



Nayia Yiakoumaki: Domestic Affairs

15 March - 14 April 2013



The Gallery @ Idea Store Whitechapel presents a new installation by Nayia Yiakoumaki.

In her capacity both as artist and curator, Yiakoumaki is interested in the creative potential of archives. For this exhibition, the starting point is the artist's extensive collection of colour postcards from the post-war period, with their staged depictions of idealised middle class families from the 1950s and 1960s.

The postcards present luridly coloured, kitsch images of happy families in perfect

homes. However, the different permutations in Yiakoumaki's extensive collection of approved shots and studio offcuts reveal the way that the images were constructed. It is clearly apparent that the variations on a theme are acted out by the same actors in different poses, guises and settings. The presentation of the collection, therefore, both illustrates yet undermines the original intention of the images, raising questions about mainstream representations of family life.

Such discrepancies are especially apparent at times of recession. Yiakoumaki accompanies the postcards with a wall text giving facts about financial hardships faced by families in Britain today. Sourced from a recent survey by Netmums, a campaigning group who lobby government on family issues, these grim findings include the fact that households are facing financial meltdown, with over 70% 'on the edge' of surviving. Such statistics are especially pertinent in the current economic climate, particularly in an area like Tower Hamlets, where Idea Stores are based. The borough is one of the poorest in the country yet includes - or is adjacent to - the immense wealth to be found in financial centres such as Canary Wharf and the City of London.

Nayia Yiakoumaki (b. 1967, Athens) is an artist and curator who lives and works in London. In 2009 she was awarded a PhD by the department of Creative Curating, Goldsmiths College, University of London. Currently, she works as Curator (Archive Gallery) at Whitechapel Gallery, London, where she has organised numerous exhibitions, including 'The Whitechapel Boys' (2009); 'John Latham: Anarchive' (2010); 'This is Tomorrow' (2010 - 2011); Rothko in Britain (2011); 'Aspen Magazine: 1965-1971' (2013). Yiakoumaki's own group shows and projects include a commission for Athens Olympics (2004); 'A-topia', Stratopedo Kodra, Thessaloniki (2007); 'The Work of Others', Whitechapel Gallery, (2007); contribution to 'Archive Public', a book of artists' proposals published by the University of Patras (Department of Architecture) and Cube Art Editions (2011-12)