



Adrian Paci, *We Apologise*, Victoria Square, Athens, October 20 to November 12, 2021

Contemporary Art, Migration and History Education: Albanian artist Adrian Paci at Victoria Square (Athens).

Dr. Eugenia Alexaki

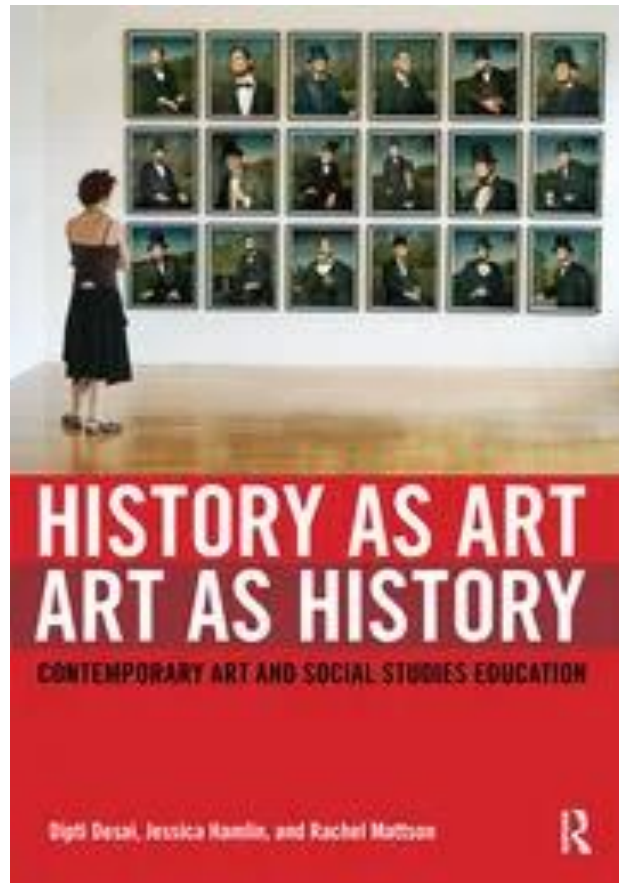
Art historian

University of West Attica, Greece

Association for History Education in Greece-AHEG Association
of Albanian History Teachers "Youth and History"

***Approaching the Migration Experience. Albanians in Greece:
History, Education***

Saturday, November 18th 2023, Tirana



Dipti Desai, Jessica Hamlin, Rachel Mattson, *History as Art, Art as History. Contemporary Art and Social Studies Education*, New York, Routledge, 2010.

The use of contemporary artworks that disrupt the conventional historical narrative and reveal marginalized "voices" is capable of transforming the history and social studies classroom into a "political space of cultural production".



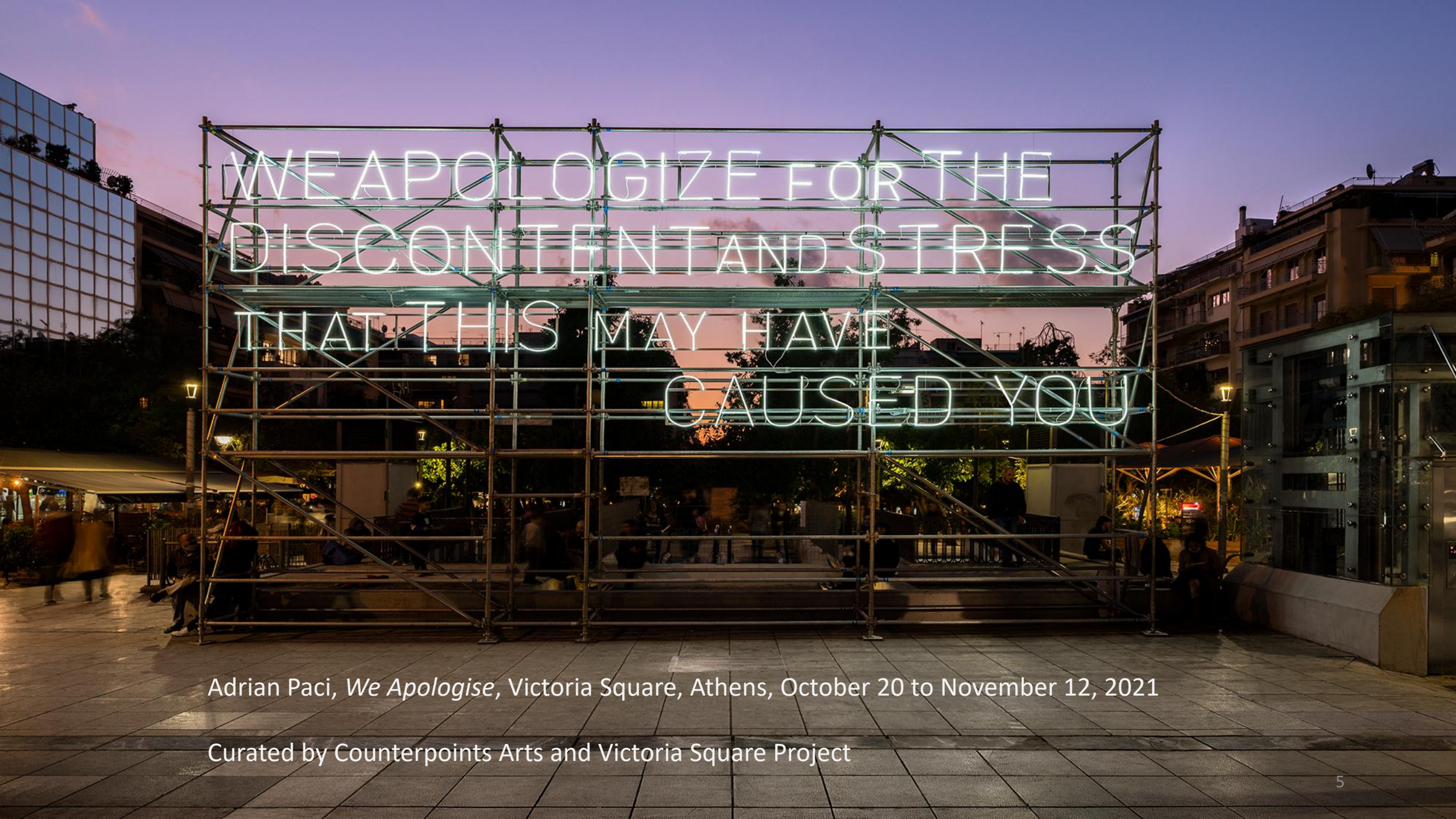
View from Adrian Paci's exhibition "The Guardians" at Kalfayan Art Gallery in Athens in 2015 (1st solo exhibition of the artist in Greece).

