

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Idem, Item, "Now Viewing – Blood of Two," *The Moment Blog*, June 17, 2009

MEDIA

June 17, 2009, 2:59 AM

Now Viewing | 'Blood of Two'

By **ITEM IDEM**

Photos by Cyril Duval



The arrival and delivery of "Blood of Two."

The evening before Monday's sunrise arrival and unveiling of "Blood of Two," the collaboration between Matthew Barney and Elizabeth Peyton, and the inauguration of the Slaughterhouse, the Greek billionaire and art collector Dakis Joannou hosted an exclusive dinner for the Barney and Peyton on the island of Hydra in Greece.

Held in an open air restaurant, where casual glamour and sophisticated simplicity were the order of the evening, the dinner drew the gallerists Jeffrey Deitch, Emmanuel Perrotin and Javier Peres; the artists Maurizio Catelan, Rirkrit Tiravanija and David Byrne; and David Teiger, a MoMa trustee, and long time collector, who entertained the audience with a speech dedicated to Joannou. The

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notable attendees feasted on mutton head, which anyone not conversant in Greek cuisine could have mistaken for Barney's personal contribution to the dinner.

A night of mayhem followed at the Pirate club, a local favorite, leaving art trekkers with very few hours to sleep before the artwork delivery, at 6 a.m. At dawn, the crowd waited patiently on a winding cliffside road, where little by little the local psaras (fishermen) pulled out of the water an expected glass sarcophagus containing mysterious artifacts and artworks. The long pace of the unloading echoed the calm, focused and attentively observant crowd who were clearly intended to be part of the artwork, part of an imaginary film Matthew Barney unfolded in front of our eyes.



The mysterious artifacts and artworks.

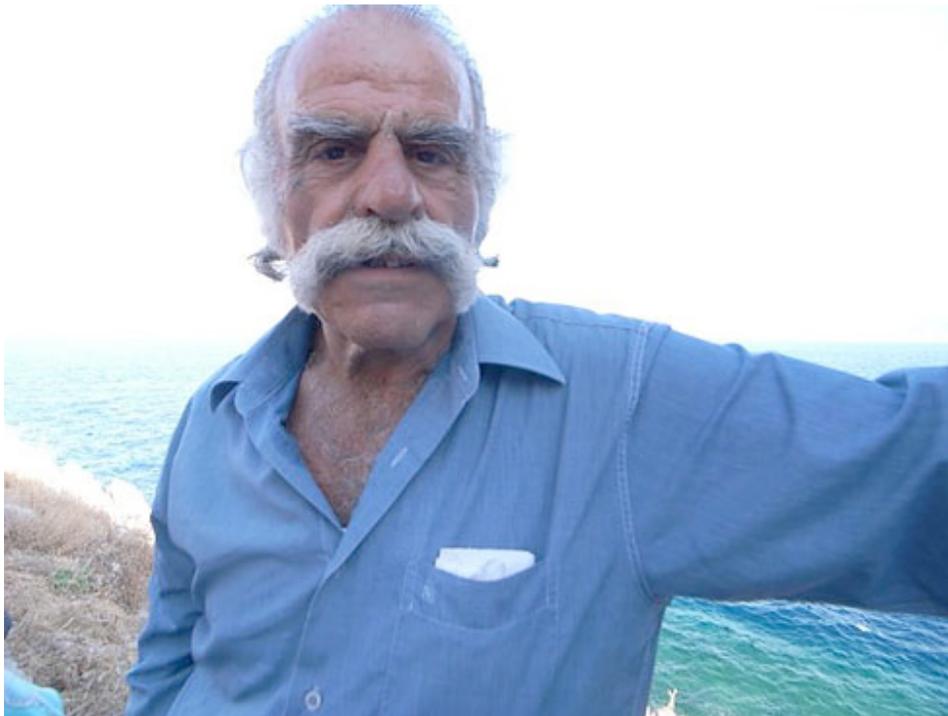
A signature Barney moment was the apparition of a herd of goats, accompanied by their voskos (shepherds), which initially appeared to be coincidental but soon

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revealed itself to be an integral part of the performance that blended with the human herd. The peak of the procession was the appearance of a dead shark (its mysterious absence of odor leaving many to wonder what means of conservation had been used), whose corpse was laid on the glass sarcophagus, a totemic symbol mixing traditions of fishery and religious codes. The cortege then proceeded slowly, like an animist funeral ceremony, accompanying the artwork to its mausoleum, the new [Deste Foundation](#) project space, the Slaughterhouse — a small, cryptic building facing the sea, featuring small artworks by Barney and Peyton.

Then, in a deeply charged atmosphere interrupted only by camera flashes, the coffin was finally unsealed by the leader of the fishermen, whose flamboyant moustache seemed straight out of *Cremaster Central Casting*. In a climactic moment, flooding water unveiled beautiful small-format graphite drawings by Barney and Peyton, which mixed elements of Symbolist imagery and nautical fantasies. The relieved crowd then walked its way toward the port, the early morning sun soothing their shock and awe.



The leader of the fishermen, Llefteris Arapojanis.