



**CONTEMPORARY  
ART EXHIBITION**

**CARLES VALVERDE**

**DIDIER GUILLON**

**VANGELIS KYRIS -  
ANATOLI GEORGIEV**

**22.04.23 > 25.02.24**

**PALAZZO BONVICINI  
CALLE AGNELLO, 2161/A, VENICE  
EVERYDAY 10AM - 6PM**

**[WWW.FONDATIONVALMONT.COM](http://WWW.FONDATIONVALMONT.COM)**



# INTRODUCTION

“This supreme quality is felt by the artist when the esthetic image is first conceived in his imagination. [...] The instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the esthetic image, is apprehended luminously by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness and fascinated by its harmony is the luminous silent stasis of esthetic pleasure, a spiritual state very like to that cardiac condition [...] called the enchantment of the heart.”<sup>1</sup>

Imagine Venice, where four artists found themselves immersed in the highest representation of eternal and fragile beauty. Inevitably playing as a source of inspiration, Venice led the artists to conceive their thoughts on the notion of *Ego*: *Ego* as the self, the first person singular. *Ego* as *Ich*, mediating between the conscious and the unconscious. *Ego* as the thinking subject. *Ego* becomes **EGO** for the artist as *hero*, the creative hand, the decision maker in terms of Beauty.

What has the role of the artist become in the contemporary world? Is his/her power comparable to an indisputable omnipotence? Is he/she called to present the unicity of the self through infinite repetitions? Is he/she rather called to perturb the viewer by representing the exact opposite of what we call classical Beauty?

CARLES VALVERDE, DIDIER GUILLON, VANGELIS KYRIS and ANATOLI GEORGIEV grappled with these questions, where Art and Beauty turn out to be intertwined in the new all-male exhibition at Palazzo Bonvicini.



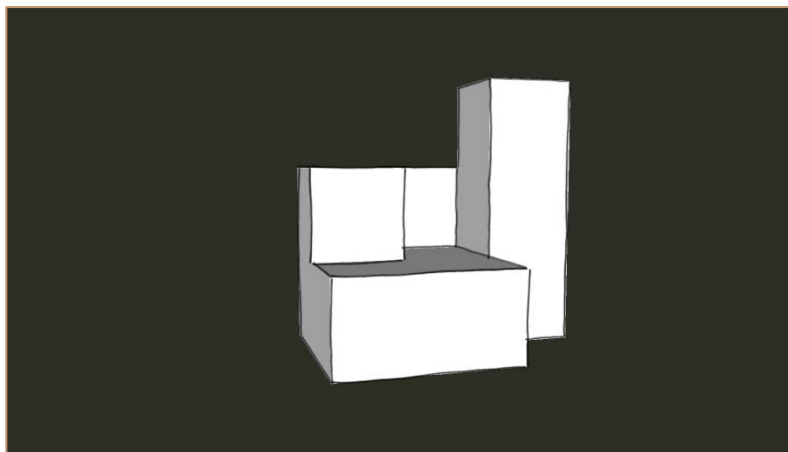
From left to right:  
Anatoli Georgiev, Vangelis Kyris,  
Didier Guillon, Carles Valverde.  
May 2022, Venice

<sup>1</sup> J. Joyce, *Dedalus. A Portrait of the artist as a young man*, Garzanti, Milano, 2021, p. 498.

# COMPOSITION OF TWO MODULAR ELEMENTS

CARLES VALVERDE

"For me, the notion of **EGO** is the *individuality* of the word *society*. We always have the impression that we are analyzing ourselves, but if we see what is happening around, the uniqueness is nothing if it is not part of something. The multiplicity of an **Ego** is what makes a society. **The Ego in the arts is the Ego in creation**. The pure creative state is completely selfish. One must convince oneself to be sincere *vis-à-vis* the rest of society. Man can change society – yes, I do think man can individually change the society – but never in a group where there's no reflection.



3D study on Composition of two modular elements

Individual, philosophical reflection is more important. For this reason, the notion we present at Fondation Valmont is the individuality of an element. An element that is identical to all the other elements that we will present. This egoistic element composes its Ego from another. It is his identical element that allows all possible combinations and thus the creation of individual Egos. Maybe it has to do with our functioning at the level of the DNA: we all have the same bases, and when combined differently – individuals are made. That's what we're looking for. What is very close to my work is **simplicity**, seeking the **essence of things** and showing the essence of things, which is ultimately the most difficult."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Carles Valverde, May 2022



# L'HOMME PENSANT

## DIDIER GUILLON



Prototype of L'Homme Pensant

"**Art** is the idea we have of beauty speaking to the senses and emotions.

The **artist** is the person who has a sense of beauty and can create a work of art.

**Ego** is the self-awareness of the artistic self, the source of inspiration for the creation of beauty.

For the creation of L'HOMME PENSANT, I wanted to consider these definitions. It is a distorted representation of the beauty, the impossible outcome of creation, a kind of **non-beauty**. It had to be a kind of inner cry, an inner malaise, hence the distorted physique of the character of Ego.

