

A theoretical essay on the concept behind the “Peri Peripterou (About the Kiosk)” project

About the Kiosk is the name of a collaborative project, produced by the team PalAmeA (Giorgos Paliatsios and Dimitris Ameladiotis). Their project consisted of a kiosk similar to those in Greek cities, towns and villages, where citizens can buy various things.

As the artists explain: “This Kiosk will work the same! It will be continuously open to the public! It will be accessible and familiar to everyone! It will be integrated into the public space! There will be various things and events inside and around the Kiosk! It will be under the control of two people with special needs. However, this Kiosk will differ from the “real” kiosks around us. In this Kiosk transactions will be cultural and not commercial! Unexpected events will occur during non defined times! Everyone will be able to take part in the Kiosk, transforming it into an active workshop! Everyone will be able to exhibit whatever they wish in the Kiosk, transforming it into a gallery! Everyone will be able to decorate the Kiosk, transforming it into a public sculpture! Everyone will give lots of information to this project! Everyone will receive lots of information from this experience! Everyone will pass this Kiosk and will act in it, so that the final art work will be a very important social statement. Personally, we wish this Kiosk to be a ‘temple’ where many ways of expression can come together as a true collaboration. We invite everyone to create and become an art being!”

The “About the Kiosk” project [“Περί Περιπτέρου” (Peri Peripterou) in Greek] is an initiative which aims for the conversion of the kiosk from a humble space of the trade on a small scale into a non-profit public platform of creative activity.

The kiosk is continually exposed to the public. It is space where the limits between the internal and the external, the private and the public are confused. For that reason the Greek word περίπττερο (periptero) doesn't signify the kiosk only as the small store on the sidewalk. Also in the Greek language the kiosk means the public stage of the political parties, the booth of various commercial exhibitions and art fairs, the pavilion of the art biennale etc. The common elements among them are the intention of communication, the ephemeral architecture, dissemination and the exchange of ideas and the accessibility. So, the kiosk is something much more than a small space. Essentially, it is an event in which everyone can take place! As a characteristic Greek patent the periptero (the kiosk) has connected strongly with the modern Greek public culture. That happens because the kiosks have provided by the Ministry of National Defence (Greece) to the people who have been injured during their martial service in the Second World War for reasons reparation since 1950. Also the Greek government tends to provide the kiosk to all categories of the disables and the patients for their social and professional survival.

As we have written in this text before, the kiosk is a very humble store as well as a typical sample of the micro economy. So, the cost of its construction as the prices of its products such as newspapers, cigarettes, foods, magazines are low and accessible to the people. Therefore, the conversion of the kiosk into an open space of an non-profit artistic action as well as the use of ephemeral cheap materials in the creative process reflects our idea on the importance of the public art in the current financial and social state. The aim of this project is to promote the value of the art work as a creative public procedure of actions and events.

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