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## Events

Free entrance, full program on [www.betonsalon.net](http://www.betonsalon.net)

- 16 September - 23 January  
BnF | François Mitterrand,  
Research library

Exhibition "Klonaris/Thomadaki : archives": Access reserved for accredited members of the research library

- Fridays, 8 November and 6 December,  
from 3 pm to 4 pm  
BnF | François Mitterrand,  
Research library

Discovery workshops of *Klonaris/ Thomadaki archives*. Reservation required: [publics@betonsalon.net](mailto:publics@betonsalon.net)

- Friday, 22 November,  
6 pm  
Rencontres internationales  
Paris/Berlin at Centre  
Wallonie-Bruxelles

*The Angel Experience* : screening of *Requiem pour le XXe siècle* (1994), *Quasar* (2002-2003) and *Angel Scan* (2007), Talk with Katerina Thomadaki and Émilie Renard

- Saturday, 23 November,  
Bétonsalon  
3 pm  
Exhibition tour with the team and Maud Jacquin  
5 pm  
*Incendie de l'Ange* [Angel's Fire]: conference by Mathilde Collonges and Maud Jacquin, Q&A with Katerina Thomadaki and signature of recent publications

- Sunday, 24 November,  
2:30 pm  
Rencontres internationales  
Paris/Berlin at Jeu de Paume  
*Extases* : screening of *Smoking* (1975-2015), *Flash Passion* (1970), *Sauro Bellini* (1982) et *Kha Les Embaumées du Cycle de l'Unheimlich* (1979-80): Talk with Katerina Thomadaki and Maud Jacquin

- Wednesday 11 December,  
from 6 pm to 8 pm,  
BnF| Richelieu,

## Conference room

Klonaris/Thomadaki, *Night Show for Angel, le cinéma déployé* [Expanded Cinema]: conference by Alex Chich and Katerina Thomadaki, introduction by Maud Jacquin

- Thursday, 12 December,  
6 pm  
Villa Vassilieff - AWARE :  
Archives of Women Artists,  
Research & Exhibitions

*An Expanded Gaze: Klonaris/ Thomadaki's Super 8 Film Workshops*: Conversation and screening performance, with Catherine Bateau and Ana Bordenave. Event produced with AWARE

- Saturday, 14 December,  
from 6 pm to 8 pm  
Bétonsalon  
Conference by Antoine Idier, talk with Katerina Thomadaki, Vincent Enjalbert and Émilie Renard

- Wednesday, January 15, 2025,  
7-9pm  
"Vidéo et après" cycle,  
New Médias department,  
Centre Pompidou  
at Institut National de l'His-  
toire de l'Art (INHA) -  
Auditorium Jacqueline  
Lichtenstein  
*Klonaris/Thomadaki: Silence and sound*: Katerina Thomadaki in conversation with Marie José Mondzain

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## Workshops

Free admission, registration at: [publics@betonsalon.net](mailto:publics@betonsalon.net)

- Wednesday, 16 October,  
from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm  
*Perséphone* : Magic lantern  
workshop for children aged 6 and  
over, with Braquage collectif
- Saturday, 30 November,  
from 2:30 to 4:30 pm  
*Vénus* : Creative workshop on film,  
between adults, with Braquage  
collectif

- Wednesday, 4 December,  
from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm  
*Orlando* : Family collage  
workshop, from 4 years and over

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## Parallels programs

- Fridays, 25 October,  
22 November and  
6 December,  
from 6 pm to 8:30 pm  
*Written with mittens* : writing  
workshop on and around art

- Friday, 11 October,  
from 3 pm to 8 pm  
*Béton Book Club* : surveying ses-  
sion around Laura Marks book  
*The Skin of the Film*

- Friday, 18 October  
7 pm  
Book launch of Julie Pellegrin,  
*(Non) Performance. A daily practice*  
(ed. T&P Publishing)

- Wednesday, 6 November  
7 pm  
*Bestiario de Lengüitas* (ed. K.  
Verlag) book launch and perfor-  
mance: with Mercedes  
Azpilicueta, Virginie Bobin and  
Emmanuelle Lafon. With CAC  
Brétigny

- Thursday, 21 November,  
7 pm  
Bétonsalon  
Aron Barbier, "Transer, murmurer.  
*La communication des anges*" confe-  
rence-performance as part of the  
Festival des Fiertés from 13th and  
14th Town Hall, City of Paris

- Friday, 29 November,  
from 3 pm to 6 pm  
*Parties prenantes* : retrospectives  
on the history of Villa  
Vassilieff around the show Teo  
Hernández, "Éclater les appa-  
rences" (2019)