The installation entitled **L'HOMME PENSANT** is made up of ten sculptures representing the busts of screaming men. **The idea is to reverse the notion of classical beauty**: the artist, used to creating Beauty as his primary goal, is now called upon to represent the absence of beauty itself. As opposed to the traditional plaster cast galleries displaying pure white human figures, harmonic in features and proportions, these men are screaming, trapped in unknown bodies not recognized as theirs. Showered with gold paint, **the busts are finally ennobled with a brand-new status.**"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Didier Guillon, May 2022

# RAIMENT OF THE SOUL<sup>4</sup>

VANGELIS KYRIS – ANATOLI GEORGIEV

VANGELIS KYRIS

“I believe that **EGO** is responsible equally for all the positive and the negative aspects of the human species. The evolution of Ego differentiated humans from animals and made them acquire the basic necessities; at the same time, though, Ego caused many immaterial things to be regarded as necessities. This how our civilization was created: science, technology, art, philosophy. The Ego is responsible for what humanity prides itself on, while its overgrowth has resulted in wars and the development of the Seven Deadly Sins: Envy, Gluttony, Sloth, Wrath, Greed, Lust and Pride. The Ego is therefore responsible for what is shameful today for humanity as well. During the times where photography was first introduced, the Greeks used the word **Apathanatizo** (to immortalize) instead of photography. **Apathanatizo** means to preserve something alive in the memory of current and the future generations. The vanity of the photographer makes him a God-like figure and he acquires a highly developed ego. My goal as a photographer is not to immortalize the human form, but to stop time, elevate feelings and enhance the memory. Anatoli adds the third dimension to the artwork with his embroidery. A glimpse of a fleeting life in a world that keeps evolving linearly whilst preserving its history and – above all – the invincible Super-Ego.”<sup>5</sup>



Costume from Megara, Attica, XIX century

<sup>4</sup> The photographed clothes belong to the collection of The Historical National Museum of Athens

<sup>5</sup> Vangelis Kyriss, May 2022

## ANATOLI GEORGIEV

“Humans are born with a strong sense of individuality – the Ego, which for better (or worse) dominates our existence. *EGO is ever-present in all our senses*: taste, smell, hearing, sight and touch. I believe my work in embroidery is highly connected to the Ego through the senses: specifically, sight and touch.

Humans are born with an ego. It accompanies them throughout their lives. Ego is born through tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing and touching. It is part of who we are, for better or for worse. I am an embroiderer. I embroider on the photographs of Vangelis Kyris. This is an embroidery interwoven with photography. An embroidery created on photographed costumes carrying patterns and symbols; costumes dating back over two centuries. *I revive the embroidery of bygone times through my own ego. Me.”*<sup>6</sup>



Anatoli Georgiev at work

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<sup>6</sup> Anatoli Georgiev, May 2022

## THE ARTISTS

### CARLES VALVERDE



**Carles Valverde** is a Catalan artist born in 1965 and living in Switzerland for almost 30 years, after a period of several years spent on the island of Mallorca. He trained at the Llotja School of Applied Arts in Barcelona and was inspired by the works of Eduardo Chillida, Richard Serra and Max Bill.

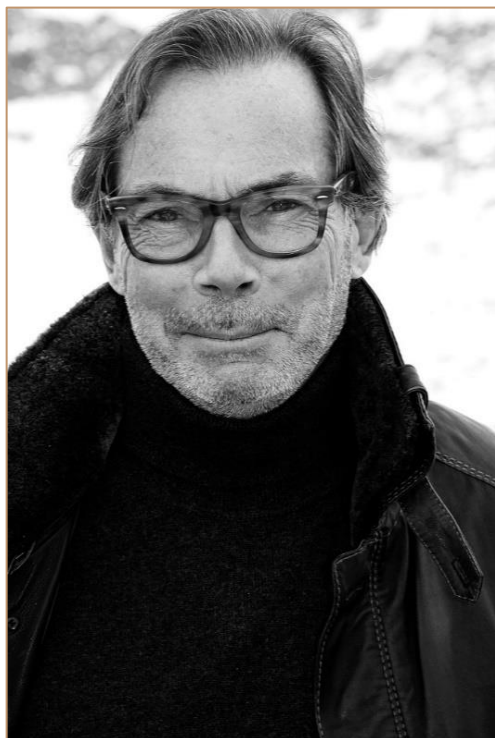
Carles Valverde considers himself a sculptor, but his practices may embrace painting as well. He likes to combine the diversity of parts and the unity of the whole. From monumental pieces in metal to paintings, from drawings to installations: harmony must be found in everything. Minimal and linear forms characterize his universe to the fullest. Defined as a *builder of space*, the artist remains faithful to his style, described as austere, but also enjoys experimenting with materials and techniques. He offers animated and playful installations that provide an extension in space and time as well as static sculptures.

In Switzerland, his creations can be found at EPFL, Bex & Arts, the Louis Moret Foundation, and in several galleries and private collections. He also participates in exhibitions in Spain, Poland and Germany and, since spring 2018, at the Château de Vullierens.

