

POV: You wake up in the westworld

A duo show by Captain Stavros and Yannis Voulgaris
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I am a stage where green apples dance,
A theater of desire, a captivating trance.
Everyday objects take on a new soul,
In amusing narratives, they play their role.

Upon sleek pedestals, a note in miniature,
Questioning truths on screens, obscure.
On this stage of life, desire takes flight,
In a spectacle of blue, lilac, yellow and red lights.

Objects arranged with a purpose clear,
To unravel mysteries and invite cheer.
Cocktails grandeur both in happy and sad,
Expose the ruse of openings, lick, sip... bad.

Four sculptures stand tall and proud,
Each with a story, each with a shroud.
Heart, diamond, club, and spade,
With mushrooms growing, desires are laid.

Stacked cards of our fragile realities,
From primal beginnings to complex fatalities.
Apples cling, a message clear,
Critiquing structures we hold dear.

Beyond the veil, fantasies dance,
Unveiling staged love, draping our chance.
Taught to crave certain spectacles bright,
But peek behind, behold the light.

The machine-made perfection clashes with nature's grace,
Metal against fungi, apples, curtains and bows chase.

As the stage unfolds through organic and sleek design,
We see a dance of contrasts, in this exhibition divine.

So tell me, dear friend, can you unravel the scheme?

It starts with a note. It ends with a hole.

A sleek pedestal, a miniature note. A play on scale where the classical display of the plinth is overthrown by the miniature musical note. A critique of the supposed truths in our carefully crafted digital worlds, where the spectacle thrives. We ask and question how reality is processed when everything revolves around the image.

The stage now becomes the party. Through a martini glass tower, unfolds a space of hedonism, seeing and mostly, being seen. Take out your address book. The tower is sleek, it is excessive, it is sharp. It reflects, like a mirror, our orchestrated needs and attitudes, a system that feeds from itself, perpetually, back and forth.

Our human desires grow, like fungi. We want love, affection, wealth, social status, health, and followers. How can our desires start as something basic, personal, necessary, to become the tool that is used to influence our reality? However, fungi grows in humid spaces. It is here, growing out of the fabricated frames. As humans, we are humid, liquid, sweaty... let's slip away with our fantasies.

The frames are outside and inside us - variable from person to person - yet if you turn them around you realize their fragility. **#the house of cards** is stacked up and ready to crumble. Everything can collapse around you and you may wake up in a different reality. Here, real apples are used for their image and symbols: a timeless fruit with deep meaning: biblical, historical, technological. It is also a meme, it can mean knowledge, and progress.

The curtain hides and reveals: hides our fantasies, reveals our conducted and performed sexualities. How do we know what we like and want when we have been taught to want and be pleased by certain spectacle realities? Vanilla love. Conducted love. Spectacle performed love. Peep through the hole: you can see the spectacles

mechanisms, it's wood, metal, mushrooms, nails... The curtain which normally hides the spectacle to the viewer, becomes it.

This is a duo show by Yannis Voulgaris and Captain Stavros. Both artists work independently but created each sculpture together. Through the medium of communication, calls, emails, physical and digital moments, they constructed ideas behind each sculpture you can see.

The exhibition is a kit: it can be mounted and taken down to fit a pallet that can be shipped and mounted in other spaces. But what is less obvious is the process of its thinkers.

How did the show come to be, what process did you undertake?

Yannis:

The show started off with a work I was doing, that included blue apples. Interested in the apple, Stavros intervened in this work, and the apple became the starting point of the exhibition. I was also thinking about the desire I had to have an exhibition, the desire to make work... I am a trained psychologist (later studied art), and found myself analyzing my desires, questioning them, exploring them; and wanted to work with this more. This is why there is a backbone of psychology in my work, our works, and in the show. My work considered the human at its core, without showing the human form in any way. What is not shown is what is addressed.

Stavros and I were close in university, and I really appreciated Stavros's approach and incorporation of the scenography in his work. We both use found objects, and work with

the symbols of these objects, as it is more about their image. Interestingly, capitalist and marketing strategies also use the image as the most important aspect to their methods and strategies. The objects I use are from the everyday, yet have become overused by our system. Take for instance the banana, we find it in places like the casino games, as a symbol, as an emoji. Used to an extreme, these everyday objects that can be found in the show (apples, bows, cards, and even the plinth) reveal an uncanny nature to them. Another common theme to our work is humor. Mine is in a more organized and playful way, which, when pushed forward, dives into the absurd.

So, it is through numerous calls, exchanges and dialogues, that our ideas came together, borrowing from previous pieces, isolating aspects of other works... which drove us to build these 'conversation' sculptures.

Stavros:

It was a nice process, as we never worked together in the past, but were both totally open about what could happen. We both bought symbols and questioned them: what if we upscaled these symbols? What if we make the whole show monochromatic? A game, open flow, adding elements, odd things, bringing quirky things that then come together? We both have the element of enigma in our practice, in addition to building environments and sets revolving around humor - offbeat humor. The spectacle was in our practice independently as we both work with set design - so the idea of theater and stage was underlying. Yannis in a post minimalistic way - me as a meme/popie way. All together the works have been communicated - yet work independently as units. We play with the viewer, phenomenologically but also in an object oriented way.

My individual artistic practice is grounded in an architectural background, where I prethink, pre-set, build with models, make 3D representations, print, laser cut, mostly by working with technicians. I don't take decisions of the final work while making it (like more classical art making), but I am preset in the design of the piece, its colours, its size, how it will be assembled, how much it will weigh...

Through this show, we question the viral, meme culture, post social media culture. We ask how does the young generation approach meaning in the post capitalist world through this hyper mediatization? This is why we allude to childhood memories, like Alice in Wonderland. POV: you wake up in the westworld: This world (of the exhibition)

is colorful and dreamy/desirable, temptations... yet everything is metallic, it tricks you with its materiality and scales to make this dream world come to life - yet with a hint of curiosity and hesitation. Indeed, there is discomfort in how the viewer is brought to go through the show and needs to question the metaphors bought by the stages.