- Wednesday, 11 December,  
Lecture hall Buffon  
*Thick presents* : Study session on  
science fiction with the Centre des  
Politiques de la Terre and the  
cultural department of UPC

# REVEALING THE INFINITE POSSIBILITIES

Since the 1970s, artists and filmmakers Maria Klonaris and Katerina Thomadaki have never ceased to break new paths and express their dissident positions, in hybrid, protean artworks abolishing the conventional boundaries between artistic media, cultures, and fields of knowledge. From the beginning, the artists have laid claim to a “double female authorship” proposing – in their *Cinéma corporel* [Cinema of the Body] – a “radical femininity” capable of “shattering all that weighs on it and constrains it”, beginning with the binary opposition of male and female. A concept further developed in their major cycles of works inspired by other “dissident bodies”: the Hermaphrodite (1982–90); the intersexual “Angel” (1985–2024); the conjoined twins (1995–2000). By revealing the power of these figures to transgress symbolic – as well as biological and anatomical – norms, Klonaris and Thomadaki have very early on contested the ideology of “nature” as a static order, thus anticipating current debates and theories concerning gender and the materiality of bodies.

Today, at Bétonsalon, a decade after the passing of Maria Klonaris, Katerina Thomadaki revisits and extends the *Cycle de l'Ange* [The Angel Cycle], which the two artists launched in 1985 and developed together over three decades. This vast ensemble of artworks, created in a variety of media – photography, video, sound, text, performance, installation – begins with a medical photograph: an intersexual person associated by the artists with the angel – a herald announcing the collapse of gender. In their artworks, the intersexual body is not reduced to an object of observation, pathologized by the medical gaze. On the contrary, the artists assert its multifarious and elusive character as it becomes the subject of infinite metamorphoses through multiple hybridisations with astronomical photographs. Bétonsalon’s exhibition space is specifically transformed to welcome this “Angel”, who meets and dialogs with emblematic self-portraits of the two artists. Via their interventions on this “matrix image”, Klonaris/ Thomadaki give shape to the infinite possibilities which open up once we overcome the binary regime of sexual difference. But while the “Angel” thus acquires a cosmic dimension, the two artists also express the genuine suffering experienced by the person stigmatised for their difference. This constantly reformulated image creates and maintains a certain tension between disaster and freedom, implosion and explosion, violence and emancipation.

Borrowed from the soundtrack of their expanded cinema performance *Mystère II : Incendie de l'Ange* [Mystery II: The Angel Ablaze], the exhibition’s title insists on the intensity of the relationship between the two artists and between them and this “Angel” who has long fascinated them. The reference to ecstasy highlights the way in which the amorous experience may overflow, undoing the limits between the self and the other – as well as between male and female, human and non-human, the imaginary and the tangible. Ecstasy also evokes the altered state which Klonaris/Thomadaki’s artworks seek to elicit in the viewer; the abandonment of a day-time regime of perception, governed by functionality and rationality, in favour of a nocturnal plunge into a world both political and eminently poetic.

This exhibition is part of a long-term research project supported by Bétonsalon with Maud Jacquin on Klonaris/Thomadaki’s œuvre, considered through the lens of performance and its relationship to gender and identity issues.

Émilie Renard & Maud Jacquin

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# THE ANGEL EXPERIENCE

Ten years after the passing of Maria Klonaris, the year 2024 has swept me away like a powerful wave. Our early engagements with gender issues which strongly resonate with current political debates, combined with recent institutional recognition have shed new light on our artistic path. The exhibition at Bétonsalon is a crucial moment in this process.

In tribute to Maria and thanks to the involvement of Maud Jacquin and Émilie Renard, I have revisited the *Cycle de l'Ange* [The Angel Cycle], one of our major life and art experiences. *The Angel Experience* refers to the end title of *Angel Scan* (2007), the ultimate “extragalactic” work of this cycle, created with both of us present. An indication that I picked up from where we’d left off.

In our practice, the emergence of “the Angel” brought together echoes of several previous works: from *Unheimlich II : Astarti* (1980), it inherited the wings of Maria’s flight on a golden eagle, as well as the fire that sets the end of the film ablaze. The title of the performance that inaugurated the cycle in 1985, *Mystère II : Incendie de l'Ange* [Mystery II: The Angel Ablaze], highlights the continuity with *Mystère I : Hermaphrodite endormi/e* [Mystery I: Sleeping Hermaphrodite] (1982). From the cross-dressing and transsexualities of *Orlando* (1983), it pursues the radical undermining of gender boundaries and its alchemies. From *Le Rêve d'Electra* [Electra’s Dream], created in 1983, it retains and unfolds the cosmic horizon.

