

Angela Melitopoulos. Cine(so)matrix



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS y MAURIZIO LAZZARATO
The Life of Particles, 2012
La vida de las partículas
Un proyecto de investigación audiovisual. Videoinstalación de tres canales, 82 min

DATES:	14 June – 18 September 2023
LOCATION:	Sabatini Building, Floor 3
ORGANIZATION:	Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía
COORDINATION:	Fernando López, Ana Lázaro

The exhibition **Angela Melitopoulos. Cine(so)matrix**, the largest retrospective dedicated to the audiovisual artist to date, is on view from June 14 to September 18, 2023. It features 10 audiovisual works and a sound project that trace a journey over more than two decades. From the 1999 video essay *Passing Drama* to the ongoing research project *Matri Linear B* in 2022, Angela Melitopoulos investigates and reflects on a **new way of narrating time**, connecting issues related to **memory, migrations, resistance and landscapes of life**.

Angela Melitopoulos (Munich, 1961) was a student of Nam June Paik at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf (Germany), where her training was built on a self-reflective approach to video as a medium. Her artistic practice is characterized by an investigative curiosity that runs through the questions raised in her video essays as well as the technical and expressive mediums she employs to create them and then arrange them spatially in installations.

For Melitopoulos, video imitates the functioning of perception and memory, which allows to study the processes of formation of subjectivity, trying in her works to open to new forms far from capitalist, colonial and patriarchal identifications. Melitopoulos recently dubbed her singular way of working with space, sound and the moving image *cine(so)matrix*, a form of experimental cinema that gives its name to the exhibition.

During the process of creation in her works, different collaborations surface, with certain intellectuals, artists or activists — philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato, anthropologist Barbara Glowzewski, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Jean Claude Pollak, philosopher and artist Elisabeth von Samsonow or artists Kerstin Schroedinger and Angela Anderson.

Video as a thinking tool

Melitopoulos uses video technology experimentally, with a non-linear, fractioned montage or process, and **as a tool for sensory intervention**, as she explains: "The video image does not document the real but acts as a visual memory".

Melitopoulos' videos and installations **inquire about memory, perception, and the formation of collective historical consciousness**, as well as the mapping and use of places over time. From the interests and approaches that his work uses are born concepts such as **chronolandscapes**, a conceptual and aesthetic proposal that articulated much of Melitopoulos' research and findings in the 2000s.

The exhibition. A journey through landscape and memory

At the beginning of the exhibition, a "textile installation" by Chilean-born artist and designer **José Délano** evokes a loom where the intersections and lines of investigation of Angela Melitopoulos' work are visualized. The titles of each project are shown as loom combs, physical nodes connected to each other through cotton threads. A selection of notes, single sentences and quotations provide the keys to enter the exhibition. At the core of the tour, six "electrical diagrams" by the same author synthesize some of the fundamental concepts that run through the different works of the artist that make up this exhibition.



Passing Drama, 1999. Video essay, 66 min.

The exhibition starts with a video essay on migrant memory that focuses on the history of the artist's own family, Greek refugees, as passed down to her after three generations.

In the 1920s, one and a half million people were forced to leave Asia Minor and seek refuge in Greece. One of the places of passage in their journey was the small Hellenic village of Drama. This displacement continued for generations to come, through Austria and Germany.

ANGELA MELITOPOULOS
Passing Drama, 1999
De paso por Drama
Videoensayo, 66 min

Passing Drama focuses on the small stories of refugees and migrants, displaced by capital-H History: “As a migrant one lives in a world of differences, singularities, heterogeneities (the “here” that one has migrated into and the “there” that one comes from; the mother tongue and the language that has to be learned and the culture that has to be adapted)”, as Melitopoulos puts it.

This reflection on the dispersal of migrant memory is the point of departure for understanding the notion of *timescape*, which Melitopoulos dedicated several years to developing theoretically and practically in the first decade of the 2000s. During that period, she launched the online platform *Timescapes*, which brought together artists, researchers, and activists connected by the internet, who each contributed their own footage to create an image bank in order to explore new narrative techniques as a constitutive space of “the common,” against the logics of segmentation imposed on memory, communication, and the spaces of the imagination.

Corridor X, 2006. Two-channel installation, 80 min.

Corridor X is the name of the tenth corridor of the Trans-European Transport Network, an infrastructure project designed to facilitate the communication of people and goods throughout the European Union, connecting Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, North Macedonia and Greece.



