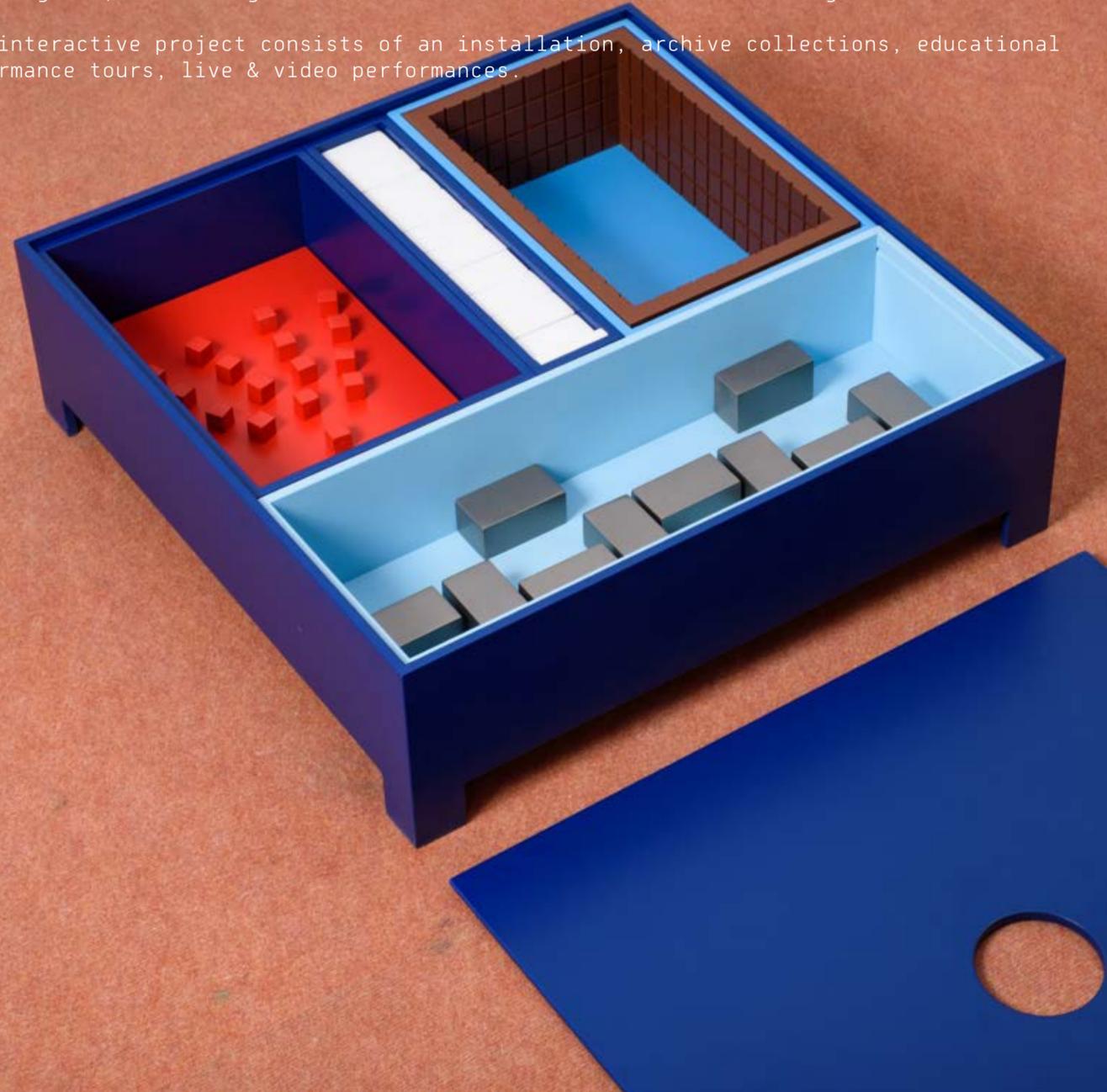


THE SEA GLASS FACTORY

The project showcases the constitution of an imaginary factory that aims at the production of artificial sea stone glass, imitating the natural material that is situated alongshore.

This visual and interactive project consists of an installation, archive collections, educational workshops, performance tours, live & video performances.