The epicentre of the *Cycle de l'Ange* [The Angel Cycle] is the medical photograph of an intersex person that Maria discovered when she was a teenager, among her gynaecologist-obstetrician father’s archives. A shock discovery. The person emanates a sense of pride. We associated them with the angel. We welcomed them, by placing a solar eclipse on their chest (*L'Ange. Corps des étoiles* [The Angel. Body of Stars], 1986). We projected a firmament onto them.

This blindfolded person transformed our art, just as much as we transformed their image. For several decades we’ve never ceased to explore the dazzling quality of their presence and of their silence. With them, we’ve sharpened our theoretical arsenal as to the shifting complexity of sexual identities. With them, we’ve confronted the crimes against differences (*Requiem pour le XXe siècle* [Requiem for the XXth Century], 1994). Around them, we built starry universes and origin myths reinvented: *Incendie de l'Ange*, *Night Show for Angel*, *Pulsar*, *Quasar*...

Revisiting the cycle after a ten-year interval. Going back through, wandering, recomposing, visualising new incarnations and new impacts. Slipping in the archives and out of the archives towards the indigo blood of memory. Because my pursuit of the angelic experience is haunted by a wound: Maria’s disappearance. We had immersed ourselves together in the meta-lives of this “Angel”. Now I was going to immerse myself in our own meta-lives and the meta-lives of our work.

And then imagining a condensed version of the *Cycle de l'Ange* [The Angel

Cycle] in its dissident and ecstatic states. Extending it through an angelic trance with *Sword and Sea* (2024) and through new forms of phosphorescence – *Ailes, Manifeste* (2024).

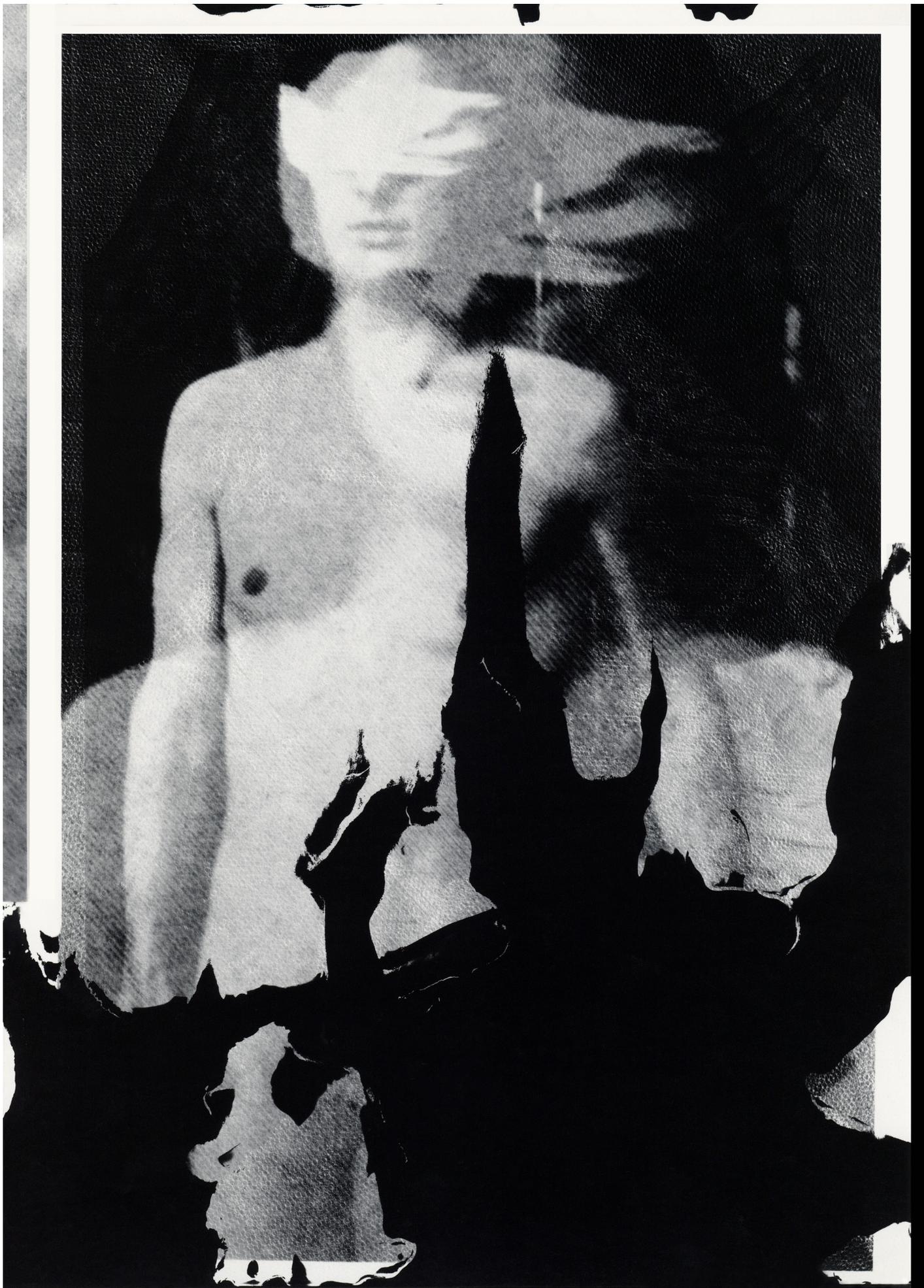
The transmediality of the cycle was essential to maintain. Accommodating within the space, in one simultaneous and reverberating presence, photographs on paper, projections, videos on screens, lightboxes, and texts – all interconnected. These represent the many stages of our non-linear technological journey, between analogue, electronic, and digital – our “media ecology”. In short, reviving or creating distinct artworks along with texts and harmonising them into a single work, one site-specific installation, one all-encompassing artwork.

