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## ATHINA BOTONAKI

Athina is an artist and architect who likes to read about and play with the interweaving of memory, fact and fiction, its imprints on our lived environment and their formative impact on community identities. Keeping storytelling in the centre of her practice, she works among the fields of film, writing, illustration and set design. Through her projects she aims on subtle yet engaging ways to address urgent matters.

### WEBSITES

[athinabotonaki.com](https://athinabotonaki.com)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

[www.instagram.com/athinabot/](https://www.instagram.com/athinabot/)

### MEMBER OF ARTISTS' INITIATIVE/COLLECTIVE/INCUBATOR

(no name yet) artistic duo/collective with Nika Dundua

## EDUCATION

2022 - 2024	MA Interior Architecture Den Haag, Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten diploma
2021 - 2021	Theatre Lighting Design Alexandros Politakis
2020 - 2021	Theatre Design & Scenography LSA - Laboratory of Scenography Athens
2012 - 2018	MA Architectural Engineering Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece diploma

## EXHIBITIONS

2024	Graduation Show 2024 Royal Academy of Art, The Hague The Hague, Netherlands Annual exhibition of graduation projects. <a href="https://graduation.kabk.nl/archive/year:2024">graduation.kabk.nl/archive/year:2024</a> Group
2024	Dutch Design Week / Class of '24 Klokgebouw Eindhoven, Netherlands Participating in DDW with my graduation project titled 'FAR FROM IT', together with four other selected works from MA Industrial Design and MA Interior Architecture graduates, of the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague. Group

## PROJECTS

2024	FAR FROM IT [comic book] Royal Academy of Art The Hague Den Haag, Netherlands <a href="https://athinabotonaki.com/FAR-FROM-IT-comic-book">athinabotonaki.com/FAR-FROM-IT-comic-book</a> Within my graduation year at the Royal Academy of Art, I worked on a fictional story which I developed into a spatial installation / set design, accompanied with audio. The background theoretical research (thesis) on the topics of hoarding, memory, and nostalgia, took the form of a graphic novel, of which the plot is being gradually revealed, in-between the text.
2024	FAR FROM IT Royal Academy of Art The Hague Den Haag, Netherlands <a href="https://athinabotonaki.com/FAR-FROM-IT-2">athinabotonaki.com/FAR-FROM-IT-2</a> "A young woman recalls some of her last encounters with her father. Through a fragmentary landscape of memory she unravels the chronicle of a fatal nostalgia epidemic, as perceived by two different generations." Looking at objects as carriers of nostalgia, and at material waste as part of our human nature, I speculate on whether a hoarder's room could possibly constitute a Wunderkammer of the future; a cabinet of curiosities destined to re-introduce life on earth to human. I examine nostalgia as performed in the domestic space; through the collection and display of beloved objects as personal artefacts. The things we surround ourselves with are usually nostalgic traces, not only of past experiences, but also of general periods of time that we ourselves may never have known. When it comes to hoarding, a habit of compulsive accumulation of things, often accompanied with feelings of guilt, can tell us a lot about our society and how we learn (or not) to deal with inner needs, such as processing a trauma or mourning a loss. Now, within the setting of a fictional post-apocalyptic scenario, wouldn't there be a shift of value around a plastic cup, if we realised that it might be the last one in the

universe? Or around an empty packet of food, a jar filled with soil, and so on? This seemingly contradictory notion of treasure-looking trash indicates that value derives from the context, and thus, for a deeper comprehension and personal engagement in urgent matters, fictional storytelling can sometimes be a powerful design tool: as a conversation starter, it adds new layers in the existing discourse, making it ever more accessible and inclusive. Therefore, conceived as a short sci-fi story, FAR FROM IT attempts a zoomed-out view of earth as home that, we humans, are destroying; urging the audience to reflect on the topics of nostalgia and migration through the broader lens of the current climate crisis, and the inevitable end of the world as we know it. It is an installation that hovers between a theatre play and an audio book. Placed on a small stage, it is a set frozen in time; filled with traces of a performance that has already happened.