Sea Glass Factory (the Maquette), 2020,
λακαρισμένο ξύλο, 100×100×20cm

The project Sea Glass Factory explores the romantic aspect of the collector and their collections, as well as the transformation of a precious and collectable object to a commodity that satisfies the contemporary needs of people. This project is apparently critical of modern lifestyle, the possessive nature of human beings, and overconsumption.

The installation displays the constitution of the designing and construction of a factory in which the industrial and artificial production of sea stone glass takes place. The form of this glass will be similar to the pieces of stone glass found alongshore. The project aims at proposing a solution to the seeking of an elusive -to some, even precious- object. With a hint of irony, what is being proposed is an oxymoron - the annulment of the unique and precious character of glass pebbles - by being subject to mass production. The commodification of sea stone glass - which in itself constitutes a critique on modern evolution and the fast pace of our society - indicates the contempt of contemporary civilization for any remaining trace of romanticism. While the collector will be seeking the next 'unique' glass stone, the factory will have already transformed this precious object into a commodity.

In the designing of the factory facilities is included the creation of a library where the visitor will be able to find novels, photo albums, scientific surveys and articles regarding the natural sea stone glass. The next room is intended to be the workshop where the entire process of artificial sea stone glass production will take place: from the collection of raw materials to the final process of imitating the natural burnish. Finally, the next level is intended to be a conference and presentation hall where the visitor will be able to attend presentations, discussions and speeches by various guests, collectors and experts regarding the sought-after glass pebbles.