From a rectangular space made of concrete and glass windows filled with daylight, I wanted to generate an effect of suspension. I needed a vibrational transformation of the space, a concave energy, a penumbra that would allow bright images to shimmer. That might be the first thing I want to share with the public: shimmering. And through shimmering, the expression of political, visual, emotional, musical concepts.

With Maria, we performed the feminist and queer revolution within the image. And within our shared approach. And by our own relationship. Our fierce independence comes from this “wild feeling of freedom” that she refers to in her poems. Our dissidence is rooted in the body but also in language, starting with the experimental filmic language. Along with gender dissidence, we have always defended the biodiversity of images, the ecology of imaginaries, and transcultural mobilities. The angel experience is political. It is an opening up of politics to the whole being.

We never elided our origins: Greece and Egypt paved the way for us towards other levels of sensitivity and different temporal perceptions. The past is a subterranean present that vibrates, nestled into the future. Weaving time (and images) beyond the regime of so-called “reality” does not imply an indifference towards historical time, but a determination to protect vital temporalities that are now increasingly marginalised, repressed by the states of emergency we are pushed into by the violence of the world and the lives it attacks.

Katerina Thomadaki  
2024



Front cover and page 6 : Angélophanies, 1987-1988  
Anologic photography from The Angel Cycle  
© Klonaris/Thomadaki and ADAGP Paris 2024.

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 3/ Angélophanies [Angel Apparitions], 1987-88

Composed of some two hundred unique photographic prints, the *Angélophanies* series originates in a photograph of an intersex person that Maria Klonaris extracted from the archives of her obstetrician father and that Klonaris/Thomadaki transformed in multiple variations. Through a multi-layer contact printing process developed by the two artists, the original image is constantly altered by technical or chemical effects and by encounters with other images – stars, wings, and sublime yet devouring flames. Through these hybridisations, the body is elevated to the status of “Angel” while simultaneously being erased, attacked, and burnt by the images that invade it. If the angel in various mystical philosophies is an entity embodying the in-between and serving as an intermediary between the spiritual and tangible, Klonaris/Thomadaki’s “Angel” manifests the surpassing of the gender binary, opening up the subject to cosmic multiplicity. Perceptible through plays on contrast and overexposure, light and fire symbolise the incandescent energy that emanates from the figure, overflowing and connecting them to the cosmos, as much as the suffering experienced by intersex people in a strongly gendered society. They highlight both a movement towards immateriality and the recognition of the violence with which social norms are imposed on bodies. More directly, they are the intangible elements through which angels appear (that is the meaning of the term *angélophanie*: the appearance of angels) but also the photographic image. Here, the figuration of a sexual identity that does not conform to the established order is paired with the reinvention of the photographic medium. A powerful ally of medical discourse that determines and categorises the bodies to which it is applied, photography is here used in such a way that it escapes all attempts to establish a stable definition. It is treated as a palimpsest that condenses different states and is invigorated with an almost filmic movement, amplified in the exhibition by the presentation of the photographs on a very long table, evoking the unfolding of a film. Everything in these images acts against the fixation of bodies and identities, instead celebrating the multiplicity and ephemerality of experiences. **Maud Jacquin**

