

Chaidari Park of Historical Memory. (At Chaidari there was a concentration camp during the German occupation)

Study for the monument by Aemilia Papaphilippou, December 2008

This sculptural study's approach is based and inspired by the following fact as witnessed and recorded in the book "Chaidari" by the doctor of the camp Antonis Flountzis. The detainees on their way to Kaisariani, where their imminent execution would take place, seeking ways to communicate with their loved ones in their this last hour, they threw from the truck that transported them, a lot of notes, on small papers or written in pieces of cloth (since paper was prohibited), on handkerchiefs, clothes and in a case somebody on his wooden leg...

I quote:

"Better to die fighting for Freedom than to live a slave.

Nikos Mariakakis, agronomist, 1-5-44

Whoever finds this do not destroy".

"My Loved ones,

My death should not sadden you but harden you more for the fight that you conduct. Steel your hearts and immerge with dauntlessness from this new ordeal. Thus you will honour us better. When a person gives his life for superior ideals he never dies...

I kiss you all, with a lot of love".

Mitsos

"Farewell my friends... Mum do not feel sorry, Farewell Mum".

Vangelis

"My daughter Rina should become a schoolteacher. I kiss my wife and child."

"Notify my widowed mother... that I die for our Greece. I die proud. Pedestrian Greek deliver this cloth to this address. This is the last wish of a person who knows how to die for freedom..."

Spilios.

"Papa I go for execution. Be proud for your only son. Bye. Bye Papa".

[Napoleon]

These notes unsophisticated as they are are exceptionally to the point and I wanted to rescue this directness. Of pivotal importance is also the fact that these notes thrown to chance and to the street, do actually end up to their recipients through a community network formed by strangers resulting in rescuing and communicating these messages up to today and to us.

Beyond the notes I would like to report one more testimony that inspired me on an other level, since it describes that we tend to consider as given the most humble that are proven to be the most precious...

"... after 26 days in block 15 (in isolation) for the first time I walked on earth laid with some grass. I walked and could not get enough of the nature around me. For a moment, without even realizing it, I bent to cut a little grass, to caress the earth, to take something with me. I didn't make it ..."

Since the architectural study of the park has already organised a 42 meter ascending route leading to a small hill where the monument is to be situated I felt that the conditions speak in favour of a work that will not rival, with the usual obvious way, the landscape and this size but it will include it while being included in this.

What do I mean? A 'growth' not according to the usual vertical "monumental" direction but towards the horizontal direction of the field (side geotropism).

Furthermore observing that if one changes the scale of reading a creased piece of paper, if one "sees" it bigger, then it resembles creased and thrown clothes, and still bigger the earth's surface as in a landscape, in a rock, I resulted into the idea of the work...