

Tinos Quarry Platform is a forum for contemporary art operating an artist-in-residence program located on the island of Tinos, Greece. TQP invites participants from Greece and abroad to work on a range of artistic and cultural projects. Emergent synergies between artists and the landscape contribute to the development of networks that include both local and international audiences while opening the space to a wider public.

The free movement of bodies and objects once considered critical for the smooth functioning of contemporary art now appears increasingly uncertain in an era marked by new forms of nationalism, xenophobia, and economic isolationism. Indeed, many artists working in this environment have found it difficult or impossible to cross once unquestionably open borders, or to ship works to and from exhibitions held across a requisitely international stage. Responding to this crisis, *Reassembly* brings the work of artists from four continents to the Greek island of Tinos through a collaboration between artist, composer, and theorist G Douglas Barrett, artist Petros Touloudis, the Tinos Quarry Platform, and the Cultural Foundation of Tinos.

The artists included in this exhibition incorporate themes of transnationalism and globality in works made through a variety of digitally portable media (video, photography, sound, text) and through practices of scoring, notating, and scripting that formally relate to the musical score. Deracinated from music, the score nevertheless suggests, in this instance, an ability to cross spatial and temporal boundaries through its virtual or immaterial status. Other precedents

for these intermedial scripts and instructions can be found in the “event scores” that emerged alongside conceptual art and the “dematerialized” practices of the 1960s and 70s. Here these forms point not only to a formal fluidity between media, but also broadly reflect a contemporary state of hyperconnected global isolation.

The artists featured in *Reassembly* draw upon music and various digital (and electronic and analog) media in projects that traverse and transgress national borders, cultural boundaries, linguistic delimitations, temporal markers, and other lines of demarcation. Yet rather than converging on stable definitions of terms like music and media, formally these artworks share with their content a sense of openness and fluidity. Nevertheless these artists engage a number of distinct yet interrelated fields: art and music history, ethnomusicology, urban studies, cultural anthropology, postcolonial studies, and continental philosophy. Together their work speaks to the issues of immigration, spatial mobility, national identity, political economy, gender, sexuality, and cultural hybridity through a range of artistic methodologies.

G Douglas Barrett

## Participating artists:

Adel Abidin, G Douglas Barrett, Sari Carel, Emma Dusong, Dora Economou, Francesco Gagliardi, Giorgos Koumendakis, Alyssa Moxley, Melody Nixon, Lena Platonos, Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolec, Raphael Sbrzesny, Petros Touloudis, Samson Young, and Hong-Kai Wang.

Curated by: G Douglas Barrett and Petros Touloudis

German artist **Raphael Sbrzesny**'s *Castel Volturno* (2010) stages an homage to those who have tried and failed in their efforts to cross borders, focusing on the economically depressed eponymous Italian township located just north of Naples. The single channel video depicts the artist wading into the sea while repeatedly striking a drum. This drumming, according to Sbrzesny, represents “the manifold voices of migrants who, year by year, try to make their passage across the sea to start a new life in Italy.” Entering by the shore, the drummer marches out to sea until fully submerged.

Another form of ambulatory musicality is found in **Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolec**'s *Reading Stanley Brouwn* (2015-16), an installation that reinterprets a book publication by Dutch conceptual artist Stanley Brouwn (1935-2017) entitled *my steps 12.12.2005 – 1.1.2006* (2014). Brouwn's book consists of twenty-one pages, each containing a date and the number of steps the artist walked that day, covering a total of twenty-one days. In Sambolec's re-reading, the artist recorded each step of a similar series of walks (in a different location) in real time using a digital tracking device. In his installation Sambolec re-encodes each step as a single tick emitted by an electronically modified analog metronome that operates on a matching timeline. That is, the twenty-one days of Sambolec's walks correspond directly to the work as one experiences it during the exhibition. Ultimately, the viewer witnesses a kind of cybernetic reincarnation of Brouwn, digitally retranslated as the artist's own metronome-marked footsteps.