*“Like an enlarged filmic frame, the photographic image glides through time. Even if its doubles remain motionless, the image of the subject never comes to a standstill.*

*Endowed with the multiplying power of crystals, the matrix photograph of ‘the Angel’ generates a time of its own, a mirrorical time, just as it generates its own stellar space. Operating with light, we embed stellar space in the space of this human body (...) An impossible hybridisation takes place between the human body and the macrocosm, an interweaving of two worlds on the stage of an intersex body.” \**

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## 4/ Ailes, Manifeste [Wings, Manifesto], 2024

This installation devised by Katerina Thomadaki comprises both historical works from the first period of the *Cycle de l’Ange* (1985–2013) and new works, offering an immersive experience adapted to the architecture of the art center. Duplicating the spaces that are already at work in each image, it reopens here a field of “intercorporeal” experimentation – a term derived from their “*Cinéma Corporel*” [Cinema of the Body], referring to the encounter between two subjectivities on the material surface of the film – that is a space between the self and the artwork, the self and the Angel, a plural image that is at once transformed and transformative. In this way, Katerina Thomadaki continues one of the duo’s fundamental gestures, which consists in “performing” the archive – whether it is a found archive or the archive of their own work – continually setting their own images in motion, transferring them from one medium to another. Another of the duo’s signature actions is the act of plunging the exhibition space into darkness, with the artworks themselves representing the only sources of light, creating a nocturnal atmosphere that invites viewers to suspend judgement, to feel more than they observe. Sculpting the luminosity of Bétonsalon, Katerina Thomadaki designed a liminal work to suit the scale of its very high glass facade, thus reviving other symmetrical interplays: enlarged angélophanies rise above the full surface of two-sided lightboxes, in a direct vis-à-vis with the public and passers-by. Printed on a textile that is opaque enough to filter the solar variations yet transparent enough to illuminate the surrounding area with its permanent glimmer, the blindfolded figure radiates, studded

with constellations, flames, feathers, leaves and reframings. Entitled *Manifeste* [Manifesto], the sequence turned towards the exterior begins with an excerpt of a key text entitled “Intersexuality and Intermedia. A manifesto” (1995). It introduces to the exhibition through a political, poetic, and aesthetic message, which advocates the dissolution of all sexual binarism in favour of a liberating confusion: “The idea is to replace the notion of boundary with that of interconnectedness and permeability. The solids by the fluids. The opaque by the transparent.” On its interior side, the *Ailes* [Wings] sequence is associated with a poetic text, written across the full height of the space, in which one person addresses another, an indeterminate individual, who could be me or you, perceiving them sometimes as a “fiery sun” sometimes as a “dazzling moon”, professing a desire without aim or terrestrial limit. This double work, at the margins of the exhibition, attests to the way in which Klonaris/Thomadaki attempt to maintain opposites together – opacity and transparency, black and white, moon and sun, feminine and masculine, you and me – placing a multitude of intermediaries between them: a bluish luminosity, constellations of stars, the Angel, a liminal state...

Émilie Renard

*“The particular intersexual body is just a naked human body. The fact that the photograph comes from a medical archive means also that this REAL body, this REAL and historical subject, has endured normalization processes and suffering. The medical context denotes this body as a problematic, ‘ill’ body, as a socially unaccepted body or as some kind of monster.”\*\**

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5/ Pulsar, 2001

A pulsar is an astronomical object created from the implosion of a massive star and that emits a very strong electromagnetic field. Its name comes from the contraction of the term “pulsating star”. In the eponymous video from *Cycle de l’Ange*, Maria Klonaris performs an improvised dance whose powerful and radiant energy is amplified by the bright explosions from a firework and through syncopated editing, using repetitions, inversions, and superpositions. While Maria Klonaris invades the screen with her monumental yet ethereal presence, the editing work holds us in a suspended time, in a different temporality, in which contradictory energies coexist. There is a constant to-and-fro between movement and immobility, dark and light, as well as the explosion of linear time contracted and fragmented to the point of inversion.