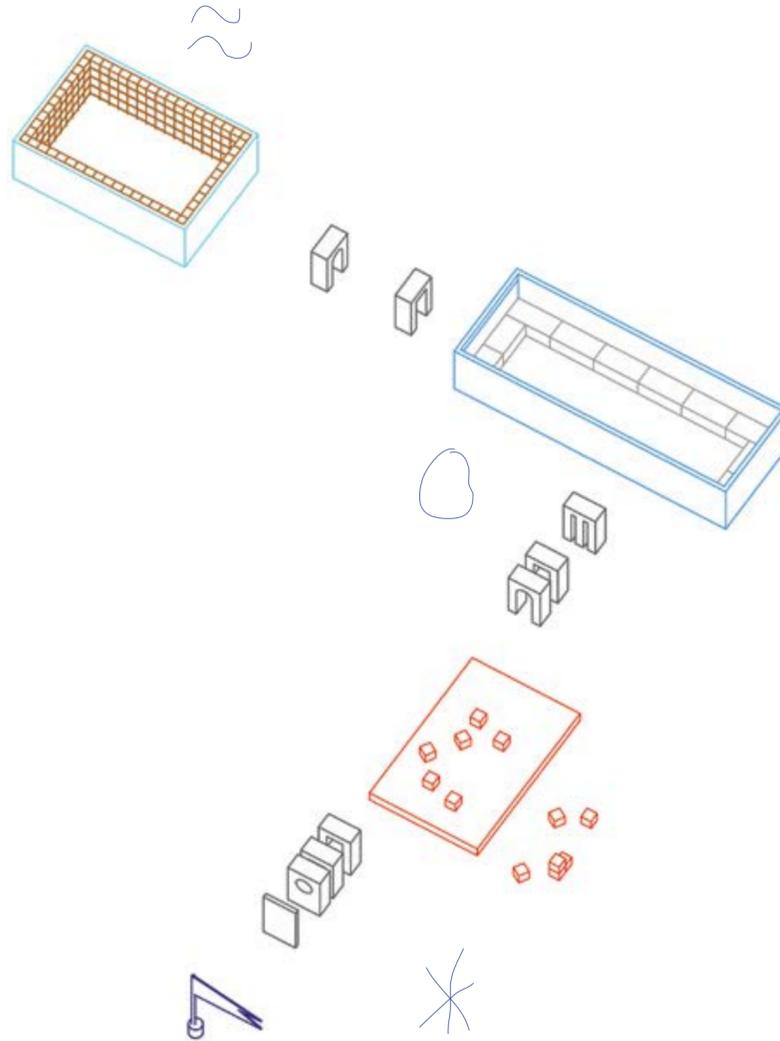
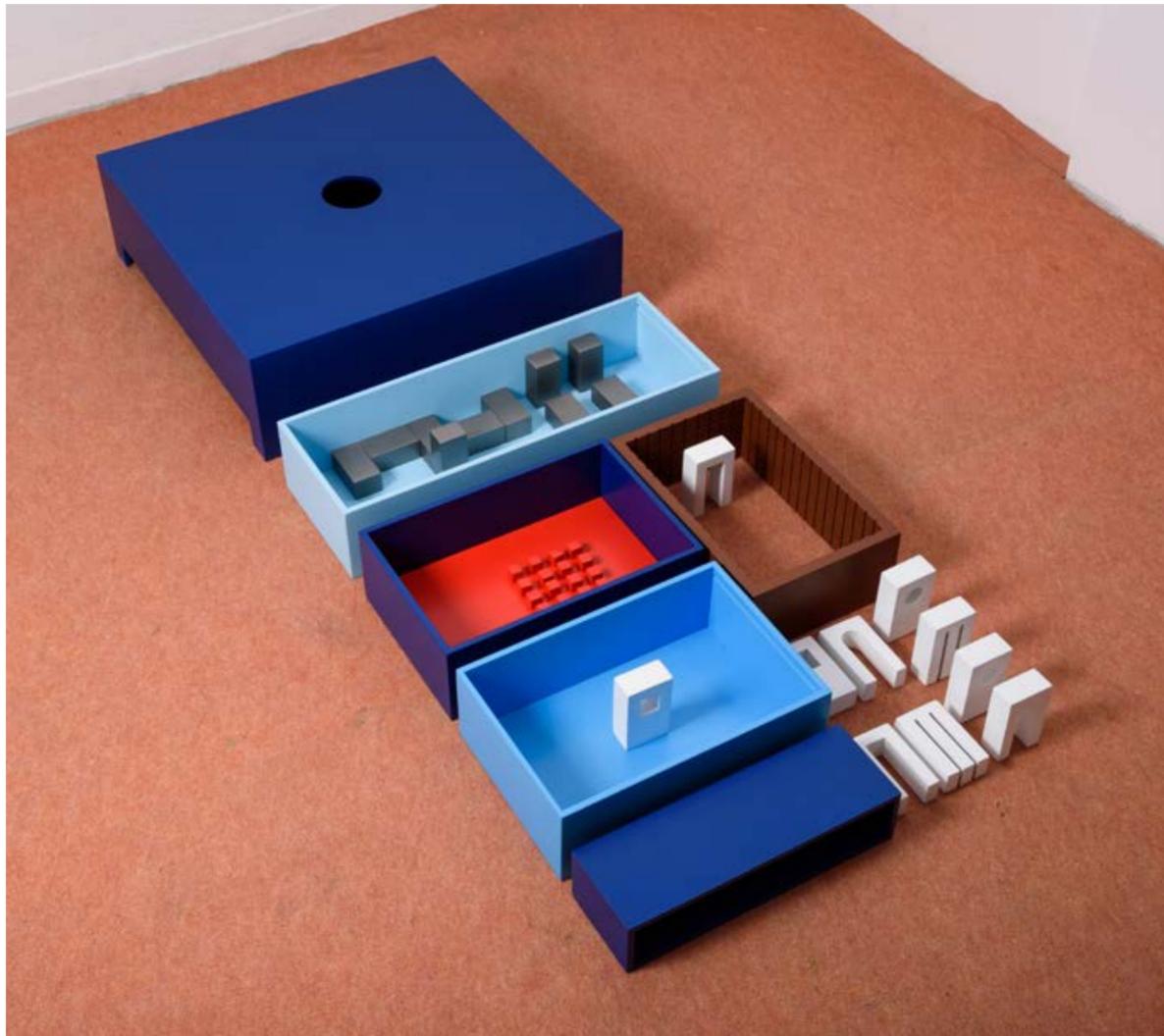
Should anyone grasp the romanticism entailed in the practice of the collector, they would be able to comprehend the perseverance required, alluding to an obsessive and dreamy type of personality. Therefore, the primary role of the entire project is played by a hero without a face, who is manifested through various visual pieces of information provided in the performance tour (along with its video coverage) held by the visual artist Dimitris Ameladiotis. In this context, the collector performs a ritual that 'declares' the truth of such a faceless character.

This work highlights the sensitivity of a collection arising from the constant study of the behavior of glass stone in relation to its ecosystem, allegorically juxtaposed to the human desire to imitate and over-produce this precious stone to multiple copies.