Berlin-based German artist **Raphael Sbrzesny** studied visual art, composition, and percussion in Stuttgart, Paris, Munich, and Bern. His work, which combines performance, video, installation, and sculpture, has been exhibited in institutions such as the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and the Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden. Beginning in 2017 he will be a fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany.

**Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolec**, originally from Ljubljana, Slovenia, is an artist and researcher currently based in Amsterdam. With a background in visual art and music, he studied at The Royal Conservatory in The Hague, and recently completed a fellowship at the Bergen Academy of Arts and Design (KHiB), within the Norwegian Artistic Research Fellowship Programme.

Translation is also a theme in Italian-Canadian artist **Francesco Gagliardi**'s single-channel video *Translation #6: Shuang Shuang Yan* (2009). The work documents an event in which the artist invited an extended Chinese-Canadian family in Toronto to a dinner party in order to collaboratively translate into English a popular Chinese song from the 1930s. The song plays on a loop in the background as large plates of Chinese food are served. Meanwhile, the family converse with Gagliardi and with each other over the song's potential meanings as the camera slowly revolves around a large circular table. But Gagliardi, who is himself an immigrant and a non-native English speaker, deliberately eschews any sense of a cultural or linguistic center. Through a series of negotiations, hesitations, slippages, and shared uncertainties, he reveals translation as a contingent process that recalls, perhaps, what anthropologist Georgina Born has termed “social improvisation.”

Artist **Adel Abidin** uses the vernacular song to subversively retranslate Iraqi history and its cultural representations through the idioms of Western popular music. In *Three Love Songs* (2010) Abidin created music videos for propaganda songs commissioned by Saddam Hussein during his time as president of Iraq. The songs are arranged in three different musical styles: 1960s lounge, 1920s jazz, and contemporary pop. Each of the three corresponding videos features a young female singer staged in an atmosphere characteristic of the respective era. The songs are sung in an Iraqi dialect of Arabic. Yet while the video is subtitled in English, the performers, who do not speak

Arabic, were instructed to perform the songs as though they were traditional love songs. Abidin thus highlights asymmetries between linguistic access and regimes of representation through the act of musical retranslation.



**Raphael Sbrzesny** *Castel Volturno* (2010) video, 4:25 min.



**Adel Abidin** *Three Love Songs* (2010) We Still Have the Patience, Father of Two Lions, Enter It! (video, 9:48)



**Francesco Gagliardi** *Translation #6: Shuang Shuang Yan* (2009) video, 48:34 min.



**Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolec** *Reading Stanley Brouwn* (2015-16) book, modified metronome, table

Hong Kong artist **Samson Young**'s *Muted Situations* (2014) similarly challenge notions of cultural interiority and authority in a postcolonial context. The series consists of twenty “text scores” that, according to Young, “re-prioritize certain sound layers” of performances, actions, and events. Included here are *Muted Classical Quartet* 消音弦樂四重奏—a string quartet from the classical era (composed, according to Young's instructions, “by a European male composer”)—and *Muted Lion Dance* 消音舞獅—the artist's variation of the traditional Chinese custom wherein performers mimic the movements of a lion in sync with percussive drumming. On the one hand, the classical string quartet is defamiliarized by uncovering incidental (“non-musical”) sounds and choreographical gestures often unique to each string player's sense of musicality. On the other, Young contrasts the collectively produced lion dance with a reference to the musical tradition that has historically consolidated authorship almost exclusively to European men.

Continuing a similar thread, Taiwanese artist **Hong-Kai Wang**, in her sound installation *The Broken Orchestra* (2007), asked nine musicians to individually recreate a twentythree year old cassette tape recording of her brother and herself performing French composer Charles Gounod's 1853 *Méditation sur le Premier Prélu de Piano de S. Bach*, a well-known setting of the Latin text *Ave Maria*. Ironically, Gounod's work is itself a transcription of the melodic improvisation the composer performed

while his future father-in-law played a modified version of Johann Sebastian Bach's *Prelude No. 1* in C major (1722). In Wang's multichannel sound work, each of the nine professional musicians was asked to adhere as closely as possible to her cassette tape, attending to the various imperfections of the duet recorded with her brother. Through her iterative recording and transcription process, Wang thus highlights the kind of familial intimacy—at once intergenerational and transcultural—that often inheres through musical processes of pedagogical transmission.