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS
Corridor X, 2006
Road movie a doble pantalla. Videoinstalación de dos canales, 80 min.
Un proyecto Timescapes (Cronopaisajes)

Corridor X is also the title of this double-screen road movie produced within Timescapes. Over three years, video artists and activists from Germany, Serbia, Greece and Turkey created a video repository called Chronolandscape, which uses nonlinear montage to explore collective memory and alternative forms of filmic representation that challenge the supposedly progressive ideology of capitalist integration, according to Melitopoulos.

Unearthing Disaster I, 2013 Two-channel installation, 37 min

Sharing a room with the previous one, this video installation by Angela Melitopoulos, created together with artist Angela Anderson, is also a double-screen road movie that documents the



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS y ANGELA ANDERSON
Unearthing Disaster I - (former title: Postscript to an Unfinished Journey), 2013
Desenterrando el desastre I (título anterior: Epílogo de un viaje inacabado)
Road movie a doble pantalla, videoinstalación de dos canales, 37 min

disproportionate consequences caused by the construction of a gold mine in the forests of Mount Kakavos in Skouris, and its impact on the social, mental and environmental ecologies, as well as the resistance strategies developed by its inhabitants. Melitopoulos notes, "What we find is the biological reality that produces a political disaster. The gold mine of Chalkidiki imposes conditions of total homogenization of subjectivities to a single plane of reality, thus triggering a resistance that seeks another perspective."

The Cell. Antoni Negri and the Prison, 2008

Chapters: Prologue 18 min / Exile - Paris, 1997, 10 min /Prison – Rebibbia, 1998 46 min /House arrest – Rome, 2003. 47min



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS
The Cell. Antonio Negri and the Prison, 2008
La Celda. Antonio Negri y la cárcel
Proyecto de DVD con hipervínculos. 120 min.

The Cell. Antonio Negri and Prison is a film-interview originally edited in DVD format about the 15 years of imprisonment of the philosopher Antonio Negri (Padua, 1933), one of the main theorists of the left in Italy since the 1960s, accused of association and armed rebellion against the State. This 120-minute project is articulated from three interviews conducted with the philosopher in his Parisian exile in 1997, his imprisonment in Rebibbia in 1998, and his house arrest in Rome in 2003),

The Language of Things, 2007. Video essay, 33 min.

The language of things is a video essay that investigates the form of immediacy experienced in technological environments such as amusement parks, where "machines accelerate, the body loses its sense of gravity and reaches a state of euphoria that puts the usual sense of time on hold and, almost instantaneously, places us in a sensorial state of material communality with things". Interspersing the montage of the recorded shots with excerpts from the text by German philosopher Walter Benjamin, " On Language as Such and on the Language of Man", Melitopoulos weaves an audiovisual essay whose fragmented and syncopated texture reproduces the perceptual environment created by the machines.



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS
The Language of Things, 2007
El lenguaje de las cosas
Videoensayo, 37 min

Assemblages, 2010. Three-channel installation, 71 min.



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS y MAURIZIO LAZZARATO
Assemblages, 2010
Agerenciamentos
Proyecto de investigación audiovisual. Videoinstalación de tres canales. 71 min.

Picking up the idea of "**machinic animism**", Angela Melitopoulos travels to Brazil, re-examines the ideas of philosopher and psychiatrist Félix Guattari on animist cultures and creates the project *Assemblages*, together with sociologist and philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato, for which they use documentary material, film fragments, radio programs, archives on the La Borde clinic and interview clips.

The installation forms a triptych with screens of different sizes suspended in the air, each one intensifying a perceptive modality: seeing, hearing and reading.

The Life of Particles, 2012. Three-channel installation, 82 min



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS y MAURIZIO LAZZARATO
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The Life of Particles is a visual research project by Angela Melitopoulos and Maurizio Lazzarato that follows the path taken with *Assemblages* around the notion of "machinic animism" and uses the same type of presentation, three screens of different formats arranged vertically and suspended in the air. Conceived as a travelogue, its three parts overlap interviews, film excerpts, archival images and Guattari's own voice recordings.

The video installation addresses the situation in Japan after the earthquake and nuclear disaster in Fukushima in 2011; the anti-colonial protest against militarization in Okinawa; the Anti-Nuclear Movement in Hiroshima after 1945; and the technological history of Japan, in which the animist tradition is central.

