

The Crab's house one month on: Report on the fellowship

We are almost exactly midway to the first residency of Art Fellows in Athens. The two fellows, Tami Izko, who is a sculptor, and Federico Clavarino who is a photographer, are working on the third iteration of the project their Crab's House in Athens after the presentation in the Stiftung Künstlerdorf in Schöppingen, Germany and Villa Empain, in Brussels. The project raises a series of important questions about the nomadic condition of artistic production, the most important of which are how is it possible to form a community and how to create a sense of belonging, when one is (forced to be) always on the move. As the artists themselves explained in their application proposal: "The Crab's House takes its name from the hermit crabs' way of inhabiting found shells or other objects and the social mechanism that allows them to move into a new "home" once they grow out of the one they have by sharing with others". Both autobiographical and self-reflexive this project reflects on the very form of the residency and the dynamics of the relation between host and guest. We are confident that this question will be discussed and researched, offering useful material for the development of the Art Futures fellowship programme in the future, producing not just engaging art projects but also material for artistic research. We are confident that the two artists are going to develop a very engaging show that is going to be produced in dialogue with the local arts community. Federico and Tami have initiated a series of dinners inviting local artists and curators, asking them to bring a sacrificial object. Each of the guests is invited to tell the story behind her/his object and the reasons why she/he brought it.¹ These objects and the stories behind them will form the background behind the artworks produced for the exhibition (planned for the 28th of June). Photographs documenting the experience of living and working in Athens will also be exhibited giving a broader context of the exhibition. The selection of guests is obviously important, making sure that as many different voices as possible will be included, for example by inviting members of the growing Afro-Greek artist community. Parallel to this series of dinners that provided 'material' for the final show

¹ Photo documentation for the first two dinners that were organized on the 10th and the 31st of May is made available.

and started weaving a community around the residency and the venue [sic!], we organized a visit and a talk by the two artists at the ceramics studio of the Athens School of Fine Arts on Monday the 15th of May. There was an intention to open up the process to the faculty and the students of ASFA, but also to allow insight and access to the facilities of the School (Tami needed to use a kiln for baking her ceramics) and the local know-how (about sourcing material, other artists working on similar media). The lecture was well attended and quite a few of the participants expressed interest to join the dinners and the exhibition. More importantly a link was forged between the School and the Fellowship Programme to share resources and collaborate in the future.

Concluding, we feel confident that we are on a right path to successfully conclude the goals of the first fellowship programme. The planning and participation in the dinner has been progressing in a satisfactory manner, all practical issues (concerning access to materials and facilities) have been addressed, and the residents feel already at home and are able to devote all their energy in finalizing their project. A full report will be compiled at the end of the residency, but for now we have every reason to feel confident and optimistic.

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