It refers, that is, to a romantic hobby of collectors who pursue their passion in big cities and harbors with industrial infrastructure. The sole treasure that the collector seeks in nature also constitutes the treasure of the market that multiplies it to numerous copies.

Within this work, that is, within this factory, materials and concepts are sculpted according to the surrounding space, as well as according to the notions, needs and desires that the human condition entails.

Subsequently, after the project-installation has been described, a more elaborate presentation of the three levels of the factory will follow.



The library

The library houses material that study the nature of the sea glass as a material and as a collectable object. Novels, photo albums, scientific researches, magazines with articles from various collectors and others constitute the core of information on how the glass shapes its colors, on the rarity and origin of glasses, the methods of sea glass finding and ways of evaluating the finds.



The laboratory

The space where the production of fake sea glass takes place. All the stages of process and production happen in there, from the collection of glass objects to the final procedure that imitates the natural path that the glass follows in the sea.



The auditorium

The lecture hall of the building where someone can attend talks and discussions by invited collectors and sea glass experts on issues regarding sea glass.

THE LIBRARY



On the first level, as we enter the premises, we find the space of the library that contains multiple book titles and volumes on both humanities, (history, anthropogeography etc.) and science (geology, oryctology, oceanography etc.). Additionally, it provides with a wide range of essays, articles, manuals, and dissertations published by sea stone glass collectors in science newspapers and magazines. It provides, that is, a rich databank on the natural evolution of sea stone glass. By and large, the library provides us with the opportunity to become acquainted with the practice of establishing collections of 'bizarre' objects, dating from early renaissance till our days. This 'history' is strongly related to the discovery of new places, continents and seas, through which the Europeans expanded their knowledge regarding the natural resources of the sea. The newly acquired knowledge inevitably led to the investment in new geophysical resources as well as new human dynamics. Along with the utilization of both physical and incorporeal resources acquired in the new world, the Europeans readjusted and redefined beliefs deeply rooted in the folklore of ancient places such as the Mediterranean Sea.

THE LABORATORY



This is the 'heart' of the factory, that is, the space with the necessary equipment and tools for the materialization of all the stages of sea stone glass production. In this workshop occurs the research, design, production and use of improvised machinery whose function simulates the natural conditions of sea stone glass formation. Moreover, it is the collection and display hall of extraordinary glass objects, (both shape and color-wise) as well as various types of sea sand and pebbles gathered from beaches across the Mediterranean Sea.

The stages are as follows:

Initially there is the collection of old, useless glass objects such as glass bottles. The cleaning of various traces of liquids, stickers, grains of sand, etc. as well as the drying off of the objects is of great importance. Subsequently follows their smashing to smaller pieces, the burnishing of the fragments, and their categorization according to size and shape. Then, the fragments are placed in a cement mixer together with some seawater, grains of sand, and pebbles. The time of mixing fluctuates from 3 to 10 hours depending on the level of burnishing that is desirable.

Basically, what takes place in this workshop is not just the stages of a mass production of objects but the artifact of a process simulating the natural poetics and dynamics of the sea and the sand that shape them.





THE AUDITORIUM



This is the exhibition and meeting space where the guest collectors present their findings and conclusions, exhibit their collections of natural sea stones as well as the outcome of the artificial ones as produced in the factory.

Besides the lectures, exhibitions and events, this space hosts educational and artistic seminars for both adults and children. In the context of these seminars realized as creative and interactive tours, the participants are initiated into the beauty of the marine world. Their exposure to this new world aims at the awakening of their sensitivity and fondness towards the marine ecosystem. Additionally, these workshops aim at the development of critical thinking so as to be able to distinguish the natural from the artificial, the 'unique' and priceless object offered generously by nature from the multiple retailed by the market in a specific price of surplus value (overpriced or underpriced).



Green glass
Forest green
Lime green
Olive green
Seafoam green



Brown glass
Amber
Yellow



Rare young & old
Pink
Red



Cobalt blue
Turquoise
Seafoam blue



Lavender



Bonfire sea glass



Bottle bottoms



White or clear



Black sea glass

Green sea glass is the most common green found today and comes mainly from lemon-lime flavored sodas such as 7-UP, Sprite, wine and beer bottles. One in five pieces of sea glass will be green.