Pulsar is the only work from the *Cycle de l’Ange* [The Angel Cycle] in which the medical photograph does not feature. Here, the Angel is embodied by

Maria Klonaris, or more precisely, the artist’s performance expresses an attempt to welcome the Angel within her, to embody a “becoming Angel”. Philosopher Marie José Mondzain has highlighted how this performance reminded her of images of shamanic trances by Siberian women. Shamans do share with angels the fact of being at once here and elsewhere, of connecting worlds usually kept apart. Then there is the ecstatic dimension of the dance, in the sense of getting out of oneself and of any fixed state. In *Pulsar*, Maria Klonaris’s body is made and unmade before our eyes; the vibrational energy that emanates flows beyond the limits of the subject, materialising the invisible continuities that link us to others and to the world. As expressed by the artist’s outstretched hand, seemingly willing to reach beyond the screen, this continuity is extended to the viewers. Far from eliciting a distanced and rational approach, *Pulsar* creates an almost hypnotic atmosphere that act, through contagion, on bodies and minds. In this context, the recurrence of the eye motif in the video is not so much an invitation to capture through the gaze as to encourage an inner vision, a different way of seeing, capable of apprehending the world beyond its established norms.

Maud Jacquin

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6/ Sword and Sea, 2024

Comprising images filmed by Maria Klonaris in the late 1990s, digitally modified during a residency at the Centre international de Création Vidéo Pierre Schaeffer in the 2000s, then reworked by Katerina Thomadaki from 2023 onwards, *Sword and Sea* underwent a long and multi-layered creative process, bearing witness to the temporal elasticity that pervades Klonaris/Thomadaki’s work.

Duplicated by a split screen, a new technique in their films and videos, Katerina Thomadaki appears here as a warrior, wearing medieval armour and carrying a sword, an armed Angel engaged in a duel with an obscure enemy whose outcome remains uncertain. To her whirling arms and gestures, sometimes defensive and sometimes offensive, responds the incessant movement of the waves of a Greek Sea that are progressively transformed into digital foam, to the point of merging with her body, wreathed in a hypnotic glow. In a continuous flow in which each frame bleeds endlessly into the next, the haunting and enveloping music by composer and long-term collaborator Spiros Faros enhances this sublimation in which the elusive body becomes an indomitable landscape.

Characteristic of Klonaris/Thomadaki’s work on variations of depth, negative/positive contrasts, and the grain of the image, *Sword and Sea* materializes a technological stratification enabled by the

possibilities of visual deformations introduced by the digital turn. Thus, it mirrors *Pulsar*, screened in alternation in the exhibition. The liminal and primordial space in which Katerina evolves in *Sword and Sea* is indeed transfigured by an explosion of energy and by the appearance of Maria as an angelic interstellar figure in *Pulsar*. The correspondence established by these two films expresses the idea of a superposition or even a hybridization of two subjectivities that continue to converse, via the intercessor Angel, beyond physical and temporal borders.

Vincent Enjalbert

*"The figure of the Angel appears here and there, but what interests us is the angelic transformation, the state of being at the edge, between worlds, between absence and presence, between time and the nullification of time. These are cosmological visions that we translate into a visual work on energy, light radiation, sight, insight and floating."\*\*\**

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8/ XYXX Collapse of Gender, 1994

Presented for the first time in 1994 in the exhibition "Andere Körper" (Linz, Austria), XYXX *Collapse of Gender* is a video derived from an eponymous multimedia installation. Displayed on six screens in Bétonsalon, the video shows a series of genetic combinations, XXOX, XYXO, XXXX, ..., and words, *Mosaic Identity, Collapse of Gender, Virtual Self-Portrait*. The letters, in blue capitals, move horizontally across the screen and trace a regular but discontinuous line, against the backdrop of astral images in black and white. Drawing upon the genetic vocabulary of the XY system – a system of sexual determination described by Nettie Stevens and Edmund Beecher in 1905, which consists of distinguishing female or male individuals based on the distribution of XX and XY chromosomes – consulted in the scientific literature of the period, Klonaris/ Thomadaki reveal a complexity that has long been silenced and invisibilised, while addressing medicine's pathologizing of and dominion over bodies. These chromosomic combinations, albeit indexed, do not pertain at all to the usual binary logic: on the contrary, they derogate from it. Through this poetic sequence, multiple ways of being that pre-exist all forms of assignation logic, plural identities of a nature, that is actually complex, diverse, and unstable, are revealed. Simply because a system is based on the sole recognition of two combinations does not mean that the multiplicity of other variations that exist must be swept aside or cease to be seen. It is truly a question of the gaze here: the eye is precisely the organ through which the body is linked to the history of its image. An eye whose pupil and orbit can be recognized through the successive fades of a series of celestial bodies. Echoing the

figure of the intersex Angel, the genetic code scrolls past like the latent message from an altered cybernetics, in which signal and data confront all forms of standardisation and simplification. By placing the body at the centre of the universe, and of the gaze, the artists weave a relationship between stellar and corporeal matter, since the same chemistry forms the basis of macrocosm, infinitely vast, and microcosm, infinitely small. Through a consistent process to render this interstitial space visible and tangible, the subject is caught in the continuous flux of movement; they glide between sexes and between worlds. A computer code come to hack the reading software of a patriarchal and capitalist world – founded on a process of fixation of time and space, identities and bodies – the Angel, now a cyborg, emerges as the utopian horizon of an other/inbetween world, after the collapse of genders and borders.

