



Drawing on car glass during heavy rainfall.

Rhodes conference “Imperishable water” and the question of development.

How to respond as an artist to nature and the wetlands in particular,
with this question I came to Rhodes at the end of May 2011.
Initially I got carried away by all the stories and impressions of the specialists....

Visiting the various habitats I saw the beauty of nature. But there was also the impression that nature is under pressure, and that every moment of procrastination, means irreversible loss. There are several reasons for that which are also linked to: -dictates of the tourism industry- random waste disposal- new constructions at unique locations- the construction of resorts on river basins- intervention on the coastline for beach recreation- limited research and unilateral decision-making in construction of waterworks and dams- corruption and lack of knowledge and political vagueness. In short, it is clear that if not immediately respond to, nature shall come ever more under pressure on Rhodes. As in the economic field, the Greeks are asked to implement reforms since there is a big responsibility to protect the natural areas. Initially this ought to be a reform in politics. But it starts as well with the people themselves. WWF and other organizations already working hard on this.

When the inhabitants of the island, see again the beauty of their island as a unique property, and for example, become aware of the bottlenecks as by depicted by Nikos Kasseris in his lecture, then awareness will grow and responsible administration will be normal. Priorities should be:- clear political line on use of land- awareness of values and individual responsibilities- education and regulation.

What are the possibilities of the group to advance these priorities and what would be my role as an artist in this? I have given the group a picture in the form of a joint action. We built a stairway with ice, which symbolizes our partnership. During the conference, the ice melted and formed a small stream of water. Each can see this image according to her or his own approach to matter. For me it symbolizes the magnitude of the problem. On the one hand, the ice makes it possible to bring water to places where it is effective. On the other hand, research and needed actions will quickly disappear, like the ice, when no one acts upon these issues and problems immediately. I see opportunities to work with students who carry out projects on the island, in order to develop new insights and awareness, as was briefly done in groups during Insa's stone project, and when I took children to the empty river-bed to enact an art of communication. And then there was the intended action at the lake, which, thanks to the rain, remains in everyone's memory.

I thank everyone for a great contribution and positive energy, and look forward to cooperate with all of you in the near future, Boudewijn Payens.



Rhodes nymphs entangled.



Performance at the river site.

Lake of Gadouras, participation project.



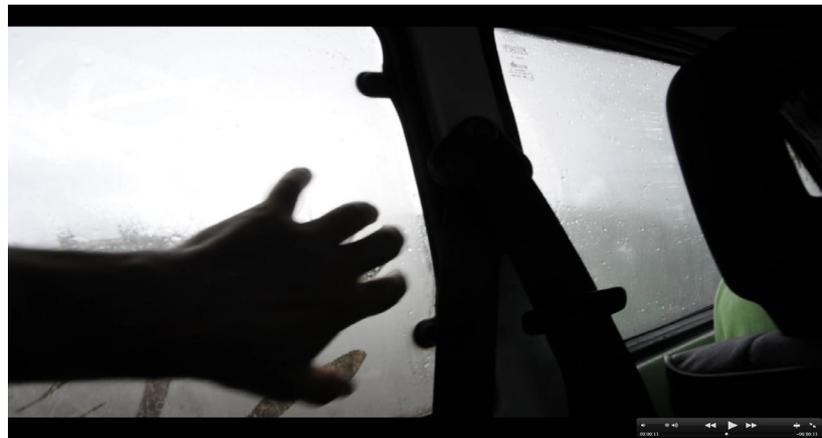


We build a stairway with ice.....





Cooperation project at the damlake.





Cooperation project at the damlake.





Riverbed and icecubes, photo-compilation.



Riverbed project with young students.





Riverbed.



Damlake area.



At the dam