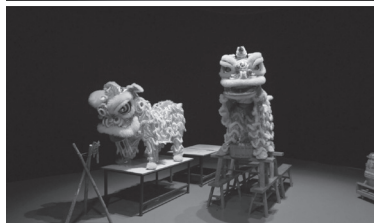
A different sense of intimacy can be found in **Emma Dusong**'s *Ta voix* (2013), a work that consists of two large white pillows containing implanted headphone speakers. The viewer is invited to hold each pillow on either side of her/his head, as illustrated in the accompanying photographs, such that the speakers are heard in stereo. The sound transmitted via the speakers is the artist's own voice, which describes another voice that belonged to a person who has passed away. The voice, Dusong says, “carries its own disappearance.” Dusong's work begins with the ostensibly solipsistic gesture of covering one's head with pillows, perhaps as a way of blocking out the world during a time of mourning. Yet the viewer receives not comfort from silence but a sense of disquiet as one voice solemnly points to another's passing.

In **Alyssa Moxley**'s *Sound Entangled Spaces* (2017), the artist exhibits another kind of passing, here focusing

on sound's potential to communicate across geographically separated spaces. Moxley, an American artist who travels extensively, will be stationed in Athens during the opening of *Reassembly*. She will begin her performance in Athens by playing back sounds she has collected from some of her many border crossings, island visits, and locations that signify transitional movement. That sound will be transmitted to Tinos where it will combine with room ambience before returning to Athens. Moxley's telepresent feedback loop may also invoke the work of experimental composers like Maryanne Amacher, who beginning in 1968 used sound to connect different spaces in her *City Links* series. Here Moxley appends further lines of transversal to her network of aurally entangled spaces.

**Emma Dusong**, *Your Voice* (November 2013) [Excerpt]

Your voice is made of many layers.  
First some light-colored grains,  
then a denser extra layer.  
The whole, sheathed in a breath.  
You retract your tongue slightly,  
but, upon utterance, I understand what you say.  
I hear the smile in your voice  
and, on occasion, also its worry.  
Your voice is thin,  
it delicately moves forward.  
As with all your gestures, you speak slowly,  
unafraid to make way for silence among the words you took time to choose.  
The end of your phrases marks a pause.  
Discreetly you catch your breath.  
Your voice moves forward and backwards according to what you say.  
When it advances it looks as if it's strolling on level ground.  
When it steps back, it climbs a sonorous hill, toward the end of each phrasing.



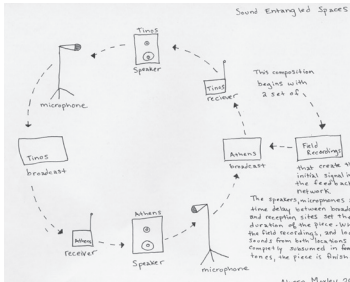
**Samson Young** *Muted Situations* (2014) text score (not shown), performance, two videos, Muted Classical Quartet, video, 17:10 min. Muted Lion Dance, video, 7:21 min.