Elena Lespes Muñoz

*"The ideology of 'Nature,' inherited from the 19th century, basically considers that what is natural is not what comes from nature, but instead, what is labeled as natural by religious, social and scientific authorities. In reality, nature is precisely characterized by perpetual differentiation."\*\*\*\**

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7/ Personal Statement, 1994

An angel passes. It goes through the screen from bottom to top, even passing from one screen to the other, across the full height of the four stacked screens. Black-and-white images of the Angel file past in a continuous movement, indifferent to the blue hands that seemingly want to slow down their disappearance. Situated nearly a decade after the start of the *Cycle de l'Ange* [The Angel Cycle], which began in 1985, this video installation takes a retrospective look at an archive that the artists have already unfolded in a multiplicity of images created from a single photograph. The *Cycle de l'Ange* originates from the photograph of an intersex person: on the stage of a medical study, they stand, nude, blindfolded, mute, and anonymous. This definitive image, marked by pain and silencing, was extracted by Maria Klonaris from the paternal medical archive and carried with her in their flight to Paris. Ten years later, Maria and Katerina transmuted it. They subjected the image to the chemistry of photography to the point of witnessing, through this transformative process, the body and the space around it merging, imploding into infinite variations. It's as if this transition from a mute image towards an unstable and transitory multitude had had a transformative power over it. Now an allegory of non-binarity whose power resides in their ability to connect,

the Angel is no longer the photographed subject alone, but the entire image in its materiality, figure and background intertwined, and in all its variations. Here the artists address to the Angel a “Personal Statement” uttered by the voice of Maria Klonaris – “Magical image. (...) You break down the borders. (...) You have become an infinite erotic fiction” – while the hands of Katerina Thomadaki, in negative, glide over the surface of the images. These caresses and murmurs seek to touch an inaccessible place that not even the editing of two image regimes – filmic movement and photographic stasis – can diminish. The haptic quality of the work acts on those who watch it, calling for their full attention, their corporeal memory, as though this pain and proximity could in turn undo the clinical distancing of the medical apparatus. If the radical inaccessibility of the archive first stirred the artists’ desire for the Angel; this amorous desire is above all one for the world that they anticipate: multiple, complex, and infinite.

Emilie Renard

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### Généalogies, archives

Conceived as a historical preamble to the exhibition, the reception area of Bétonsalon presents a collection of artworks and documents that draw connections with the *Cycle de l'Ange* [The Angel Cycle] and the evolution of its modes of display over the course of several international exhibitions.

In 1985, the J&J Donguy Gallery in Paris organised the retrospective *Dix ans de cinéma à Paris 1975–1985* [Ten Years of Cinema in Paris 1975–1985] dedicated to Klonaris/Thomadaki’s films. On the poster produced on this occasion, Maria Klonaris evoked the goddess Astarti (or Ishtar), the Greek goddess of the Moon, accompanied by an eagle with majestic wings, as she appeared in the film *Unheimlich II: Astarti* (1980) from the *Cycle de l'Unheimlich*. For the inauguration of this exhibition on 5 November 1985, Klonaris/Thomadaki presented the performance *Mystère II: Incendie de l'Ange* [Mystery II: the Angel Ablaze], a truly immersive work that combined projections of Super 8 films and slides, poetry readings and a sound environment created with two musicians within a multisensorial installation. The invitation made for this event, from which the work *Généalogie* [Genealogy] originated, uses the same motif of the eagle’s wings onto which the photograph of a blindfolded intersex person is superimposed. The dedication to Andréas Vélissaropoulos, the initiator of the movement for homosexual liberation in Greece in the 1970s, who died of complications due to AIDS/HIV, confers to this work – and, by extension, to the Angel – a clearly political dimension.

