

FAD interview with Katerina Koskina, Director of the 3rd Thessaloniki Biennale

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Interviews

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3rd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art

The 3rd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, runs from September 18 till December 18, 2011. It is the first joint venture of the "5 Museums' Movement in Thessaloniki" (5M) which consists of: The Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, the Museum of Byzantine Culture, the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, the Teloglion Foundation of Art AUTH and the lead Museum, The State Museum of Contemporary Art-Costakis Collection.

Focusing on the Mediterranean region, the culture and the people, viewed through a contemporary visual outlook, this year's organisation comprises a main and parallel programme which includes exhibitions, an international young artists' workshop, a performance festival, a symposium and a variety of artistic events, located throughout the city.

We were able to ask Katerina Koskina President of the Board of Trustees of the SMCA and Director of the 3rd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art some questions the Biennale.

1 Why have you chosen to 'Make It New' as one of the main themes of the Biennale?

The Biennale had directed its attention, even before the upheavals, to the Mediterranean region because it presents, in a relatively small scale, a large number of similarities and differences that generate the essential setting for the development of a dialogue with social, intercultural and inter-religious aspects. This centuries-old dialogue, which has been at times peaceful and at times destructive, had been weakening for years. The common language of art and culture, with its unique ability to overcome obstacles through communication, is not only capable but also obliged to revive this dialogue. Hence the choice of this year's Biennale title, "Old intersections, make it new" which we took from a poem by Ezra Pound. It aims to remind us of the long-standing nature of these ties, while also challenging us to implement Pound's call to arms, reviving a mirror-like dialogue, which is complemented by the new paths dictated by contemporary reality.

2 For people that have not heard of Thessaloniki why is it a special place culturally?

Thessaloniki represents a crucible of cultures, a port of arrival and departure, and a point of encounters for many people during its rich and varied history. It has hosted a number of cultures, nationalities, and religions that have lived on through its frequent changes of regime. A thoroughly modern city with its roots planted deep in history, Thessaloniki is a major center of learning with its many schools and universities, a center for commerce with its port and the wide