**Hong-Kai Wang** *The Broken Orchestra* (2007) multi-channel sound installation



**Emma Dusong** *Ta voix* (2013) pillows, headphones, ipod, photos



**Alyssa Moxley** *Sound Entangled Spaces* (2017) performance, sound installation

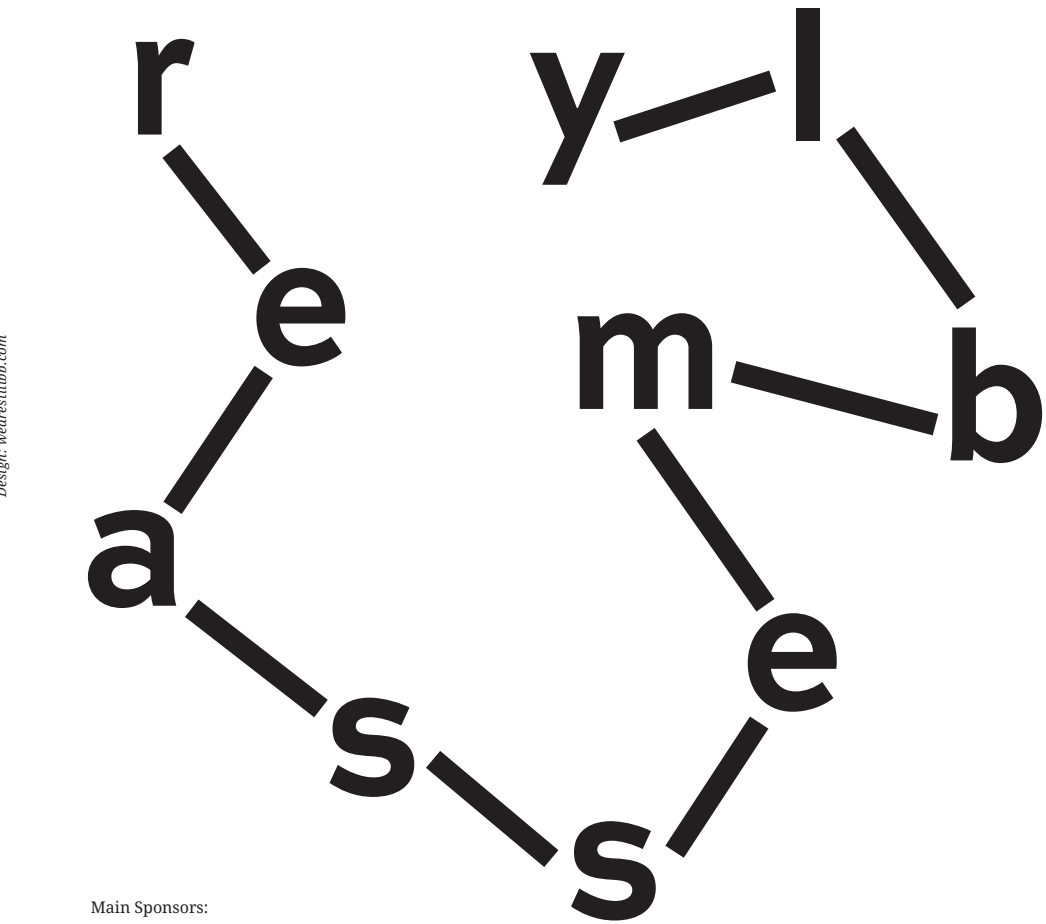


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“Ta Voix” text translations: Mirto Digoni

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Exploring a related form of spatial biography, author and artist **Melody Nixon**’s *Alien #059* (2017) consists of a prompt instructing viewers to redact portions of the US “Immigration and Nationality Act” and the “Rights and Responsibilities of a Green Card Holder” as displayed on two overhead projectors. Nixon, who often works with American immigrant populations in her pedagogical practice, is herself a New Zealand-born immigrant to the US. Her work encodes literary and artistic forms through a rubric of political engagement. Here Nixon’s prompt recalls the text score compositions of experimental music, while her redacted text refers to the literary practice of erasure poetry. By displaying and inviting public revisions to these documents, with which customs and immigrations officers routinely confront immigrants upon arrival in the US, Nixon domesticates and reworks tools otherwise used for the domination and control of already marginalized migrant populations.

