



Interview of Eileen Botsford by Gioula Papadopoulou 25/9/08 Stin Briza Magazine (translation)  
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**-First of all, I would like you to tell us some things about the PreRetrospective exhibition. It sounds very fresh, playful and humorous, and gives another perspective of what we think of a retrospective exhibition. How did you choose that title?**

For a while now I have been toying with the thought of exhibiting a selection of the work I have developed over the past few years, in the context of a retrospective exhibition. The word 'retrospective' in itself however sounded very premature for the point I am at in my life right now. I thought, gosh, if I have a retrospective exhibition, a) it would sound a bit silly b) what room will there be left for the future after it?. End so I settled with the thought that the future for me is long, huge actually, and very colourful and I will show my work under an unreal word, a contradictory title, more appropriate to where I am at, thus the invention The Preretrospective Exhibition.

**-What is a Public Media Artist? And what is the significance of Public Art for you? (this is very interesting for us and our readers, because Festival Miden in Kalamata is a free public event in open spaces)**

Being a New Media Public Artist myself means I create artwork aimed to live and be exhibited/presented within the public domain, i.e. anywhere where real life happens, anywhere other than an exhibition space. The New Media part of the my professional title explains that I work with new media technology, so a lot of the work is based on video, projection, net.art and interactivity.

Public Art, to my opinion, holds a significant role in the world of visual arts. There are important differences between work created for the public domain, and work created for a white neutral gallery space. Good Public Art is real, it has to live in real environment and communicate to a mixed crowd of people, not just art enthusiasts or artists. So it's challenge in much bigger. The artists has to think of its maintenance, feasibility, lawfulness, impact...On the whole I find a much more challenging task to create art for the public domain than for a neutral domain in which pretty much everything is safe and you know your average audience.

**-What is the main axes of the exhibition? Do you focus on a particular thematic in your work?**

My exhibition is a presentation of various works, many of which have been presented within the public domain and some concepts which I have analyzed photographically. My main axes is the 'human' as I call it. The human psyche and our vehicle – our body, fascinate me. I have also explored other concepts through the exhibition, those being photographic work I did for the non-profit organization Habitat for Humanity ([www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)) which I found interesting to exhibit within Booze Cooperativa, an amazing multifaceted neoclassical building, which is constantly in transformation.

**-After the PreRetrospective what? Should we expect a PreRetrospective#2 or #3? What are your next plans?**

My plans at the moment are big and colorful! I have had quite a few proposals for exhibitions and collaborations but at the moment I am concentrating on a few strong projects.

I have been preselected to show work at the next Florence Biennale ([www.florencebiennale.org](http://www.florencebiennale.org)) taking place in 2009 which is very exciting, so I am preparing the work I will show there. I am also working towards my next exhibition in Athens taking place in a new multidisciplinary space called MMC's and as the Creative Director of a top secret Athens based project called World 2.5 ([www.world2point5.gr](http://www.world2point5.gr)) run by the very talented writer Daphne Kapsali ([www.daphnekapsali.com](http://www.daphnekapsali.com))

Simultaneously I am planning the next aan! (Athens Art Net [www.athensartnet.com](http://www.athensartnet.com)) which will take place this winter in Athens (obviously).

**-Do you plan on living in Athens permanently? Most Athenians are disappointed with Athens, and we use to complain that little happen in art in Greece. What is it that attracts you to Greece?**

I am a afraid the word 'permanently' is enough to make me want to run away! I plan to stay between Greece and the UK at the moment, spending more time in Greece than what I have the past.

I find most people who express huge disappointment about Athens are really actually disappointed in themselves. If you live in Athens you are Athens, and if you want something to change you need change it, no one else will change it for you. I have lived a broad for a long time and I found challenges and difficulties have to be faced anywhere you are. The obstacles vary from city to city, however, obstacles are actually the hints in your life, which tell you what is missing from your city or town. As a result they are fuel for ideas on what you can do fill in the gaps and potentially succeed due to obvious demands in the market. On the whole, I believe moaning is a waste of time, and usually you will find moaners are not big doers, they comfort themselves in the thought that it's their surrounding's fault they are not succeeding.

I was born and brought up in Greece and the attraction lies on the fact that Greece is my home in more ways than any other country.