

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
 Space Culture –Public Engagement in Space through Culture (9)

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COSMUSEUM PROJECT: MEMORIES & SOUVENIRS FROM PLANET EARTH

Abstract

The etymological origin of *museum* is the word *muse*. If the muse of our space era will be the Cosmos itself, then we can propose a ‘*COSMuseum*’ as a nomade museum in space, carrying artworks-memories from Earth’s civilization. However every additional gram in space expeditions is extremely expensive. Lightest the cargo is, more economic the expedition will be. Conclusion: we cannot carry Pyramides and Parthenons in the *COSMuseum*. Thus this paper is proposing lighter cultural cargos for this imaginary *COSMuseum* in Space: sculptures made of the lightest solid on planet Earth. The author’s first artworks are directly influenced by Cycladic art. He is a sculptor combining art with technology, using the space era nanomaterial silica aerogel. It constitutes of 99,9% air and 0,1% glass which has been recently used by NASA for the collection of stardust. He states himself: “Its ethereal beauty and its optical properties - similar to those of heaven- have entirely paired with my years-long artistic quest for an omniabsence and ethereal memories” When he was first introduced to the material he was only allowed to create small size artworks. His thought of creating copies of Cycladic figurines came upon the convention of their size. He suggests that these primitive figurines work as a self-symbol widely recognizable into the public. This enabled him to promote his technique through a theme familiar to the observer. He called his work “aerosculpture” as the only source is light in the absence of material. He chose silica aerogel as a contrasting material with the marble in order to create a dialogue between the lightness of the *aer()sculptures* and the weightiness of the marble figurines. The incentive force of sculptural metamorphosis of the Cycladic form might have been the course from the original marble to the space technology nanomaterial, through the parallel adventure that led the authentic form into a “fake” copy. This event allowed him to pun on the Greek word “*plastos*”, which has the dual meaning of ‘*sculpted/modeled*’ and ‘*fake*’ and refers to touristic souvenirs . In this paper we’ll present author’s artworks-precursors for a cultural cargo from our (h)Earth.