

Valinia Svoronou @ Frankfurt am Main reviewed



by [Lossy](#) on 24/08/2016

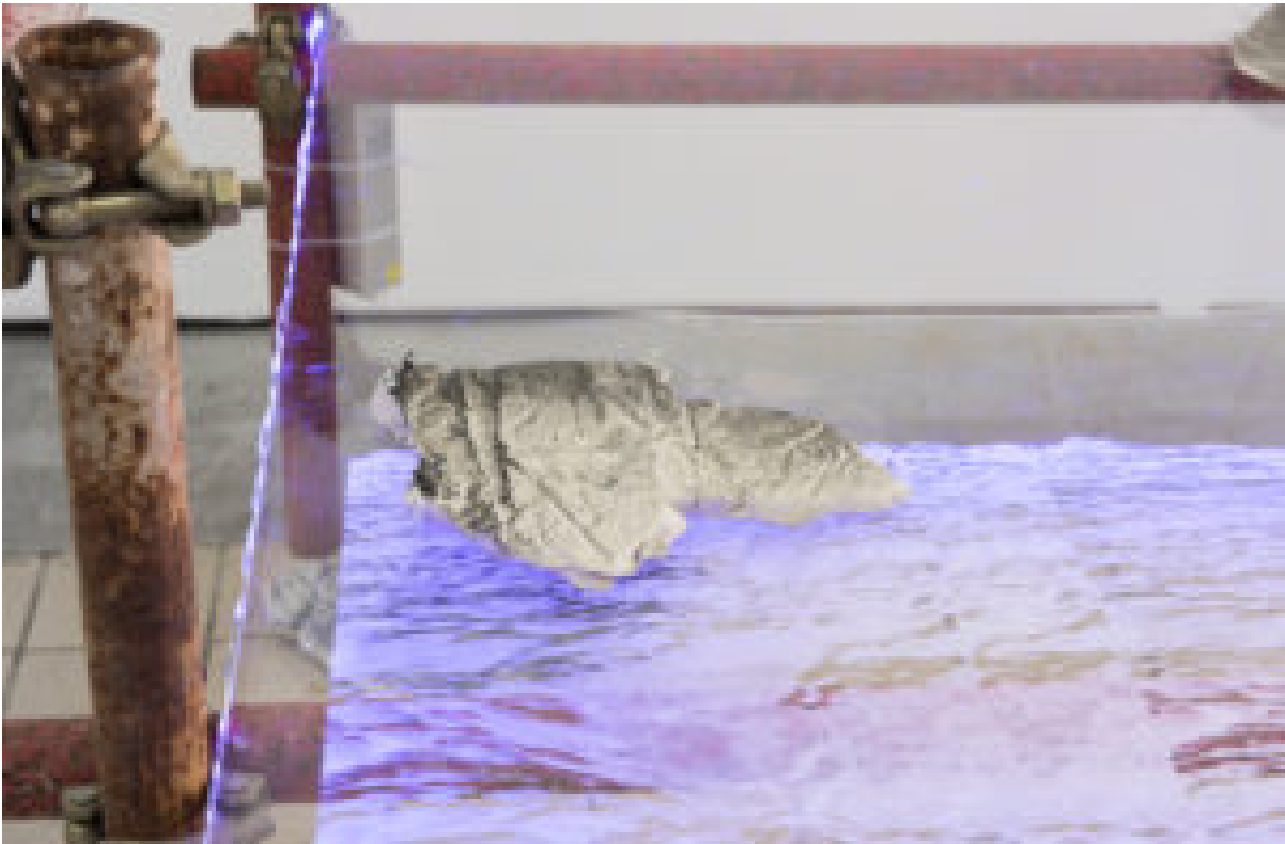
[Valinia Svoronou](#)'s *The glow pt.2: gravity regimes* works through a number of different narratives. Running at Berlin's [Frankfurt am Main](#) from August 14 to September 11, these include pleasure-seeking Greek island club culture and its ruptured local ecology through the ever increasing touristic architecture and nightlife. Here it scars the volcanic coastline both physically and metaphysically, from the local life lived daily through the euphoria of foreigners to marine life depletion and coastal erosion.

A once harmonious off-grid landscape is now riddled with the problems of a year-round economy, environmental issues and mass clubbing tourism. The space Svoronou sets up in *The glow pt.2: gravity regimes* is actually the rave's afterlife as the banal day-to-day mixed between advertisements, construction and the surrounding habitat. It exercises the concept of Deleuze's 'fold' — a form of connection, that sees the universe as a process of folding and unfolding from the outside in — seamlessly. It creates an interior that isn't autonomous to its initial site but merely a doubling of the external world. Breaking this down into symbolic structures, Svoronou, who is based between Athens and London, takes on the role of ethnographer-as-artist in presenting this local culture.



Valinia Svoronou, *The glow pt2: gravity regimes* (2016). Exhibition view. Photo by Trevor Llyod. Courtesy the artist + Frankfurt am Main, Berlin. Two large structures comprised of scaffolding bars, symbolic of the constant building sites on the islands create plinths for rock-like formations of plaster and engraved plastic, with which their edges are beaded with LED strip lights in hues of violet and giving off a sense of unnatural radiation similar to tanning salon pods. The motif engraved on the plastic gives the impression of scanned water. It looks three dimensional, rippling over the plastic surface and is representative of what is literally an impossible task to scan water.

The advantage of designing symbolic cultural phenomena rather than reporting on it linguistically is it allows the artist to play with the audience's own subjectivity in relation to the exhibited objects. Svoronou systematically studies the players and cultures embroiled in this offshore island dystopia throughout all the works exhibited. I write 'players' rather than 'people' because Svoronou seems to hone in on only showing the viewer advertisements and found footage through a video, displayed in the gallery corridor, of candid party goers. Dripping in UV paint or embracing its sweaty but 'healthy' hedonism, the six-minute film leads the viewer between pounding house beats and the occasional full moon, followed by a bikini-clad blonde slinking over golden sand ready to bake under the sun.



Valinia Svoronou, 'Gravity regimes 1' (2016). Detail. Photo by Trevor Llyod. Courtesy the artist + Frankfurt am Main, Berlin. Animated GIF-like illustrations of crowds dancing are mirrored both in the video and pinned to the walls on laser-engraved natural rubber sheeting — sterile but fetishized in the white cube, like futuristic hides. CGI rendered footage also has a strong role in the video of what initially seems like cliff faces but then starts to lend itself more to the objects placed around the main room.

Svoronou's work initially draws one into the nostalgic motifs of retro '90s euphoria, from happy hardcore anthems and full moon parties to the offsite exotic locations imbued with the natural environment that hosts these activities. However, the more time you spend with her work, the more the artist pulls these symbolic gestures into the domestic space, from washed-up glow stick detritus to the literal mass of bodies weighing down on the island and mapping the geology of subcultures. Deleuze also coined the phrase 'origami universe' in relation to the cosmos and the constant act of folding. Perhaps this exhibition is an isolated study of the contemporary cosmos through the human physical psyche and its non-human counterparts, not as a warning but as a modern-day deity — divine in status and affected only by its followers.**

Exhibition photos, top right. **Valinia Svoronou's 'The glow pt.2: gravity regimes' solo exhibition is on at Berlin's Frankfurt am Main, running August 14 to September 11, 2016.** Header image: Valinia Svoronou, 'The glow pt2: gravity regimes' (2016). Video still. Photo by Trevor Llyod. Courtesy the artist + Frankfurt am Main, Berlin.

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