The Refrain, 2015. Four-channel installation, 66 min

In collaboration with Angela Anderson, Maurizio Lazzarato and Aya Hanabusa, Angela Melitopoulos creates *The refrain*, an installation composed of a showcase with archival material, a map, a wall text and four video channels.

The story told in this installation tells of the resistance of the inhabitants of Okinawa Island (Japan) and Jeju Island (South Korea) against the U.S. military presence. The protests in defense of the territory, which have been going on for years, find in the reiteration of melodies, the refrain, a method of identity building, of safeguarding the collective memory and strengthening the feeling of belonging to a certain place.



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS en colaboración con Angela Anderson, Maurizio Lazzarato y Aya Hanabusa
The Refrain, 2015
El ritornelo
Instalación de cuatro canales, 66 min

Zonkey Music, 2023 10 musical pieces

Angela Melitopoulos channels part of her recent research through the experimental music project ZONKEY, which also involves artist Kerstin Schroedinger and focuses on the **expressive qualities of the earth's surface**. The "earth tracks" in the four listening stations that make up this room were improvised by ZONKEY in Berlin and Lower Austria around a Paleolithic site. Using microphones, amplifiers and instruments, they search for, generate and transmit sounds that emerge from the landscape, creating short-lived compositions.



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS
Matri Linear B – Part 2. Surfacing Earth, 2021
Matri lineal B – Parte 2. Tierra emergente
Videoinstalación de dos canales, 71 min

Matri Linear B 2021.2022. Two multichannel video installations, 71 and 103 min

Angela Melitopoulos' latest project, still in progress, focuses on the **expressive force of the earth**, explores the very action of seeing landscapes as **speaking landscapes**, connecting the prehistoric past with contemporaneity to ask about keys that allow us to escape from a dominant patriarchal and colonial way of relating to the environment, explains the artist. The work comprises two multichannel video installations, with synchronized video, which includes an investigation that has been carried out, so far, in Australia, Bavaria and Austria.

Matri Linear B – Surfacing Earth, 2021

Matri Linear B – Surfacing Earth (2021) focuses on the art of Aboriginal inhabitants of Northern Australia, as well as the politics surrounding their land rights and the transmission of their memory, threatened and interrupted by colonial genocide and the despoilment of their lands.

Matri Linear B – Revisions, 2022



ANGELA MELITOPOULOS
Matri Linear B – Part 1. Revisions, 2022
Matri lineal B – Parte 1. Revisiones
Videoinstalación de dos canales, 103 min

Matri Linear B – Revisions (2022) includes accounts of several agricultural producers in Lower Austria where the pattern of intensive growth and exploitation has favored the use of technologies and mechanization of crops, which implies the decrease of human contact with the land so that farmers become witnesses and operators of their own extinction.

Angela Melitopoulos (Munich, 1961)

Born in Munich (Germany) in 1961, Angela Melitopoulos studied Fine Arts with the Korean artist and precursor of video art, Nam June Paik (1932-2006). She teaches at academic institutions and art centers and has published numerous theoretical texts and articles. Her work has been exhibited at international film and video festivals (EMAF in Osnabrück, the Berlinale, the Locarno Video and Film Festival and the Montreal Film and Video Festival), as well as in numerous museums (Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, Whitney Museum in New York, Kölnischer Kunstverein in Cologne, KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, Musée d'Art Moderne in Montreal and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía).

At the Museo Reina Sofía, Angela Melitopoulos has exhibited *Crossings* (2017), a 4-channel video installation that focuses on the impact of the great economic recession of 2008 in Greece and about North/South relations. This installation was part of episode 8 of *Communicating Vessels* (Exodus and communal Life). ***Déconnage***, a video essay on the figure of psychiatrist Francesc Tosquelles (1912-1994) that is part of his cycle of research on machinic animism, could be seen in the recent exhibition *Like a Sewing Machine in a Wheat Field* (September 28, 2022 - March 27, 2023). These are two important works in his career that are part of the museum's collection and that, due to their recent exhibition, are not present in this retrospective exhibition.

Catalogue

A catalogue will be published on the occasion of the exhibition, with texts by the artist Angela Melitopoulos and by Maurizio Lazzarato, Arantzazu Saratzaga, Kerstin Schroedinger and Margarita Tsomou. The latter directs and edits the conversation on Angela Melitopoulos and her work, between Elisabeth Von Samsonow, Kerstin Schroedinger, Brigitta Kuster, which will also be included in the publication.

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