Contemporary artworks that deal with identity, inequality, discrimination, migration, exile, displacement, social and historical trauma, artworks that question dominant historical narratives and social stereotypes, are increasingly recognized as useful pedagogical tools that could foster students' social and historical empathy and encourage them to act as agents of positive social change.

Paci systematically addresses issues of migration, identity and displacement in his artworks.

In the "Names" series, the artist has engraved the "other", the "buried" names of Albanian migrants on marble slabs that resemble tombstones. Many Albanian migrants, upon arriving in Greece, were "rebaptized" with Greek names for "practical reasons".

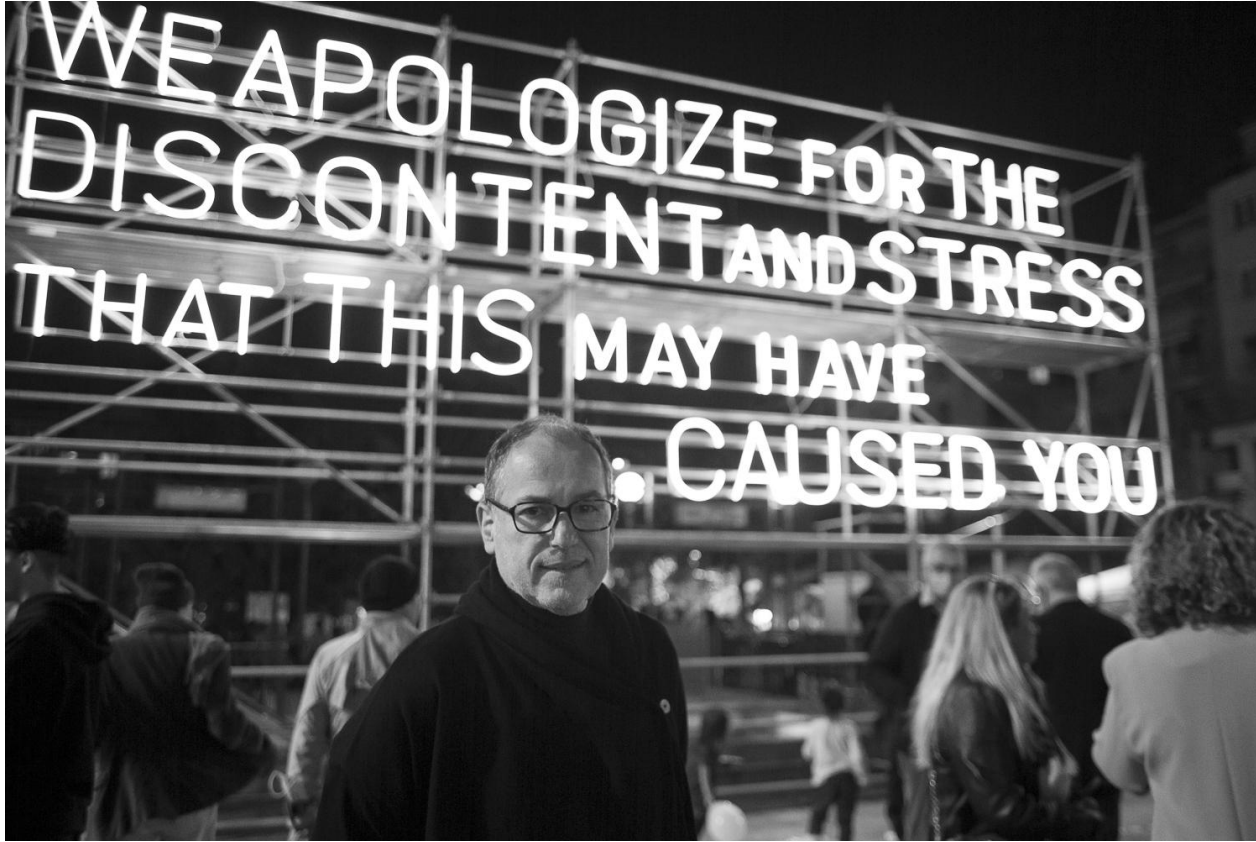




WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE
DISCONTENT AND STRESS
THAT THIS MAY HAVE
CAUSED YOU

Adrian Paci, *We Apologise*, Victoria Square, Athens, October 20 to November 12, 2021

Curated by Counterpoints Arts and Victoria Square Project



Paci created an ephemeral (counter) monument that invited us to rethink, look at each other and explore new ways to live together. Regardless of our different attitudes and needs, it was addressed to all of us, the residents and passers-by of Victoria Square, a meeting point for the many diverse communities that make up this neighborhood of Athens.

If we consider the "We Apologize" installation as an ephemeral "monument" to migration, we could reflect with our students:

- What was the story behind this unusual memorial?
- Who might have been interested in this monument? Who might have been annoyed?
- How does this monument differ from other public conventional monuments?
- What are the stories that conventional monuments "tell"? Are these monuments noticed, or are they, as Robert Musil said, "invisible" in the city?
- Whose stories are missing from our neighborhood monuments/sculptures?
- We explore with our students artworks, in public spaces or elsewhere, that deal with the issue of migration. We discuss the approaches other artists have taken to this topic and the methods they've employed.

What stories does your
local square “tell”?

What story would you like
to tell on your
neighborhood square?

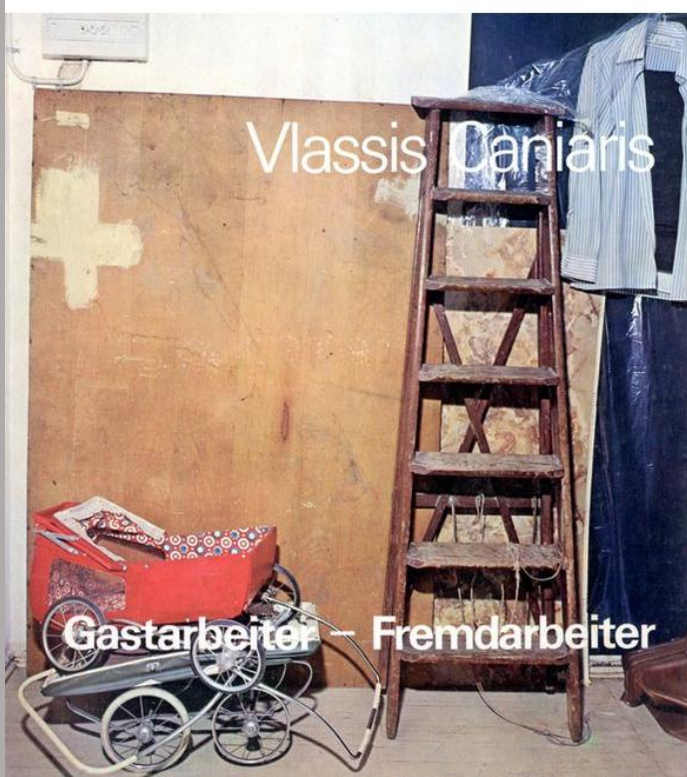


If you were to create a temporary monument about migration for a public space in your neighborhood, which site would you choose?

what kind of “materials” would you use (metal, wood, recycled materials, oral histories, other...)?

with whom would you collaborate and why?





Vlassis Kaniaris, *Migrants*, 1971-76

By asking our students to reflect on how migration has been visualized by artists, we are foregrounding a more socially just education, informed by a decolonizing approach, which embraces tolerance and active interrogation, instead of knowledge of facts, master narratives, and dominant certainty.