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## DIDIER GUILLON



Art runs in **Didier Guillon's** family: his forefathers include sculptor Alphonse Lamy and collector and art merchant Charles Sedelmeyer. Creating is an irresistible impulse, spurred by his inextinguishable curiosity. He muses through many mediums, such as serigraphy, illustration, cardboard-made or glass sculptures, with a particular fondness for mixed-media installations. Guillon's installations show a committed attention to sustainability: made of eco-friendly materials, a large part of his artwork is destroyed to be recycled after having travelled around the world for solo shows. These exhibitions frequently offer pretexts to scrutinize important contemporary issues, sometimes

through a playful lens, calling people to interact, thus making art accessible to both the widest audience and fewer expert connoisseurs.

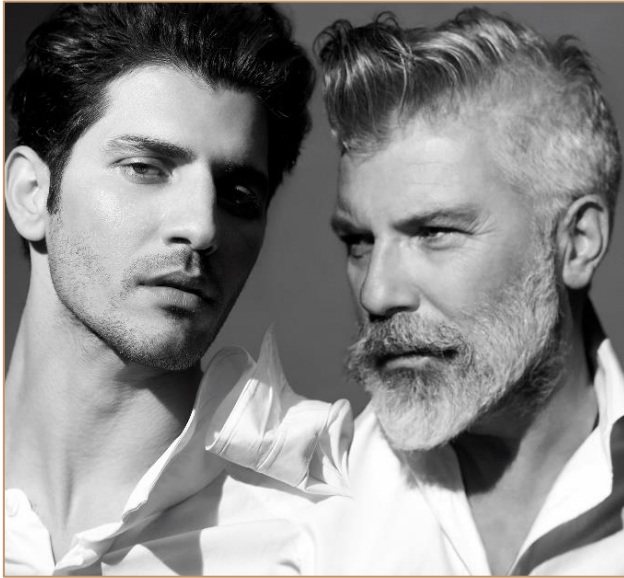
A Venetian resident for more than a year, Guillon loves his city through and through. A complete care which emerges, among other things, in his desire to work with local artisans. Since 2013, the artist has been deeply fascinated by the precious traditions that make up the identity of Murano glassmaking; he has been producing works of art in collaboration with renowned local master glassmakers ever since. Not only glass: Guillon's latest creations are produced together with local craftsmen. Bronze and brass are the materials which recently brought his research to imagine new shapes, now part of the artist's well-known repertoire. New experiments, then, always faithful to the heritage of Donald Judd and the American Minimalists so dear to Guillon, leading the artist to conceive imposing yet delicate cubist metamorphosis.

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## VANGELIS KYRIS AND ANATOLI GEORGIEV: AN ARTISTIC DUO



*Voyage Within*, 2019, was their very first exhibition as an artistic duo, **Vangelis Kyris** and **Anatoli Georgiev** have approached costume traditions from around the world in their own unique manner. When the National Historical Museum in Athens entrusted them with the authentic garments of its collection to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Greek Revolution, the two artists realised

their vision by creating a new visual world between photography and embroidery. In recent years their work has been supported by a series of state and private institutions, particularly by the George & Victoria Karelia Foundation, the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation, the Embassy of Greece in Seoul, the Anthony E. Comninos Foundation, Fondation Valmont, the Embassy of Greece in Sofia, and the Marianna V. Vardinoyannis Foundation. The Museum of ancient Eleutherna in Crete, the Acropolis Museum and the Palazzo Bonvicini in Venice have hosted their exhibitions, while the National Bulgarian Ethnographic Museum in Sofia will host new exhibitions. The mixed media artworks of Kyris and Georgiev combine photography with embroidery to create something truly unique in the contemporary art world. Their portraits in the Acropolis Museum exhibition reference history, ethnography, fashion, and museum treasures. In addition to costume tradition, the artists also employ the theatrical expression of women and men who stand in front of Vangelis Kyris' lens dressed in the authentic garments of past centuries. The portraits are then printed on 100% cotton canvas, where Anatoli Georgiev uses his needle to create subtle details using golden, silver, metal, silk, and cotton threads. Owing to textile art, embroidery now holds a special position among contemporary art forms, while in the portraits of Kyris and Georgiev, it dynamically converses with contemporary photography.

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## FONDATION VALMONT – WHEN ART MEETS BEAUTY

Fondation Valmont has a very precise mission: **promoting art in all its forms**, in accordance with the values and opportunities offered by Valmont – its parent company: **quality, aesthetics, generosity and sustainability**.

Valmont Chairman Didier Guillon always refused to remain trapped in the universe of cosmetics alone, and therefore built bridges with the artistic sector. His efforts were crowned with success in 2015, when the rich depth and scope of the projects brought about by him led to the birth of Fondation Valmont. In 2019, this international institution made Venice its permanent home, in a Renaissance palace built in the purest 16th century style: **Palazzo Bonvicini**. Alongside the international arts events that take place in Venice, Fondation Valmont offers a rich programme of travelling exhibitions presented from Hydra to New York.



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