated by digital social media – the planet we all share continues to heat up.

Almost as an echo of this piece, the exhibition also includes 'Another Moon' by the Seoul-based artist collective Kimchi and Chips, a work whose 40 solar batteries collect the energy of the Athenian sun by day to power laser beams that create an artificial moon at night, hovering 70 meters above the ground. Some other works include a 'Happiness', a humanoid handing out medicine in an abandoned pharmacy at the edge of the park by the Dutch artist Dries Verhoeven and a multi-coloured visualization of quantum memories by LA-based artist Refik Anadol.

As part of the exhibition, NOWNESS will curate an algorithm-free screening of short - mainly Instagram - films on large screens at the park's former amphitheater. This presentation disrupts the digital platform's practice of serving content determined by an algorithm to viewers on their personal devices, returning viewers to a collective viewing experience in a public space where they watch - or don't - free of digital tracking.



Eclipse, Tony Oursler @Thibault Voisin

Returning to Pedion Areos Park for a second year, and following on from the successful 'You and AI' exhibition there, Onassis Stegi is picking up where it left off. If 'You and AI' tackled artificial intelligence and the ways in which we situate ourselves in relation to it, this year's exhibition – "Plásmata: Bodies, Dreams, and Data" – explores the body, be it ours or another's. Be it individual or collective, human, non-human, or – ultimately – planetary. Digital technology is both entering into the human body and extending it beyond its bounds. This network of bodies, an offshoot of both surveillance and entertainment technologies, is calling upon us to seek out the very limits of the 'plásmata' ('beings', 'creations', 'creatures' or "imaginary things" in the Greek) that we ourselves create and actually are.

How do we understand gender within a digital setting? How do we see our own selves in the reflections we ourselves create? What does disability mean, or the extension of our abilities? How do pharmaceutical and medical technologies help mold our intentions? What sorts of bodies does a machine imagine, and how can it make them? What kind of a body is created by platforms that engender job insecurity? What is signified by the non-human body and how does it express its own subjectivity? What does the ever-expanding digital economy entail for the planetary body that is the earth?

Onassis Stegi decided on Pedion Areos Park as a setting once more – a space that started out as an army training ground before becoming a recreation ground for the city's inhabitants – in order to speak about the body not just as the locus of subjectivity, but also as the field of personal, political, and social conflict, as the core of both pleasure and pain, and ultimately of our very existence.

'Plásmata' – which runs from May 23 to July 10, 2022 – opens at the statue of King Constantine I of Greece (1868-1923) and reaches all the way to the Alsos Theater and the pine forest that lies beyond.

This year, the exhibition will follow pathways that invite us to discover parts of the park that are not generally known to the general public. We are encouraging exhibition visitors to explore those Pedion Areos areas that run alongside Alexandras Avenue – the side where the statue of the goddess Athena stands – and to wander around the digital pavilions and events sited in the clearings and flowerbeds hidden away inside the park.

This is a conscious curatorial approach that allows visitors to engage with the exhibition in Pedion tou Areos' most popular areas before losing themselves within the park in order to discover startling exhibits, collective activities, and events. Just like last year, the rationale is one of curated serendipity, with three suggested routes through an exhibition that is nevertheless accessible every which way: engaging with one exhibit means at least one other is in sight, and so visitors can immerse themselves in this nocturnal exhibition.

Pedion Areos, designed to pay tribute to the heroes of Greek independence and now a public park, remains an evolving collective space, where Greek and immigrant communities mix to explore this green oasis in the heart of the city. Its Plásmata are inviting you in to discover it.



Happiness, Dries Verhoeven. Photo Willem Popelier

Participating artists:

Morehshin Allahyari, Refik Anadol, LaTurbo Avedon, The Alternative Limb Project, Ekene Ijeoma, Frederik Hayman, Keiken, Kimchi and Chips, Nick Knight (SHOWstudio), Marshmallow Laser Feast, Eva & Franco Mattes, Christian Mio Loclair, Tony Oursler, Maria Papadimitriou, Eva Papamargariti, Annie Saunders, Sensorium, SpY, Superflex, Dries Verhoeven, Cecilie Waagner Falkenstrøm, Saya Woolfalk, Liam Young.

Film screenings curated by NOWNESS.

Curatorial Direction: Afroditi Panagiotakou, Onassis Culture

Curator: Irimi Mirena Papadimitriou, [FutureEverything](#)

Executive Director/ Scientific Advisor: Prodromos Tsiavos

Commissioned and produced by Onassis Stegi

With the kind support of Region of Attica

Read more

<https://www.onassis.org/whats-on/plasmata>

About Pedion Areos Park

Pedion Areos Park constitutes the heart of a new Athens – a multicultural Athens brimming with diverse communities – but also a place where public space is being discovered anew, where young people are being brought together with older citizens, and where the digital encounters the physical, public meets private. From the statue of King Constantine I to the Gardenia café, and from the Water Course to Economides Square, Onassis Stegi’s exhibition is entering into discourse with the space, the place, and us all.

Onassis Stegi at Pedion Areos

[‘You and AI: Through the Algorithmic Lens’](#) (24.06.21 – 25.07.2021) was an exhibition at Pedion Areos exploring how algorithmic systems are constructed and defined, and by whom, and how they impact and reshape society and our perception of the world. This exhibition included an exhibition at Pedion Areos in Athens, as well as online experiences, conversations and participatory sessions on artificial intelligence, creativity and ethics and attracted more than 80,000 visitors.



Another Moon, Kimchi and Chips @Jochen Tack

ONASSIS CULTURE

Onassis Culture – centered around the performing arts centre Onassis Stegi (‘shelter’ and ‘roof’ in Greek) and its various other cultural spaces in Athens – is Onassis Foundation’s cultural arm. Onassis Culture focuses on Athens as a centre of global contemporary culture through a series of initiatives and works set within the city. Bringing international culture to Athens and Greek culture to the world, the foundation operates internationally and has activity in New York and Los Angeles. Onassis Culture promotes dialogue about democracy, social and environmental justice, racial and gender equality and the human rights of the LGBTQIA+ community through talks and events. Supporting artistic development, creation, and experimentation across a range of media, Onassis Culture produces performances, films, exhibitions, digital media, publications, documentaries, podcasts and hybrid works, and offers fellowships and residencies both to emerging and established artists. With a constant online presence through a dedicated Youtube channel, Onassis Culture creates content for the present moment: culture connected to the here and now that becomes a way of life, embracing the local made global and the global made local.

<https://www.onassis.org/culture>

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