



PRESS RELEASE

PAULINE ANASTASIOU and BRONEK KOZKA

“The Australian Dream...”

Curator: Clelia Belgrado
Opening Reception: Friday 7th October , 2011, from 6 p.m. to midnight
Duration: 8th October - 10th December 2011
Location: **VISIONQUEST gallery**, Piazza Invrea 4 r, 16123 Genova, Italy
+39 010 2468771 +39 339 7534993
Gallery hrs: Wednesday to Saturday 3.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.
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VisionQuest gallery is pleased to begin the 2011/2012 season by presenting **“The Australian Dream...”** by **Pauline Anastasiou** and **Bronek Kozka**. The opening reception on Friday 7th October is part of START, the event that marks the beginning of the new season for all the art galleries in Genova.

Pauline Anastasiou's videos and Bronek Kozka's photographs diversely explore the idealism of the suburban landscape, the concept of family within this context and the dream that has already evolved; images of a dream that can only come true or be broken in a country like Australia.

Pauline Anastasiou: after viewing hours and hours of home movies made over years she begins to piece together short movies made of moments that she chooses among all those hours of recordings. Very soon she becomes aware that her choices lead to a manipulation of the image of the family: yielding a positive image, idealized, much more consistent with the images seen in the classic family photo albums. By her own admission, the artist claims that making videos that purport to be 'real' using footage of 'un-constructed moments' (her home movies) is of course questionable because the self consciousness rendered by the video camera suggests that what is happening is no longer as it might have played out. What emerges from these videos is an image of the family deliberately transformed, far from reality, not only because the artistic process changes its content, but also because the very act of choosing one clip over another implies another interpretation.

“The videos of these children's lives are intended to show the complexities of their existence. The difficult moments are still not told but they are implied, and there is a recognition I believe that lives belong to a space that signifies a crisis. This space of disruption and difference is what Michel Foucault describes as heterotopia. The movies I have constructed are intended to belong to the 'heterotopic' place (a place that accommodates the margins) that Foucault talks about. The heterotopic space was also important to look at with respect to my fathers' place in this project. He also took movies; his were filled with reminiscing, longing and the questioning of the border he had crossed in making the decision to live in this country. Looking back at this project it seems that I took a lesson from my father and repeated that process. My work I suppose allows me to make sense of these margins in similar ways. The resulting videos are about the margins that I have experienced, of migration, death and the way in which, through video, this particular family is re imagined,” explains Anastasiou.

Bronek Kozka: through his photographs explores the idea of the suburban landscape - "suburbia" - and the Australian dream. His photographs go beneath the surface, they scratch the perfect facades of the suburbs of Australia and explore the idea of isolation, dislocation, ties, family communications, suspicions and fears and how all these ideas collide in the Australian "suburbia". Scenes of inside and outside ordinary everyday life are rendered with extraordinary detail. Meticulous work behind the scenes, a very accurate casting and a perfect *mise en scene*, create beautifully executed photographs working on the disparity between the reality shown and felt; between what is depicted and what is remembered.

"When we hear the word suburbia we are at once filled with ideas and imagery that contradicts. On one hand visions of model homes, spacious yards, and the obligatory Hills Hoist [for washing] come to mind. But soon those thoughts of safe homogenized family utopias gave way to our fears, suspicions and all is not quite right. The "Australian Dream" is the dream of a suburban quarter acre block. The "Australian Dream" is just that - a dream - and for many reasons that I explore in my work, one that is slipping away from most peoples' reach," explains Kozka.

Pauline Anastasiou and Bronek Kozka, first-generation Australians - Cypriot father and Greek mother for her, Polish father and English mother for him - investigate the concept, partly true and partly mythical, of how memory can confuse but also affirm its construction of the lived reality. If on one side the "Australian dream" is broken, on the other that same "dream" wants and needs desperately and tenaciously to be kept alive.

BIOS

Pauline Anastasiou lives and works in Melbourne. She holds a BFA at the University of La Trobe, Melbourne and a Master of photography at RMIT (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology). She is a lecturer in photography at the RMIT - School of Communication and Design - where she is also involved in projects such as the exploration of mobile computing and wireless networks through the Transmesh Group. She has exhibited in numerous group and solo shows: in 2009 Re Imagining the Family, Field 36, Melbourne, and Order of Magnitude Queensland Centre for Photography in 2008 and Digital Remembering, Project Space, curator, Dr. Diane Charleson. She has published widely and presented at conferences in Australia and overseas.

Bronek Kozka lives and works in Melbourne. Professional photographer from 1995 to 2001, he is currently professor of photography at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, School of Communication and Design. His photographs have been widely exhibited, collected and published internationally: "Picturing Community: Ugunja, Kenya" (2002), "Auschwitz Revisited" (2005) and "The Best Years of Our Lives" (2009). He was invited at the Grand Prix International de Photographie de Vevey in September 2010, while his works were also exhibited at the Pingyao International Photo Festival in China. In 2011 he exhibited at the Chobi Mela, Bangladesh Photo Festival. At the end of 2011 he will be exhibited at the Hanmi Museum of Photography in Korea. In 2008, some of the images from "Sunshine House" & "Passion" were published by teNeues in the Hassleblad Masters Book Vol.1. Winner and finalist for numerous awards including The National Portrait Prize both in Australia (2007+2009) and in Gran Britain (2008), Albury Art Prize SCAP08, Scap09, Monash Gallery of Art Award (2008+2009) and the Hassleblad Masters Award 2008.



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