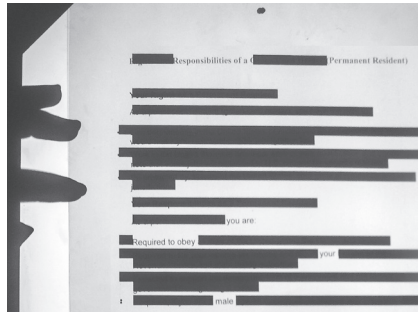
With a different perspective on a similar thread, Israeli-American artist **Sari Carel** uses zoology and ornithology as tools for excavating the endangered and sometimes extinct histories of human migration. Carel’s *Migration: Earth and Sky* (2017) is a multifaceted intermedia project that unites disparate bodies of artistic, anthropological, and scientific research around the Hula Valley region of northern Israel. These include data analyses of bird migration patterns, an accompanying audio diary, and a series of “research sculptures” that provide partial reconstructions of the craft work found in the pre-Zionist Bedouin villages of the

Ghawaraneh tribe. But since no artifacts were left to conserve following the forced depopulation of the Ghawaraneh villages, Carel’s sculptures—including here are *Earth and Sky*, *Brief nos. 8 (Sitting Mat)* 9 (*An Instrument for Cleaning*), and 12 (*External Wall*)—provide only a speculative reconstruction of a body of cultural knowledge forced into extinction.

In her electronic music compositions, Greek musician **Lena Platonos** unites political concerns for contemporary urban issues, including migration, with personal narratives of love and loss. Her watershed 1985 LP, *Gallop*, for example, includes vocalized commentary on “Rumanian Immigrants” set against her characteristic synth pop textures and electronic dance beats. The album, Platonos notes, was composed in the wake of a painful breakup, an event the composer channelled into broader social and political commentary. According to Platonos, *Gallop* stands as “a study in the mythology of urban population of the contemporary metropolis and also a gaze into the future life of it.” Such a study ultimately represents only a fraction of Platonos’s monumental output as an electronic musician, which has been largely overlooked outside of a Greek context.

The work of Greek artist **Dora Economou** speaks to culturally and geographically specific representations of gender and feminism. Economou broadly combines modernist European sculptural practices with influences ranging from the “women’s work” movement of the 1970s to the kinds of paper folding found in Japanese origami. In her

*Greatest Misses* (2017) Economou points to competing layers of cerebral and somatic labor involved in paper folding practices through references to gendered embodiment. Economou stages a series of large-scale folded paper works stretching across the floor of the gallery, which, according to the artist, “takes up almost as much space as the spread out surface of my skin would.” Economou describes the process of learning origami techniques by watching YouTube tutorials, noting that such videos typically isolate the tutor’s hands thus obscuring gender. In the context of *Reassembly*’s focus on musicality, Economou’s work recalls Fluxus artist and composer Ben Patterson whose paper-based performances invoked issues around race within a highly Eurocentric artistic movement. Here Economou similarly reinscribes the (gendered) body through the geometric folds of her contoured white surfaces.



**Melody Nixon** *Alien # 059* (2017) performance, text, installation



**Sari Carel** *Earth and Sky* (2017) Brief no. 8 (Sitting Mat); Brief no. 9 (An Instrument for Clean-ing); Brief no. 12 (External Wall). Oil on wood, photograph, watercolor, pigment, and pencil on paper, handmade rope



**Dora Economou** *Her Greatest Misses* (2017) paper (variable dimensions)



**Lena Platonos** *Gallop* (1985) electronic music album, video, 33:16 min.

**G Douglas Barrett**’s *What is the Sound of One Flag Burning?* (2017) is a collaborative vinyl record project that combines political demonstration with philosophical reflection on sound recording technology. In 2016 the artist created an audio recording of a public flag burning in response to rising neonational sentiment in the US and in light of then president-elect’s threat to imprison those responsible for a similar event. The project suggests a double homage: firstly, to American artist Dread Scott’s 1988 *What is the Proper Way to Display a US Flag?*, a work that invited participants to step on an American flag and which prompted President Bush Senior’s support of legislation that subsequently prohibited such acts. Secondly, the project alludes to Iannis Xenakis’s 1958 work *Concrete PH*, a *musique concrète* composition that consists entirely of the sound of a single burning ember. Invoking *musique concrète* composer Pierre Schaeffer’s notion of *acousmatics*—wherein recordings are imagined as capable of removing all reference to a sound’s source—the project asks: to what extent can sound reliably evidence acts of transgression? Side A features Barrett’s original flag-burning recording while Side B consists of two original works (*Tobacco* and *Oil*) by *Reassembly* artist Samson Young.