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| 2023 | <p>(Moerwijk) Model Museum Royal Academy of Art The Hague Den Haag, Netherlands <a href="http://athinabotonaki.com/MOERWIJK-MODEL-MUSEUM-1">athinabotonaki.com/MOERWIJK-MODEL-MUSEUM-1</a> This project attempts to playfully question the role of the museum, by presenting a part of heritage which would be most probably excluded from the official historical narrative of The Hague: stories of Moerwijk and its people. Moerwijk is a neighbourhood in The Hague, part of the Escamp district. Mainly built after the Second World War, it was developed for residential use from low to middle income families. Today, a big part of the neighbourhood is consisted by social-housing apartments, which means that, in many cases, its residents stay for a short/temporary amount of time. Now, speaking of a post-war neighbourhood, that hosts many temporary habitants today, how can one embrace -or even create anew- a sense of belonging? What role could a museum play, towards the appropriation of space and memory from short-term residents? Can the representation of local (hi)stories become a conversation starter for today's Moerwijk community? Focusing on the collection, curation, and exhibition of all the little fragments of memory, that have been revealed to us through research in old newspapers, photo archives, and interviews, we conceive a local pop-up museum, decentralised from the historic centre's official spaces of knowledge. We create nine models; nine imaginary rooms, in scale 1:20, each one connected to a specific location, telling a story from the past. Altogether -either as parts of one entity or spread in the urban fabric- shape a space of shared memory. * in collaboration with Nika Dundua</p> |
| 2022 | <p>Austrinus House &amp; Studio Chania, Greece <a href="http://athinabotonaki.com/AUSTRINUS-HOUSE-STUDIO">athinabotonaki.com/AUSTRINUS-HOUSE-STUDIO</a> Restoration, interior design, and custom furniture design, for the conversion of a three-level house in the Old Town of Chania, into a contemporary guest house.</p>   |
| 2022 | <p>How to Hide in Plain Sight Royal Academy of Art The Hague Den Haag, Netherlands <a href="http://athinabotonaki.com/HOW-TO-HIDE-IN-PLAIN-SIGHT">athinabotonaki.com/HOW-TO-HIDE-IN-PLAIN-SIGHT</a> In search of a 'lee place'* in the city. Within this work-in-progress I attempt to playfully explore and understand my inner, intuitive need I have as a woman to be invisible in public space. Early thoughts on the experience of walking in public as a feminine body are naively voiced in the form of a rhyming poem and precede a sequence of images, in which individuals are looking through the camera lens. Taking the footage puts me in the uncomfortable position of interacting with strangers, and exposes me to all the curious, indiscrete, nosey eyes I always tried to avoid. I choose to reverse my comfortness: to reproduce</p>  |

the act of hiding by performing the act of surrendering. \*lee : noun 1. protective shelter 2. the side or part that is sheltered or turned away from the wind

2022

A House Full of Feathers Royal Academy of Art The Hague Den Haag, Netherlands [athinabotonaki.com/HOUSE-FULL-OF-FEATHERS](http://athinabotonaki.com/HOUSE-FULL-OF-FEATHERS) Fictional storytelling as a design tool in architecture; Located in a remote path of Scottish Highlands, the ruin of an old traditional long-house passes in the possession of Thomas Craig through his grand-mother's testament. Mr Craig, my client, is a writer and translator who lives a wealthy yet solitary life in London. He decides to convert the old property into a contemporary country house where he can also have a separate space for his writings. A few days after our first meeting, Mr Craig writes me a letter in order to confess an untold secret of his: an intense, irrational fear of birds, for which the wider area of the project constitutes the primal scenery. This is the place where the traumatic encounter with a dead raven, during his childhood, was weaved with several symbolisms and connotations stemmed from the Celtic tradition, where ravens are often depicted as foresighted carriers of bad omens. Mr Craig's decision of going back and renovate the old family cottage, is a bold gesture towards his reconnection with the place, the overcome of his fear and, in the end, the reconciliation with his own identity. [...] The design must embrace the client's own pace, towards the building of a connection with the ravens, as well as with the place, and for this purpose, the key word is time. The middle stone wall goes away, and, in its place, a young Scotch elm tree is planted, providing the time frame of the reconciliation process; at the beginning, birds may come to the enclosed yard, attracted by the insects, the flowers and the seeds of the tree, but slowly they will get familiar with the place and the human presence. It all depends on the little gestures Mr Craig might do in order to keep them close, providing water, food or plants for their nutrition... As the years will go by, the tree will grow, and the ravens will keep coming -individually or in flocks- to build their nests, maintaining the relationship. \* 'A House Full of Feathers' is the title of an architectural design project I did last winter within the studio topic 'House of Phobia', guided by Nasim Razavian. Master Interior Architecture INSIDE, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, December 2022

