

from portraits to selfies

# beat

από τη Συλλογή  
του Πανεπιστημίου Agder και  
την Ανωτάτη Σχολή Καλών Τεχνών

Παλαιά Βιβλιοθήκη ΑΣΚΤ • 7 - 21 Ιουνίου 2018

Δευτέρα - Παρασκευή 13:00 - 20:00, Σάββατο - Κυριακή 13:00 - 18:00



 UNIVERSITY OF AGDER



## IS BEAT DEAD?

- Beat art in 1950s San Francisco
- Reidar Wennesland: the Norwegian collector who made Californian Beat art known in Norway
- Beat art from Wennesland's Collection at the University of Agder in southwest Norway
- 50 portraits from the Agder Collection travel for the first time outside Norway on the initiative of Mette Line Pedersen, Curator of the Collection
- Portraits executed by art students of the Athens School of Fine Arts enter into dialogue with the Beat Collection

***Beat. From portraits to selfies*** proudly presents Michael Bowen, Arthur Richer, Casey Van Duren and an unknown artist along with works made for the purpose of the show by fifteen (15) students of the Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA). The exhibition is hosted at the **Old Library of ASFA** from **7-21 June 2018**. The University of Agder (Faculty of Fine Arts), the Athens School of Fine Arts (Department of Theory and Art History; 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Painting Lab at ASFA; Graphic Design and Visual Communication Lab, ASFA) and the Norwegian Institute at Athens join forces to remind both specialists and laymen that Beat art is not only about literary personas such as Kerouac, Ginsberg and Burroughs but also about 20<sup>th</sup> century visual avant-gardism.

Members of the Beat generation were the forerunners of the hippie movement. Different people who, in solidarity, protested against the establishment out of a desire to create a better world. Artists were inspired by the anti-materialistic spirit of the age which existed in the underground environment of San Francisco in the 1950s. The word "beat" (beaten) became associated with their meagre economic means. The spiritual, partly stemming from Buddhism, attracted the artists profoundly.

In terms of artistic production, abstract expressionism is the common denominator for both New York and San Francisco art scenes. While East Coast is distinct for its action painting and color field, West Coast is associated with *assemblages*, sculptural units put together from concrete materials. Galleries such as The Six and Semina led by artists were hosting evenings of poetry readings, art and happenings. Lived experiences were more important than achieving *fame* in the art market. Abstraction met figuration, narrative elements and jazz references.

The art production of this period is often characterized today as "forgotten". Is Beat dead? The exhibition attempts to bring, side by side, young artists and acknowledged Californian Beat'ers to instigate a dialogue by taking the portrait genre as the point of departure. What kind of exchange can happen between older practices and current artistic inquiries? Is portraiture,

both in its Beat form and seen through the eyes of the younger ASFA artists, able to move us by extracting the essence of artistic movements, currents and trends? This was the main question asked by the Norwegian Curator of the Beat Collection Mette Line Pedersen. Thus the exhibition *Beat. From Portraits to Selfies* is no longer a presentation of artworks but a means of, and a reason for, cultural encounters at the School of Fine Arts.

*For the young and the curious*, as the collector Wennesland is quoted saying.

**Exhibition title:** *Beat. From Portraits to Selfies*.

**Curation:** Mette Line Pedersen (Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Agder)

Delia Tzortzaki (The Norwegian Institute of Athens and the Athens School of Fine Arts)

**with the participation of:**

- Vanessa Divani, Marina Ziavra, Despoina Liodaki, Elena Stavradi (Students of the Department of Theory and Art History, ASFA)
- Monica Vampoura, Hara Katopodi, Irini Kyriakidou, Giannis Liarmakopoulos, Eleni Makropoulou, Vassilis Okouve, Panagiotis Stavrou, Solonas Haritonidis (Students of the Art Department, ASFA, 1<sup>st</sup> Painting Lab)
- Sotiris Vougatzi, Sofia Mellisourgaki, Athanasios Mylonas, Konstantinos Nikou, Odysseas Sarafidis, Vassilis Stogias, Madalena Tigili (Students of the Art Department, ASFA, 5<sup>t</sup> Painting Lab)
- Ioanna Alexandri, Kyriaki Mavroudi, Basilhs Niotis, Lenia Platania, Vasiliki Psimogiannou, Georgia Theologou, Zaharoula Tsampi, Thaleia Vasiliou, Crisa Voudouri (Students of Graphic Design and Visual Communication Lab, ASFA)

