

the Milena principle

# [Sinfosaramago]

## Sensitive islands

José Saramago – 90 years / Sensitive islands

A triptich in Gent – Lisbon – Braga in collaboration with the **Saramago Foundation Lisbon**, the Museu Nogueira da Silva Braga in the framework of the project SinfoSaramago.

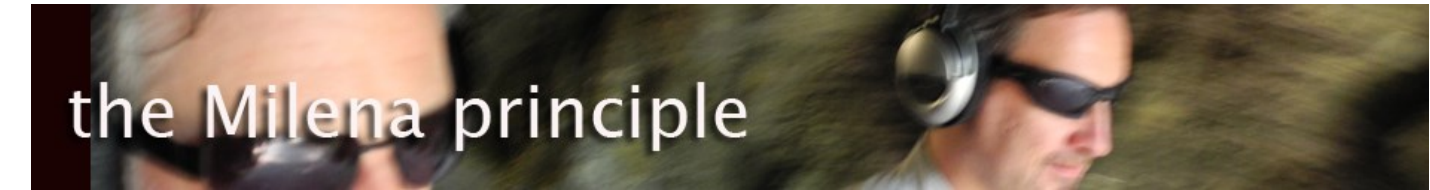
A meeting in S.M.A.K. [Museum of Contemporary Art Ghent], was the introductory event for a series of events in Belgium and Portugal dedicated to the connection between arts, literature, society and environment. Within the festive program for the 90th birthday of Saramago the Milena principle is invited for performances and conferences about their European projects and about their collaboration with the National Library in Brasilia, the National Museum of Brasilia and the International Bienal of Literature in Brasilia in 2011 and 2012. Stefaan van Biesen and Geert Vermeire made connections with the world of Saramago in art events for these institutions in Brasil. Also the artists Enrique Tomás and Yiannis Melanitis talk via Skype about their exhibitions in Brasil and the connection with Saramago. These exhibitions were curated by Geert Vermeire in collaboration with Simona Vermeire. Also noTours, geolocated literature was part of the event. A co-production of the Milena principle with the Saramago Foundation Lisbon, the Museu Nogueira da Silva Braga in the framework of the project SinfoSaramago (coordinator Simona Vermeire).

the Dürer connection: uma orelha sobre a relva / Uma biblioteca imaginaria (Brasilia, Biblioteca Nacional - October 2011). Exhibition about the library as a space of imagination, writing performances on video and video poetry in the National Library of Brasilia with the concepts of travelling as an artistic instrument and thematically connected with the novel Blindness of José Saramago. Artists: Stefaan Van Biesen, Geert Vermeire and Yiannis Melanitis. Curator: Geert Vermeire. Literary Consultant: Simona Vermeire. In collaboration with EUNIC – European Union National Institutes for Culture and UnB – University of Brasilia.

O escritor no espaço publico [Brasilia, Biblioteca Nacional - October 2011]. Lectures and workshops about art and literature in the public space. Simona Vermeire, Yiannis Melanitis, Enrique Tomas, Stefaan Van Biesen, Geert Vermeire. Keynote speaker Simona Vermeire : “O corpo patenteado na obra de José Saramago”.

Out of control [Athene, Athens School of Fine Arts - November-December 2011]. Lectures and workshops by Simona Vermeire and Geert Vermeire leading to artistic creations by students of ASFA inspired by Blindness of José Saramago.

Ilhas do Corpo [Brasilia, Biblioteca Nacional & Museu Nacional - March 2012]. Simona Vermeire participates with the conference “The island of the body” which proposes an interdisciplinary reading of the novel “The Stone Raft “ by José Saramago. Her approach is to connect the concepts conveyed in the performances of the participating artists : a new writing of the body (the body reinvented genetically) preserved in ice, as in the variant of the literary interpretation by Saramago of Kryograpia, and embryonic representations as insularity of the biological body connected with the geographical body of world (Portugal interpreted as the embryo of Brazil). A third geographic and metaphoric topic, Antarctica, will be explored in a series of poetic video-interventions of Geert Vermeire. The conference will have a “conclusive” visual interpretation by the Belgian artist Stefaan van Biesen that will show a an artistic earth globe "re-written" with bio-literary spellings.



the Milena principle

# [Sinfosaramago]

## Sensitive islands

Hy-Brasil [Brasilia, Biblioteca Nacional - March 2012]. Exhibition of Yiannis Melanitis in the National Library of Brasilia connected with A Jangada de Pedra by José Saramago. Curator: Geert Vermeire. Literary consultant: Simona Vermeire.

Part of the interdisciplinary project "Rewriting the body" : an art project in which writing is presented as a metaphor for the absolute coldness and a creative research to mythical and etymological origins of Brazil, seen as an imaginary island (Hy-Brazil) inspired by the traditions of medieval Ireland and the works of James Joyce and Jose Saramago. Installation, performance, exhibition of visual arts, literary conferences connected with the incorporated act of writing.

Anatomia da Escrita / Rewriting the body [Brasilia, Museu Nacional & 1ª Feira internacional do Livro e Leitura Brasilia - March-April 2012]. A triptich of Kryographia - Antarctica - the book of wonderings. The installation "Kryographia" by Yiannis Melanitis presents the act of writing as a state of absolute coldness. The writer, collector and producer of ice, constructs an insulated situation in order to capture the ultimate work, starting from Finnegans Wake of James Joyce. Through the use of water, he tries to transcend the entropic situation of the space, to create a new thermodynamic order. The work has the structure of a human body where each transformation of ice to water corresponds to vital human organs.

"Antarticta" [videopoems - Geert Vermeire and Stefaan van Biesen] and "the book or wonderings" (Stefaan van Biesen) complete the exhibition about the body and writing with a handwritten book, in the form of paper cut hands, an ensemble of notes, a subjective description of everyday events: walks, actions, meetings and observations that depart from the tactile. The paper cut palms also refer to the performance 'the Go-between' of Stefaan van Biesen in the museum Nogueira da Silva [Braga, Portugal 2010] where the artist covered his eyes covered with his palms and used them as an imaginary book. After a present silence, the audience heard the first sentence: 'I am reading a book', a homage to the work of José Saramago.

We become panoramic : 360 ° travelling spaces [Brasilia. 1ª Feira internacional do Livro e Leitura Brasilia - May 2012]. A sound- and video installation inspired by "the unknown island" of José Saramago. Interactive technology allows the public to become part of a and panoramic and poetic sound and image experience of 360 ° which moves with the orientation of the listener via a rotating chair.

Four natural soundscapes follow the movement of the listener. Speakers reproduce the audio contents that are mixed on an organic way, depending of the point where you are listening. The experience occurs in a rhythmic dialogue with a panoramic projection of various videos, video poems, video-performances and soundscapes, created for this installation by Stefaan van Biesen and Geert Vermeire. The flow of the text by Saramago is rewritten in a flow of sound and image activated by a person in a rotating chair, symbolizing the searching man of the fairy tale, and is transformed into a travel to an inner world.

Lecture SinfoSaramago 'sensitive Islands' Stefaan van Biesen [with Simona Vermeire] at Museu Nogueira da Silva 2012.

Spaziergangwissenschaft [SMAC Gent - ASFA Athens & Folkwang University Essen February 2013]. Lectures and conferences by Simona Vermeire about "The Cavern" of Saramago in relation to "Spaziergangwissenschaft", an artistic research and artistic trajectory by Stefaan van Biesen about walking as a science and as an artistic instrument.

Passeio branco - Lisbon Walks 2015-2016

A coproduction Casa Pessoa - Fundação José Saramago - Goethe Institut Lisbon and City of Lisbon.