## COMMISSIONS

- 2024 Data Protection by Design The Hague, Greece Phd dissertation book cover illustration Title: Protection by Design / from Abstract Principles to Implementation Candidate: Efstratios Koulierakis, University of Groningen finished
- 2021 The Funeral Athens, Greece Poster Design: The funeral/ Η κηδεία (2021) (27min.) The observational documentary The funeral, follows the funeral of Mikis Theodorakis in Crete. While dozens of reporters compete for the best shot, a biker, a conductor and a city, pay their respect to the great musician. An observational film, on the experience of Greek junta, the anti dictatorship struggle and the regime change in the 70's. A humorous take on modern Greece, surveillance and the rituals of grief in Crete. Directed by Katerina Markoulaki [katerinamarkoulaki.wixsite.com/portfolio/copy-of-biography](http://katerinamarkoulaki.wixsite.com/portfolio/copy-of-biography) finished

## SECONDARY ART-RELATED ACTIVITIES

- 2024 - -- Teaching assistant at MA Interior Architecture department, at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague On-going

- 2018

A Playful Museum Tour Archaeological Museum of Rethymno Rethymno, Greece Illustration and puzzle-games design for the kid's educational leaflet of the temporary exhibition of the Archaeological Museum of Rethymno.

[www.academia.edu/41613141/A Playful Museum Tour Temporary Exhibition of the Archaeological Museum of Rethymno %CE%9C%CE%B9%CE%B1 %CE%BE](http://www.academia.edu/41613141/A_Playful_Museum_Tour_Temporary_Exhibition_of_the_Archaeological_Museum_of_Rethymno_%CE%9C%CE%B9%CE%B1_%CE%BE) finished
- 2016

Where I Reside Chania, Greece Poster Design: photo exhibition from Λ.Ε.Φ.Κ.Ι photography and film educational space in Chania, Grece.

[www.lefkichania.gr/nea-ekdiloiseis/136-photography-exhibition-ekei-pou-katoiko](http://www.lefkichania.gr/nea-ekdiloiseis/136-photography-exhibition-ekei-pou-katoiko) finished



FAR FROM IT, 2024  
set design, stage lighting, audio, length: 5,5m x width: 2,60m x 2,40m



FAR FROM IT // Teaser Trailer, 2024  
1:48



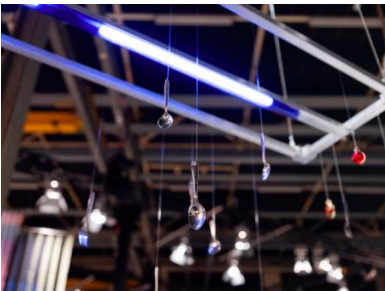
FAR FROM IT, 2024  
set design, stage lighting, audio, length: 5,5m x width: 2,60m x 2,40m



FAR FROM IT, 2024  
set design, stage lighting, audio, length: 5,5m x width: 2,60m x 2,40m



DDW / Class of '24, 2024  
set design, stage lighting, audio, plot 3.60x2.00 m



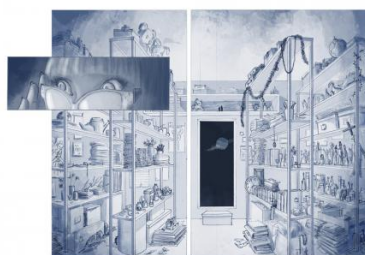
DDW / Class '24, 2024  
set design, stage lighting, audio



FAR FROM IT [comic book], 2024  
pencils/hand drawing, digital colouring , 17cm x 22cm



FAR FROM IT [comic book], 2024  
pencils/hand drawing, digital colouring , 17cm x 22cm



FAR FROM IT [comic book], 2024  
pencils/hand drawing, digital colouring , 17cm x 22cm (two-page image)



(Moerwijk) Model Museum, 2023