Greek composer **Giorgos Koumendakis** draws from the legacy of twentieth century graphic notation practices

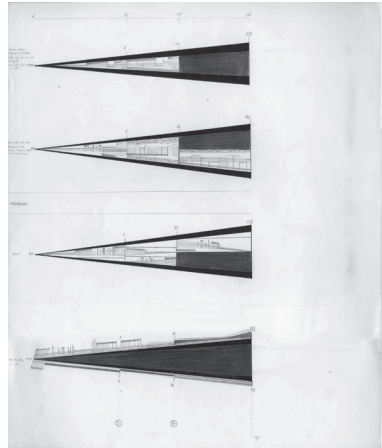
in his *Two Poems* (1980), a set of two graphic scores for orchestra displayed here as eight framed excerpts. Like works by Cornelius Cardew, John Cage, Iannis Xenakis, and Sylvano Bussotti, Koumendakis’s score defines not precise pitches and durations as with traditionally notated music but allows for a range of possible musical interpretations. With each performance such a score receives a new sounding life. In *Two Poems*, although instruments are defined, Koumendakis provides no instructions or legend for reading the various forms of indeterminate notation. Given only a visual representation of the music, here the spectator alone becomes responsible for imagining the sounding result. The poetry of *Two Poems* is thus found not in literary meaning but in the suggestive aural of the page and its musical markings.

*Reassembly* co-curator **Petros Touloudis**’s *A Study for “Mediterranean Desert”* (2012) layers the artificial and the natural by reflecting upon the Mediterranean and the long history of cultures shaped by its ebb and flow. Responding to Koumendakis’s *Mediterranean Desert* (1998-2000), a piano cycle meditation on the flora and fauna specific to the Mediterranean, Touloudis attempts to capture a sense of movement and time endemic to the region through the repetitive movement of a wave. Yet what appears initially as a naturalistic image of the ocean is later shown to be

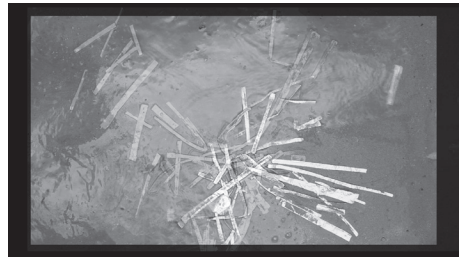
pure artifice. Beginning with a close up of a slowly undulating tide, the camera gradually zooms out over the course of the eleven minute video to reveal a small aquatic set Touloudis constructed in a courtyard. The Mediterranean, Touloudis’s *mise-en-scène* suggests, flows both in and through its representations.



**G Douglas Barrett** *What is the Sound of One Flag Burning?* (2017) performance, video (4:09 min.), vinyl record



**Giorgos Koumendakis** *Two Poems* (1980) graphic score



**Petros Touloudis** *A Study for “Mediterranean Desert”* (2012) video, 10:50 min.

**Sari Carel** is an Israeli-American artist based in New York. Her work uses sculpture, video, and sound to address issues of ecology and identity, often through the figure of technological obsolescence. She has exhibited at the Haifa Museum of Art, Melanie Flood Projects (Portland, OR), Locust Projects (Miami), and Johannes Vogt Gallery (New York).

The work of Greek musician **Lena Platonos** has been highly influential for Greek electronic music and art music beginning in the 1980s. A pioneer in the genre of synth pop, Platonos has composed and produced dozens of albums and EPs over the course of her artistic career.