Forest green sea glass is mostly from beer and wine bottles, some of it may also be from art glass. One in fifty pieces of sea glass will be forest green.

Lime green sea glass is mostly from beer and lemon-lime soda bottles. One in fifty pieces of sea glass may be lime green.

Seafoam green was a common color for bottles in the late 1800's and early 1900s. Green or soft aqua is the natural color of glass caused by the iron naturally found in batch sand. A common source of this color of glass may come from old Coca-Cola bottles which can be found in clear, and shades of aqua, seafoam green and light blue, other sources of seafoam green may be old seltzer mineral water bottles, baking soda, fruit jars, and ink bottles. If you find a thick soft green or seafoam shard, it's likely from the early 1900's. One in fifty pieces of sea glass will be seafoam green.

Cobalt Blue sea glass is vibrant and jewel like. The best known sources for cobalt blue sea glass are, medicine and poison bottles, castor oil bottles, glass rolling pins, Collyrium soothing eye lotion glass eye wash cups, ink bottles and perfume bottles. One in two hundred and fifty pieces of sea glass may be Cobalt Blue.

Turquoise sea glass is very rare and coveted. A few of the possible origins for these gorgeous treasures are old electric glass insulators, vintage siphon seltzer water bottles, old decorative glass and Victorian era stained glass window panes. One in five thousand pieces of sea glass may be deep turquoise.

Bottle bottoms are easily recognizable pieces, either the beginning or the end of the bottle, fall into a separate category as it is difficult to maintain an integer. It is interesting to be part of a collection in any color as it reminds us of where sea glass came from.

Brown sea glass may come mainly from beer, root beer and whiskey bottles. The older the glass the less common it is. Old Clorox and Lysol products came in large brown bottles. Today, many wine and beer companies still use brown bottles to help protect the liquor inside the bottles from the sun. Something in the region of one in two pieces of sea glass will be brown.

Amber sea glass can date back to the late 1800's. medicinal jars, beer bottles and even brown mason jars have all contributed to the abundance of brown and amber sea glass. One in twenty five pieces of sea glass may be amber. Yellow sea glass or light amber sea glass. Sources for this sea glass are decorative glass, art glass, stained glass, old glass insulators and glass that is made with selenium.

Lavender sea glass comes from older Pre World War I clear vintage canning jars and other glass containing manganese, a de-colorizer originally used to remove the green or aqua caused by the iron naturally found in batch sand. Some manganese dioxide decolorized bottles may date as early as the 1820's and as late as the 1930's. Over a period of many years the glass made with manganese turns lavender when exposed to sunlight. This is called "sun-purpled". One in three hundred pieces of sea glass will have a lavender hue.

Pieces of clear sea glass are the most common colors of sea glass come from glass products that are still in use today; clear, brown and green. Most clear sea glass comes from items such as soda bottles, glass food containers, liquor bottles, wine bottles, old milk bottles and medicine bottles. Clear sea glass looks frosty and white when dry and is often referred to as white sea glass. Roughly two out of three pieces of sea glass you find will be clear or white.

Pieces of glass from all age categories. Their rarity comes from the shape, the words and the designs you can find on them. Also the colors say more about how rare they are or they will be.

