

AB6 ANTI: a memorable edition concludes successfully

ANTI is one of the most memorable editions of the Athens Biennale so far.

"ANTI took an uneasy screenshot of our present moment. At times dystopian, but with a glimmer of hope, the artists exhibiting in the 6th Athens Biennale have explored multiple, speculative, absurd, and serious instead-ofs to current moments of reactionary revolt. We're grateful to all participants and to the engaged public who have made this highly topical exhibition so successful."

-The curators of AB6

The 6th Athens Biennale successfully came to an end on the **9th of December**, after a **six-week-long unique experience of contemporary art**. Titled **ANTI** and curated by **Stefanie Hessler**, **Poka-Yio**, and **Kostis Stafylakis**, AB6 highlighted how opposition inhabits both power and resistance, reactionary and progressive outcries, and attitudes that demand new alternatives in the realms mostly shaping our lives today.

More than 100 Greek and international contemporary artists and collectives activated the different aspects of ANTI through their contributions. The large-scale international exhibition presented **over 200 works**-including **27 works** that **premiered at AB6**-as well as a **multi-layered program** with close to 100 events (53 performances, 14 screenings, 8 artist talks, 4 workshops, and 3 parties), inside the venues, but also at different public spaces in the city of Athens.

Inhabiting **four iconic neighboring venues** in the historic center of Athens and accompanied by a **catalogue-reader**, the 6th Athens Biennale introduced us to the enjoyment and discomfort embodied by "**the new normal**".

More than 35.000 visitors from Greece and abroad witnessed the artworks, the performances and the events of ANTI, evoking **positive reactions** and significant **media attention**.

ANTI was joyful, indulging, and comforting at times, unsettling, ominous, and dystopian at others. An exhibition about our times.

The 6th Athens Biennale dealt with the impact of technology on our lives, work, and relationships; pointed out gendered and racialized injustices; raised questions of self-determination; thematized data-collection processes and surveillance; and scrutinized the seduction of fake news and our obsessions with our own image in the myriad of technological interfaces that surpass our reality today.

ANTI confronted and examined scenarios of trans-human enhancement, cults of wellness as well as bodily and spiritual transformation. The artistic devices that constituted AB6-from the gym to the KINO, from the online forum to the spa, from the office to the political front-revealed the dangers of today's neo-reactionary politics, asking what might motivate reactionary emotions and fantasies and how to change the current structures of pleasure.

By inviting artists and other cultural producers to inhabit situations and devices mimicking, distorting, twisting, or amplifying contemporary life-theaters, **ANTI** was the departure point for numerous *instead-ofs*.

THE VENUES

The 6th Athens Biennale ANTI took place at **four iconic buildings in the area surrounding the Old Parliament** at Syntagma Square. The exhibition venues were chosen not only because of their historic relevance, but also for what they represent today: **the passage from the analog to the digital era, a recollection of the social, political, and cultural landscape of the past, and the ongoing transformation of it.**

The visitors had the rare opportunity to walk through the six floors of **TTT building** (the former offices of the Hellenic Telecommunications, Telegrams, and Post), ANTI's main venue, feel the unique atmosphere of the former **Esperia Palace** hotel, or explore the unknown building of **Benakeios Library**. Unforgettable will be the memories from the **TSMED** building, which served as a venue for a number of performances and parties.

THE CATALOGUE

The 6th Athens Biennale was accompanied by a catalogue which offers **comprehensive material on participating artists** as well as **texts** by Alexander R. Galloway, N. Katherine Hayles, Stefanie Hessler, Daniel Keller, Leah Kelly, Carrie Lambert-Beatty, Quenton Miller, Sotiris Mitralaxis, Panayis Panagiotopoulos, Felicity D. Scot, Athena Skoulariki, Nick Srnicek & Alex Williams, Kostis Stafylakis, Yannis Stavrakakis, Spencer Sunshine, Temporary Academy of Arts (Elpida Karaba, Glykeria Stathopoulou, Despina Zefkili), Poka-Yio, Augustine Zenakos.

The texts are not selected and organized with the purpose of erecting an impenetrable political position, but with the aspiration of **proposing an investigative framework for today's oppositional politics and their normalization** within various ideological, social, cultural, and technological fields.

MEDIA IMPACT

More than 1.000 local and international journalists, art professionals, and artists were accredited. **ANTI** is the edition of the Athens Biennale with **the most extensive coverage in the international press**. Some of the most important art-related media, as well as major international newspapers, dedicated space and wrote truly **positive reviews** of the exhibition. Among them, the [Guardian](#), [Sueddeutsche Zeitung](#), [Neue Zürcher Zeitung](#), [Liberation](#), [Le Figaro](#), [Tageszeitung](#), [Artforum](#), [Art Agenda](#), [Flash Art](#), [Monopol](#), [Artnet News](#), [Ocula](#), [Marianne](#), [Radio France Internationale](#), [Deutschlandradio](#), etc.

In addition to the press attention, the discussions on **social media** were also very **lively**. On Instagram, **6.500 posts** with the hashtags [#athensbiennale](#) and [#AB6](#) were uploaded by visitors of AB6, while there was a **continuous interaction** among the official social networks of the Athens Biennale, the participating artists, the supporting institutions and organizations, the media, and the general public. **ANTI** was experienced both in the **physical** and in the **digital space**.

SPECIAL THANKS

The Athens Biennale would like to thank the **Region of Attica** for supporting and promoting culture and contemporary art through our organization, the **Hellenic**

ANTI

AB6

26.10—9.12

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Parliament for opening Benakeios Library to the public especially for AB6 for the first time since 2004, and the **Ministry of Labour, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity** for granting Esperia Palace and TSMEDE as part of the pilot project of the real estate development of the Social Security Funds and Public Employment Agency in the historic Centre of Athens, titled "Recovering properties in terms of social return".

The **6th Athens Biennale ANTI** is realized in partnership with **Onassis Culture**, which we thank for its valuable and creative contribution. We also thank our sponsors, supporters, and media sponsors for their support.

Special thanks to the participating **artists** for embracing ANTI and of course all the members of the **team** and the **volunteers** who made this experience possible.

NEXT STEPS

The **7th Athens Biennale** will be held in **2020** in Athens. More about the curators and the curatorial concept will be announced soon.

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