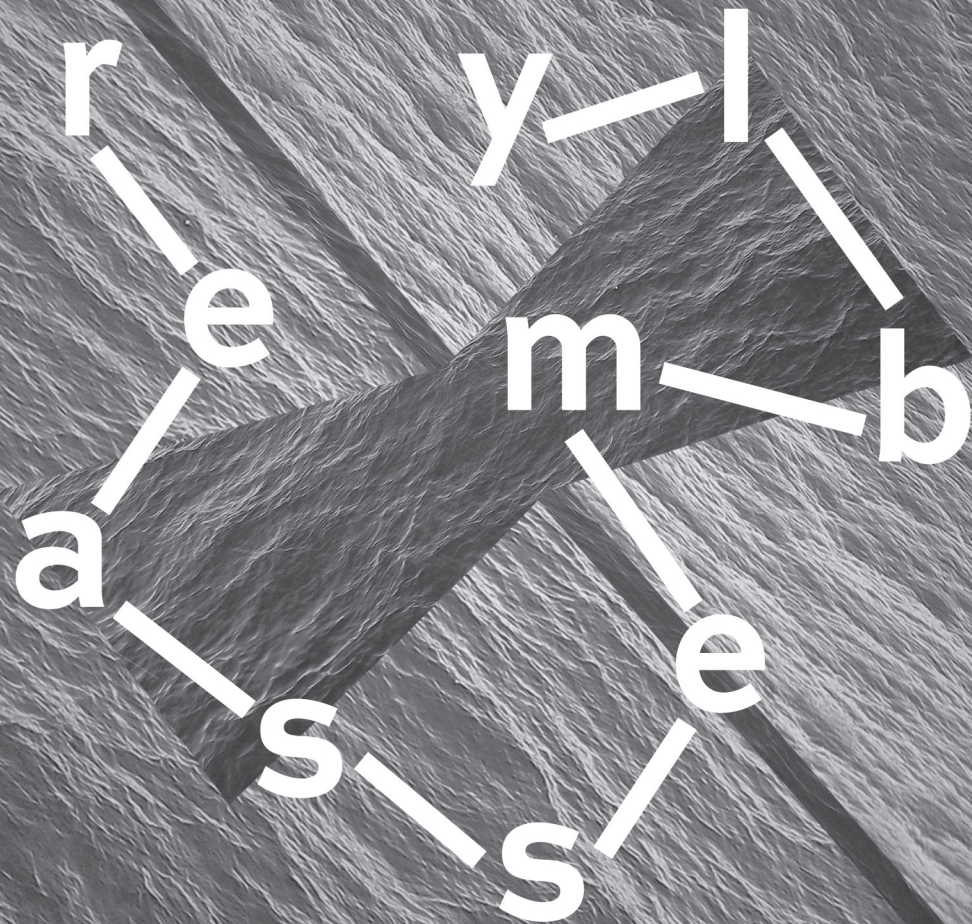
Greek artist **Dora Economou** lives and works in Athens. Frequently working with sculpture, installation, and paper, she studied at the Academy of Fine Art, Athens, and Pratt Institute (New York).

*Reassembly* co-curator **G Douglas Barrett** is an artist, theorist, and occasional curator. His artistic work, which draws on his experience as a composer, has been discussed in publications like *The Wire*, *Postmodern Culture*, *MusikTexte*, and *Guernica*. His book, *After Sound: Toward a Critical Music*, was published in 2016 by Bloomsbury.

Greek musician **Giorgos Koumendakis** has an extensive career of accomplishments as a composer of art music. Studying with Boulez, Ligeti, and Xenakis, he was awarded the Prix de Rome prize and composed the opening and closing ceremony music for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

Artist and *Reassembly* co-curator **Petros Touloudis** lives between Athens and Tinos. A graduate of the Athens School of Fine Arts, Touloudis works across the areas of architecture, opera, theater, and visual art (video, sculpture, installation). Between 2015 and 2017 he was a fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany.

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