



Best in tastelessness goes on show

Photographs and objects of bad taste make up the display that opened yesterday.

How can we define the meaning of "kitsch"? That was the question which sparked off a collaboration between the Thessaloniki Center of Contemporary Art and the free press magazine Parallaxi, leading to a project exploring the different views on the culture of kitsch as well as the various ways kitsch is displayed.

The magazine ran a photography competition about kitsch today and its constant presence in daily life. Readers who chose to participate photographed anything they found harmful to their sense of aesthetics, discovering the bad taste that exists everywhere. City streets, shop windows, churches, buildings and even their own homes feature in the kitschiest of photographs.

The 100 best images went on display at the Thessaloniki Center of Contemporary Art, in an exhibition titled "Greatest Kitsch 2009: Kitsch Today." Apart from readers' contributions, the museum will also showcase objects from the kitsch collections of Christos Kalos and Clio Tantalidou. The exhibition's aim was to create a dialogue on the outrageous and also allows visitors to vote for the best five photographs.

The center's director Syrago Tsiara has noted that kitsch, as a cultural phenomenon, is something that surfaced in the industrialized Western world at the same time as avant-garde.

Bullying on the rise at schools and online

One in four schoolchildren has been the victim of bullying, a problem well documented in other countries but only now appearing in Greece, experts say.

A study by the Association for the Psychosocial Health of Children and Adolescents in Athens shows that 22.5 percent of schoolchildren have suffered some form of verbal or physical bullying - in the schoolyard, the classroom or even on the Internet. «Intimidation has arrived in Greek schools and is affecting hundreds of children,» said Stamatis Antoniou, psychology professor at Manchester Business School. Antoniou said most victims were depressive and anti-social and called on teachers to encourage them to communicate.

In a related development, police in Athens said they had traced four young people who had posted messages on the Internet expressing their intention of taking their own lives.

Greece donates replica of precious archaic korai to China

BEIJING, -- The Greek Ministry of Culture on Tuesday donated a replica of an ancient marble statue named Peplophoros to a Chinese museum that is under construction here.

The donation ceremony was held between the Greek Embassy to China and the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), sponsor of the Museum of Chinese Women and Children, the only national museum of women and children in the country.

To underline the aim of the museum, which is to promote development, friendship and cooperation among nations, the Greek Ministry of Culture chose the statue of Peplophoros, also named Peplous Kore, one of the finest archaic korai dedicated to the goddess Athena, said Theodoros Georgakelos, Greek Ambassador to China.

"The statue will be displayed in the International Friendship Hall of the museum among other statues donated by other countries," said Mu Hong, deputy director-general of the International Liaison Department of the ACWF.

Mu said the museum was scheduled to open before Oct. 1 this year, the National Day of China.

"The original statue belongs to the Acropolis Museum," said Georgakelos. Peplophoros wears Doric peplos, a simple unpleated garment, hence her name. The young woman is portrayed frontally and her short peplos is fastened over both shoulders. The statue's radiant face is highlighted with red paint on the eyes, lips and long hair.

As described on the Acropolis Museum Web site, "this work of circa 525 BC must have come from the chisel of a great artist of the era."

"A PINK PUMPKIN?" by Pipina D. Elles (Eleftheriades)

Book Launch Ermington Library, Parramatta City Council

"AN EXCITING BOOK FOR THE YOUNG AND THE...OLDER!"

If someone had walked into Ermington Branch Library, tucked away behind the main shopping district of this western Sydney suburb and had thought that Halloween is present, they would not be misunderstood.

Last Wednesday morning, April 15, well known Greek-Australian author, poet and artiste, Pipina Despina Elles (Eleftheriades), nee Iosifidou, hailing from Ioannina city, capital of Epirus region, north western Greece, helped excite the lives of young children with the addition of a newly launched children's story in English, titled "A Pink Pumpkin?" in the centre of the Library.

Amongst the children were various designs of pumpkins, coloured in pink (!) as well as pieces of pumpkin skin pieces to entice the young children present at the launch with their equally excited parents in delving into the story.

Mrs Elles started by asking the children if they enjoyed pumpkins and what they knew. The children, ranging from 2 - 6 years old, gave their answers in a humorous manner, befitting their understanding of their world. The famed, within the Greek-Australian community and beyond, author continued reading excerpts of her book and had everyone tuning in closely. Some children were of Greek speaking background and others were of a variety of language and cultural backgrounds, indeed a mixing of cultures and languages.

The book launch concluded with a



colouring competition of pumpkin sketches and prizes were handed out to the best ones.

These moves of Greek authors to launch their books, not only within the Sydney Greek community but also within their own council areas and eventually to the wider Australian reading community is commendable and Ms Elles is worthy of praise for this initiative. Commendations should also be given to Ermington Library for approach-

ing the author and organising this important event.

Ms Elles, being a philologist-teacher and starting off as a Greek community teacher, has been an active member for many years in the Greek community of Sydney and of Australia in general on various committees. She has launched a great number of anthologies including short stories, novels, poems and theatrical plays and critical analytical writings. These include titles like: "Macedonians", "Fireflies", "Penelopes' Gaze", "Theatre 2000", "Love gifts" to name just a few.

Those parents or other community members who would like to obtain a copy or copies of her latest children's book and therefore enjoy a...pink pumpkin experience, may contact the author directly on 0404 104796 or via email on pipinaelles@hotmail.com

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