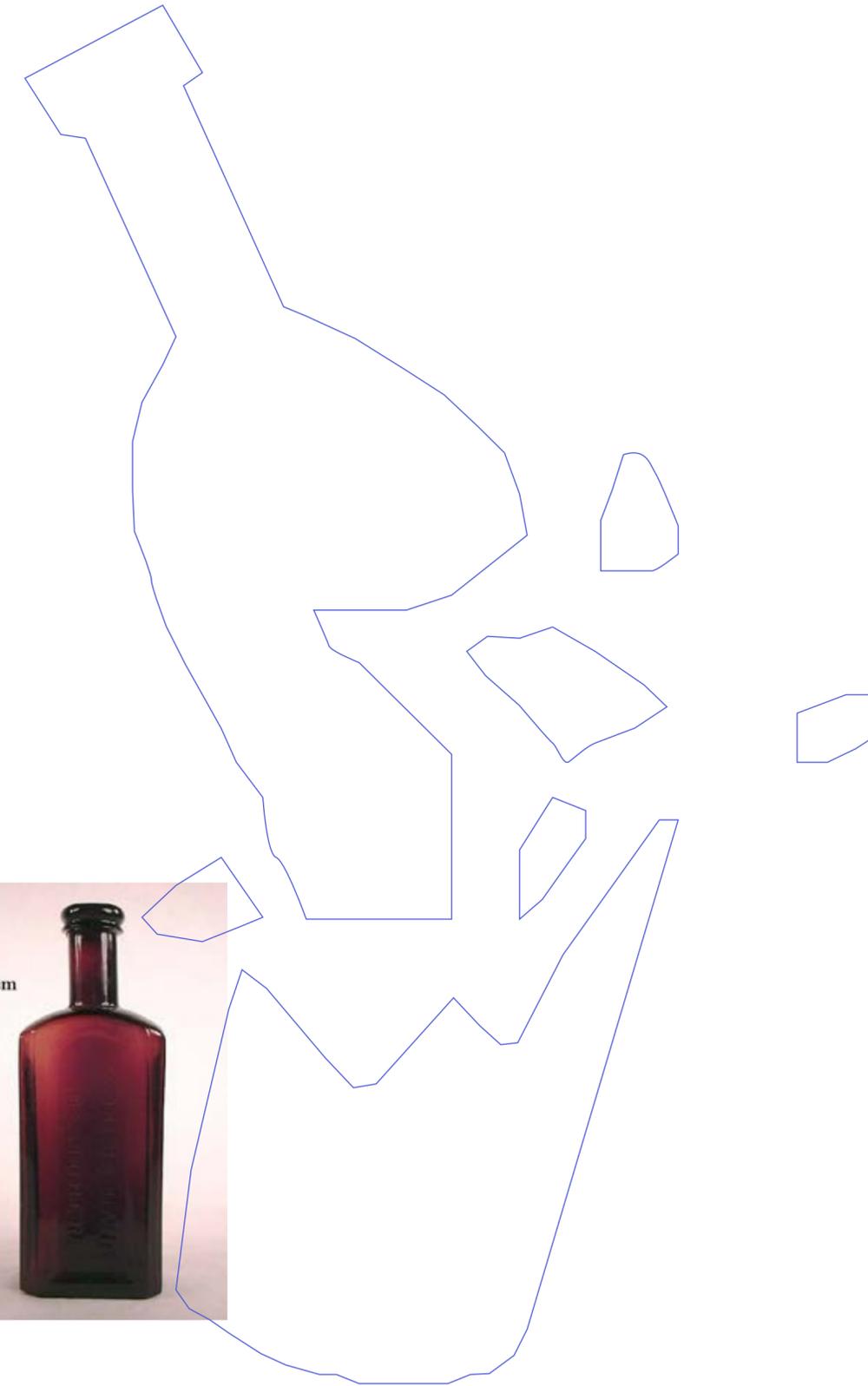
Pink sea glass is usually a soft peachy pink. Much of the pink sea glass we find today most likely comes from decorative glasses.

Red Sea Glass is one of the most difficult colors of sea glass to find. Sources include car and boat running lights, railroad and ship lanterns along with various other types of household and decorative glass.

Bonfire glass that has been exposed to the high temperature of a fire, possibly from trash burning on the shore or from forest fire. This glass will often have a strange shape. It might have debris of sand or other items lodged inside. Some very special pieces will even have water trapped inside. It can be various colors.

Black glass is one of the oldest bottle colors. Black glass is interesting as it actually has a hint of another color such as brown or olive green. During the 1700's most liquor and ale/beer bottles were mass produced as a cheap container between the 1840's and 1880's bottles were made in a deep, dark olive green color. The glass only appears to be black because of the density of the glass. Black sea glass it might look like a common rock, Its best to take it home and hold it up to a light. This glass may be from Champagne bottles, Case Gin bottles (this tall bottle is easily identifiable due to its square sides that narrow at the base) dark green wine bottles. One in two thousand pieces of sea glass might be black.

*** The categories of glasses are relatively inaccurate and every beach where you can find material needs its own re-search depending on how big and active the ports were, if there were industrial areas and shipyards around. The material can be studied in each area in a different way*



TOUR GUIDE



Tour guide: Dimitris Ameladiotis, video performance, 12 min
Filming and video editing by Ania Vouloudi

VIDEO LINK

Good evening!

We welcome you to the sea glass factory, that is, the factory that produces sea stone glass.

