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Matoula Scaltsa Professor, School of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering

Head of the Interuniversity Postgraduate Program "Museology"

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George Papakostas Professor, Head of the School of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering)

Matoula Scaltsa Professor, School of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering

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30 Aug - 30 Sep
Venice, San Servolo Island
OPEN 15 - 2012
**Aristotle University
of Thessaloniki, Greece**



**SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
INTERUNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM "MUSEOLOGY"**
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

**SCHOOL OF VISUAL AND APPLIED ARTS
SCHOOL OF DRAMA
SCHOOL OF FILM STUDIES
SCHOOL OF MUSIC STUDIES**
FACULTY OF FINE ARTS

www.decrisis.org

**RE
THINK
ING**

CRISIS

The Schools of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece)

whose curriculum largely includes creative artistic production respond to the crisis creating a joint artistic project, through which students and teachers reflect extensively upon the current multifaceted crisis and pose their questions.

It is a **collaborative project that includes music, sound, film, theater, architecture and visual art** interventions which, departing from the financial crisis in Greece and the wider crisis in Europe and modern society, critically address the concepts of rejection and incarceration, miasma and catharsis.

The analogy is inspired by the location, which had functioned, among others, as a place for the isolation and treatment for Hansen's disease and later on madness, meaning as a place for the isolation of the infected and of the organically and socially ill. Students and teachers collaboratively worked upon the subject, based on texts that were distributed by museologists and on discussions that took place among them.

This collective initiative will also be presented in Thessaloniki, where it will function as an ongoing platform for similar projects.

Rethinking Crisis

What is there to rethink in relation to the crisis?

Everyday, we are experiencing its many versions.

There is nothing romantic in poverty.

Democracy seems to be crumbling.

The rhetorics of hatred become increasingly stronger.

The Greek crisis is promoted as something isolated, out of context.

Our everyday vocabulary has incorporated terms from the medical terminology: crisis, recovery, cure.

The financial crisis is presented as an illness that has suddenly broken out, while it has long been hatched, the symptoms visible on the ill bodies. The present condition is not perceived systemically and structurally, in depth political analysis is not attempted.

The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki's participation in OPEN 15 is hosted on San Servolo island, a place which in the past has functioned as a hospital, lobotomy asylum, sanitarium, in times when any illness was considered inherent – bodily expression of the miasma of the soul: epidemics were the expression of Divine Retribution and the ill were guilty and had to be isolated and removed from society.

In Venice, across **San Servolo, expulsion, purification, expiation, atonement and catharsis are bound together.**

Paradoxically, the practice of removal as a solution for the survival of the whole and the achievement of purification through painstaking therapy are phrases that, if isolated from their historicity, could be used to describe completely distinct realities:

- on the one hand the **previous uses of San Servolo**,
- on the other **the rhetorics referring to the crisis**, currently under way in **Greece**, the **European south** and the **weak north**.

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