

## Embassy of the United States Athens, Greece

### ALUMNI IN ACTION: ZOE KERAMEA



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*Over the last 64 years, thousands of Greek and U.S. citizens have traveled on exchange programs sponsored by the Department of State. Every month we highlight alumni of these programs in our feature "Alumni in Action."*

Zoe Keramea is an artist known for her sculptures, printmaking, drawing and ceramic works. Born in Athens in 1955, she attended Universität der Künste Berlin and was awarded a Fulbright Grant in 1989 to work on her printmaking project "Two Stage Intaglio Matrix Prints - Zootypes" in New York. She lives and works in Athens and New York.

#### In her own words:

"In 1989 I received a Fulbright award to develop a new printmaking process at Bob Blackburn's Printmaking Workshop in New York. This two stage intaglio matrix printing process was later called "zootype" by an art publisher. The access to the necessary materials and large scale presses allowed me to push the process much further than I could have in my own studio in Athens. My Fulbright years were ones of intensity; intensity of both work and friendship. The interaction with other professionals in different fields colored the subsequent development of my work into the three-dimensional.

In April of 2011 I was invited to participate in the 18th Biennale of Sydney: all our relations by its Artistic Directors, Catherine de Zegher and Gerald McMaster. The Biennale opened in June 27, 2012 and will run until September 16, 2012. My works are exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, one of the four major venues.

These are twelve "Moths," twelve flexible modular sculptures made of hand-folded paper and thread and the interactive sculptural ensemble "Nine Blocks".

The moths are emblems of transformation from the earthbound to the ethereal. In Greek we call a moth ψυχή (psyche) which means soul. The transformation - the metamorphosis - in these works is also something literal as they pass from a two-dimensional to a three-dimensional existence since a flat strip of paper is folded into a dipyramid and joined with many others with thread to become a "Moth." The

"Moth," now a flexible structure, can be folded inward or outward assuming any number of different states.

The work "Nine Blocks" consists of nine wooden cubes, like children's blocks, only much larger. They are inscribed with knotted ribbons. The public is invited to move the blocks around and rearrange them trying to connect the ribbons in a continuous line along their surfaces.

I was also asked by the Biennale and their design partner Collider, to work on a drawing for the creative branding campaign. My drawing "Journey Lines" consisting of four different strands of ribbon to mark the four major venues of the 18th Biennale, is being now used on banners throughout the Sydney, the bos18 website, posters, invitations, guides, flags, tote bags, badges.

( <http://www.zoekeramea.com/main/current-shows/157-bos> )

My latest venture, "Mandala Memory" for the iPhone and the iPad is the expanded version of the physical board game I designed as part of the artist's project PinCutFoldBlowUp included in the Drawing Papers 54 – Zoe Keramea: Geometry of Paradox, published by The Drawing Center in NY, in 2005, on the occasion of my exhibition there.

"Mandala Memory" is a matching game consisting of 54 images for the iPhone and 108 for the iPad. The images are originally hand-cut from mulberry paper. The cut-outs are improvisations on the theme of the mandala. They are a series of subtle unfoldings; variations on the circle and the square. One can play for points, meditation, or mind training. It is both gender neutral and non-violent and it is also meant as an alternative to shooter games, so widely marketed to children today.

Best App Ever Awards 2010 gave "Mandala Memory" the 3rd prize in their Family Games category. It is satisfying to think you created something so easily accessible to the entire world.

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