Before we discuss the specifics of the factory we will make a brief reference to sea stone glass itself.

Sea stone glass is the outcome of a long process that various glass objects undergo when dropped onto the seabed mainly as litter.

So, its life begins as soon as a glass bottle, for instance, reaches the seafloor, gradually assuming its final form as an object of rare beauty.

Through a natural, organic process, what used to be sea litter is shaped, smoothed and transformed to, ironically, a semi-precious stone.

The aim, therefore, of such a factory is the production of artificial glass stone, imitating the natural one found alongshore.

Additionally, it aims at informing the public with regard to sea stone development techniques, through presentations and research, made by passionate sea stone collectors.

More specifically, every detail about the function and goal of the factory is presented and explored in a 3-D model comprised of three separate rooms.

In the first room as we enter, is the library which contains literary works, science fiction books, articles, essays, research and theses of the collectors, published in science-based newspapers.

The second room being the 'heart' of the factory contains all the necessary equipment for the realization of the production process.

The stages are as such:

Initially there is the collection of old, useless glass objects such as glass bottles. The cleaning of various traces of liquids, stickers, grains of sand, etc. as well as the drying off of the objects is of great importance.

Subsequently follows their smashing to smaller pieces, the burnishing of the fragments, and their categorization according to size and shape. Then, the fragments are put in a cement mixer together with some sea water, grains of sand, and pebbles.

The time of mixing fluctuates from 3 to 10 hours depending on the level of burnishing that is desirable.

Finally, the last room is the space of conferences in which the public can attend the discussions, speeches, and lectures of the collectors who present their findings and conclusions on the topic.

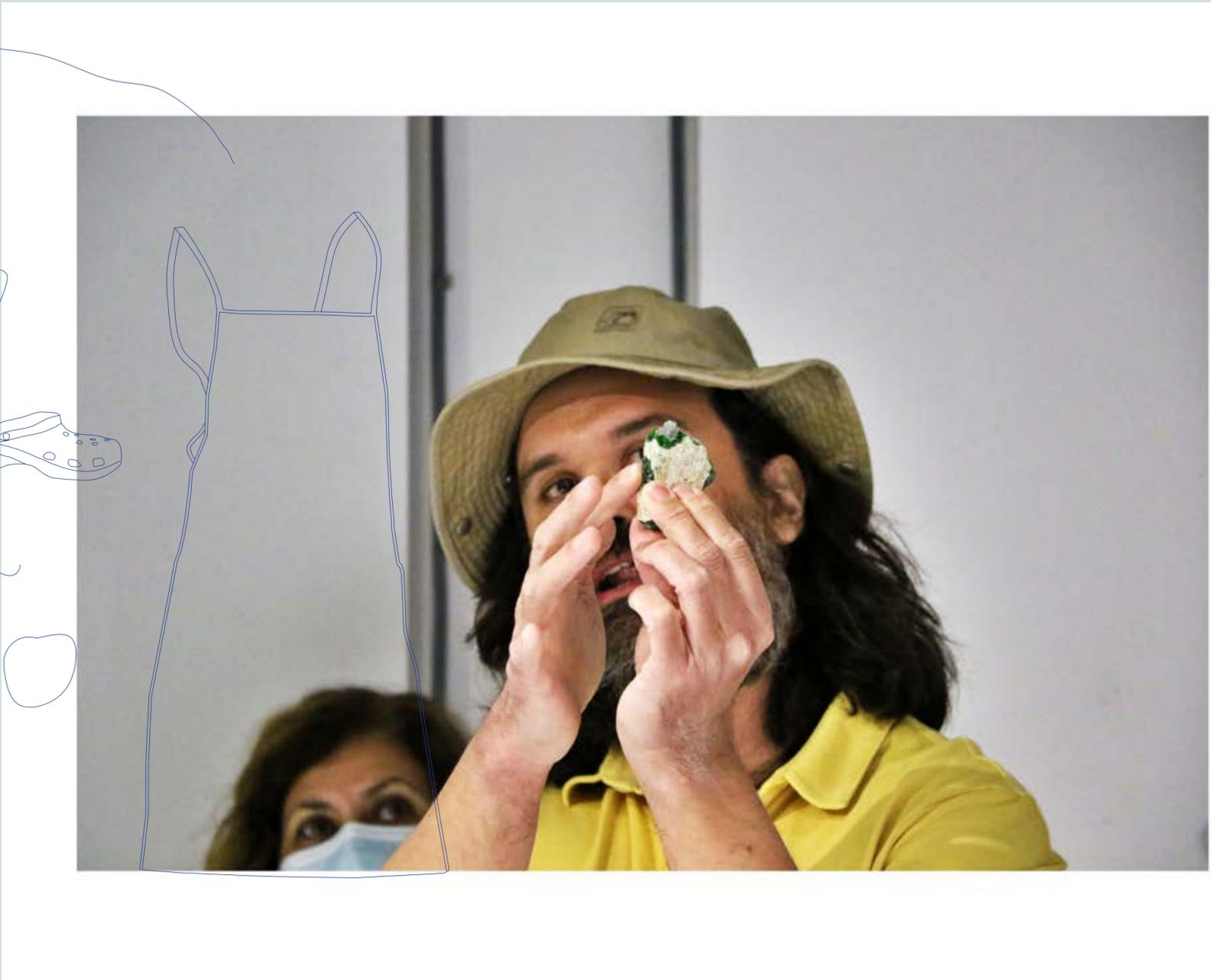
Moreover this room constitutes an exhibition space for both natural and the artificial glass stones that are produced in the factory.