**Graphic design (exhibition poster and panels):** Ioanna Alexandri

(Graphic Design and Visual Communication Lab, ASFA)

**Opening:** Thursday 7 June 2018, 19.30, Old Library, ASFA

**Duration of the exhibition:** 7-21 June 2018

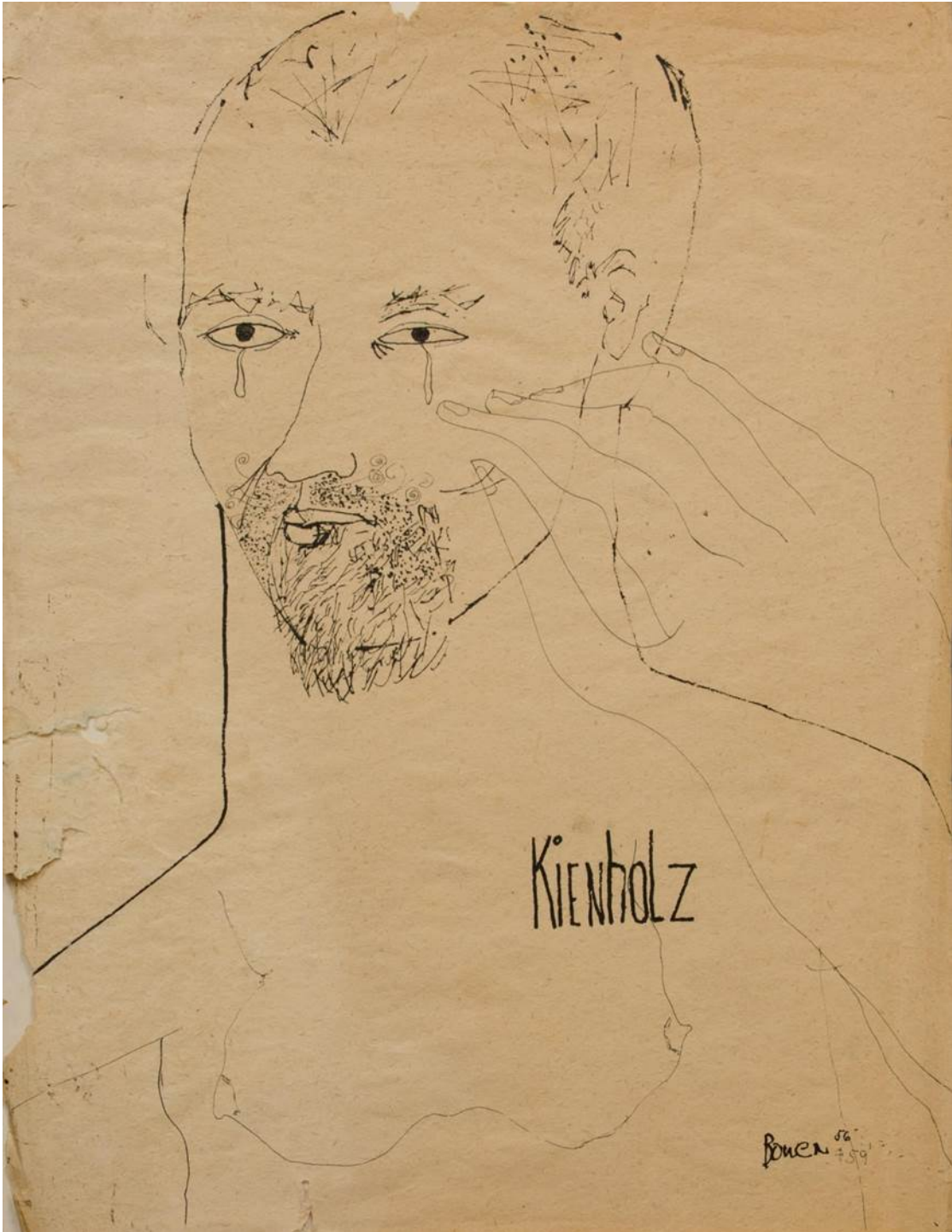
**Opening hours:** Monday to Friday: 13.00-20.00, Saturday-Sunday: 13.00-18.00



with the kind support of







Michael Bowen, *Kienholz*, 1959 (Beat Collection, University of Agder)



1<sup>st</sup> Painting Lab, ASFA (photos M.Ziavra / E. Stavraki)





ainting Lab (photo M.Ziavra / E. Stavraki)