The artistic experimentation on this image continued in 1986, during an exhibition at the Cité internationale des Arts in Paris, with one of the first presentations of *L'Ange. Corps des étoiles* [The Angel: Body of Stars], for which Klonaris/Thomadaki created a poster reusing the montage of the intersex Angel and superimposing astronomical imagery of celestial objects onto it. This process would be endlessly diversified and complexified over the years. Eight years later, Klonaris/Thomadaki designed the installation *Night Show for Angel*, composed of a series of eight multimedia environments presented in the disused swimming pool of Hornsey Road in London, as part of the Edge Biennial. At the heart of an initiatory journey through their symbolic and poetic world, the Angel, in all their multiple metamorphoses, serves as a guide, to the point of being featured and sublimated on the poster of this event.

In 1998, on the occasion of the opening of the galerie des vidéastes [video makers’ gallery] at the Espace Landowski in Boulogne-Billancourt, Klonaris/Thomadaki devised a large installation on ten screens for *Requiem pour le XXe siècle* [Requiem for the Twentieth Century] that constituted a major phase in The Angel Cycle. In this work, the intersex body of the Angel merged with images of destruction and violence from World War II, transformed using various optical and electronic processes, by turns becoming eye-witness, victim, and judge of the torments of this conflict.

Pursuing the exploration of the plural identities of bodies that escape all classifications, other posters complete this panorama and reveal the polymorphic and rhizomic character of Klonaris/Thomadaki’s oeuvre.

Vincent Enjalbert

\* Klonaris/Thomadaki, in *Klonaris/Thomadaki, Cycle de l'Ange. Archangel Matrix*, Paris, éd. A.S.T.A.R.T.I., 1996. p. 13.

\*\* Klonaris/Thomadaki, quoted by Marina Gržinić, “L’entre-deux sexes. Plus étrange qu’un ange (*Stranger than Angel*)” », in *Klonaris/Thomadaki, Le cinéma corporel. Corps sublimes / Intersexe et intermédia*, coord. Cécile Alex Chich, ed. L’Harmattan, 2006. p. 283.

\*\*\* Maria Klonaris, in *Klonaris/Thomadaki. Le Cycle de l'Ange. Selected works*, DVD4 PAL Interzone, color, 16:9, 85mins, Booklet, ed. Re:voir, 2020. p. 19.

\*\*\*\* Katerina Thomadaki, *ibid.*, p.8.

# BIOGRAPHIES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Biographies

Filmmakers, artists, and theorists of Greek origins, born respectively in Cairo in 1950 and in Athens in 1949, Maria Klonaris and Katerina Thomadaki have been living in Paris since 1975. Together, they co-sign a multidisciplinary oeuvre that is rooted in experimental theatre and cinema and brings together over a hundred creations structured in cycles – *La Tétralogie corporelle* [The Corporeal Tetralogy] (1975–1979), *Le Cycle de l'Unheimlich* [The Unheimlich Cycle] (1977–1982), *La Série Portraits* [The Portraits Series] (1979–1992), *Le Cycle des Hermaphrodites* [The Hermaphrodites Cycle] (1982–1990), *Le Rêve d'Electra* [Electra's Dream] (1983–1990), *Le Cycle de L'Ange* [The Angel Cycle] (1985–), *Les Jumeaux* [The Twins] (1995–2000) – as well as an extensive corpus of publications (manifestoes, essays, interviews). Maria Klonaris, who died in Paris in 2014, left a vast production of drawings kept secret, as well as unpublished collections of poems. Katerina Thomadaki has been an associate professor at the Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne and has participated in several research groups in the visual arts and cinema. The work of the two artists has gained international recognition (MoMA New York, Museum of Modern Art/Centre Pompidou (Paris), Tate Modern (London), National Gallery of Art Washington, Cinémathèque française (Paris), British Film Institute (London), Kunsthalle Wien, Benaki Museum and Onassis Foundation (Athens), Taipei Contemporary Art Museum, Joan Miró Foundation (Barcelona), MAXXI (Roma), etc.) and has been the subject of numerous studies. Their films are restored and preserved by the film heritage department of the National Center for Cinema and Moving Images in Paris, their texts and audiovisual documents archived at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Klonaris/Thomadaki archives) and their radio creations by the Institut national de l'audiovisuel. In 2024, several of their works entered the collections of the Centre Pompidou, and they received the AWARE Lifetime Achievement Award.

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Maud Jacquin

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KLONARIS/THOMADAKI

Exhibition:

from 27 September to 14 December 2024

Opening: Thursday 26 September, from 4pm to 9pm

Curators:

Maud Jacquin and Émilie Renard

Wednesday to Friday, from 11am to 7pm  
Saturday, from 2pm to 7pm · Free entrance  
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