This work highlights the sensitivity of a collection arising from the constant study of the behavior of glass stone in relation to its ecosystem, allegorically juxtaposed to the human desire to imitate and over-produce this precious stone to multiple copies.

It refers, that is, to a romantic hobby - that originates in the late Middle Ages- of collectors who pursue their passion in big cities and harbors with industrial infrastructure.

The sole treasure that the collector seeks in nature also constitutes the treasure of the market that multiplies it to numerous copies so as to be used as an adornment in gardens and yards, to make jewelry and various other objects.

Within this work, that is, within this factory, materials and concepts are sculpted according to the surrounding space, as well as according to the notions, needs and desires that the human condition entails.



SGF TEAM - PROJECT'S CV



The visual artist Giorgos Gerontides's art project "The Sea Glass Factory" is a work in constant progress. Various versions of this work have been presented in the following events:

2019 "Overview Effect" 60th International Film Festival of Thessaloniki (Greece) at MOMus - State Experimental Center of Arts in the parallel program of the 7th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art .

2020 "OKORAUSH" Think Tank for Design & Sustainability's ECO DESIGN FORUM international (EDF) at MAKK Museum of Applied Arts in Cologne (Germany)

2021 Supported by Cultural Services of Cyprus at the non-profit artspace Garage in Nicosia (Cyprus).

The artist Giorgos Gerontides has also present the project at the Fine Art School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (2019) and at the Goethe Institute of Thessaloniki by the invitation of ArtBox (2020).

Tour Guide Performance: Dimitris Ameladiotis
Object and Graphic Design: Post-Spectacular Office

Dimitris Ameladiotis studied at the School of Fine Arts in Thessaloniki, the Koninkje Akademie in Chent and the Chelsea College of Arts in London. His works have been shown in museums and festivals such as Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, MOMus - Contemporary Art, Benaki Museum, DESTE, Thessaloniki Film Festival etc. He has presented solo shows and performances, while he has participated in various group shows in Greece and abroad. He has curated visual workshops for children and adults at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, the Benaki Museum, the Diavata Prison, the MOMus - Contemporary Art of Thessaloniki with the support of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees etc. His works exist in collections such as MOMus - Contemporary Art of Thessaloniki.

Post-Spectacular Office (P-SO) is a narrative-driven design office with a broad spectrum of activity in the fields of graphic design, architecture, fine arts, and academia. P-SO works with individuals, brands, trade fairs, and museums, to design spatial and visual/virtual environments that stand out for their narrative power and conceptual dimensions. P-SO's projects follow a cross-disciplinary approach, as they expand into all possible scales and steps of design, in the process of synthesizing and implementing original ideas. Guided by content and employing a variety of media, the office creates layered, spatial narratives in which the co-existence of multiple materialities arrives in a unique form. In this context, the key aim of P-SO is to inspire users and visitors, as they immerse into new perceptions and experiences.

2021 Supported by Cultural Services of Cyprus at the non-profit art space Garage in Nicosia (Cyprus). Curator and texts Maria Efstathiou