

Anticipatory Mythographies for Shared European Futures:

Beyond Verticality, Patriarchy and Misogyny

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In August 2019 the classical art museum, the New Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, hosted an event in which the authors performed “The Trial of Zeus”, a long overdue trial to hold the current usurper responsible for his misogynic and criminal acts. In front of a live audience participating as jury surrounded antique statues of Zeus, Dionysus, Metis, and Apollo and many more the authors performed as prosecutor (DM) and defendant (MH) together with Linh Le (LL) who embodied one of Zeus many victims - the (female) wounded amazon (warrior). The aim of the event was to explore new ways of researching the classical texts inherited from Antiquity and their relevance and potential for contemporary politics and culture. Informed by the Deleuzian notion of rhizomatic interdisciplinary inquiry and new materialisms, this presentation aims to address the dry space of ideological disarray in Europe by activating the futures in the past that are common for Europe as an idea. The point of departure is the Ancient Greek text “Theogony”, assigned to the poet Hesiod. This text went through centuries being re-written from its archaic form(s) to authorization and interpretation in the spirit of hegemonic European mythography. Its own particular 'thing-ness' being abstracted into universalism and imprinted in history as a fundament for misogynist, imperialist and nationalist politics and culture in the 19 century. In our project, we see the narrative of Ancient Greek cosmogony as not historical, but inherently speculative, hence prone to be continuously re-imagined, re-constructed and re-enacted in constructing political imaginaries. We approach the Theogony as an unstable assemblage of political ideographs. Our purpose is to unsettle its apparatus-like interpretations towards potentiality of creating alternative constellations of possible. In doing this we seek to merge the research on potentiality of thingness within the objects of literary and material history and expand performance perspectives on heritage. Building from current ideas in speculative thinking and design we explore how thresholds of the world are negotiated through mythological and material heritage and can be used for creating new anticipatory mythographies. This exposition draws on the ruins of the performance and the visual material from it in order to ignite the discussion about potentialities for embodying, speculative interpretations and projections as part of a critical and speculative re-enaction and re-activation of alternative futures embedded in the fabric of the past.