

# Looking for Ariadne

Athens, November 2020



Here I share the work I developed during my stay at the Danish Institute of Athens in November 2020.

First I need to say that I stayed in Athens for two months longer. Luckily I arrived in September so I had some time before the government declared lockdown due to the pandemic spread.

The work I describe here was developed within the total 3 months. It can be categorised under three branches:

- Coding (programming music in Supercollider)
- Choreographic investigation
- The wandering soul - *Looking for Ariadne*

Music sketches and frames from my video shooting is shared or linked as reference throughout this report.

I want to thank DIA and all the staff for ensuring the well functioning of the Institute despite the difficult lockdown situation. The apartment in Neos Kosmos was lovely and probably the reason why I could focus on my work despite the strict pandemic measures.

## An introduction to my work

I work as a composer and sound artist involved with various setups. For what concern purely musical work I focus on electroacoustic, live electronics, purely algorithmic generative systems connected to acoustic instruments and semantic content - text or other material.

My work as a composer unfold from the code, I program my own instruments and my score as algorithmic systems. Then I arrange the code (the score) to inform the other elements (acoustics, digital sound processing, synthesis, text, image) eventually resulting in a final composition accounting for all elements and structured around the first ideal function. Often this mathematical processes are informed by literature, politics and science. A process that might look extremely deterministic and mathematical when approached from the formal point of view, is actually a process informed by the artistic idea first - and constantly confronted with it in order to evolve.

Beside the more *composed* work, I use these instruments and digital processes in the improvised music field. The improv scene in Copenhagen has been influential and inspiring for my growth in the last 2 years. A place where to challenge the instruments and push them beyond their apparent limits to expand expressive possibilities.

My background in film and performative arts from the University of Rome provided foundation for my understanding of the performative spaces, being those musical, filmic, choreographic or - more often - a combination of diverse disciplines.

Some of my sound are collected here: [soundcloud.com/canyf](https://soundcloud.com/canyf)

I did not collect all of my work into a website yet. A short CV is attached.

## Coding

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# IX

This piece is the outcome of rehearsing and arranging my granular synthesis code into a music composition.

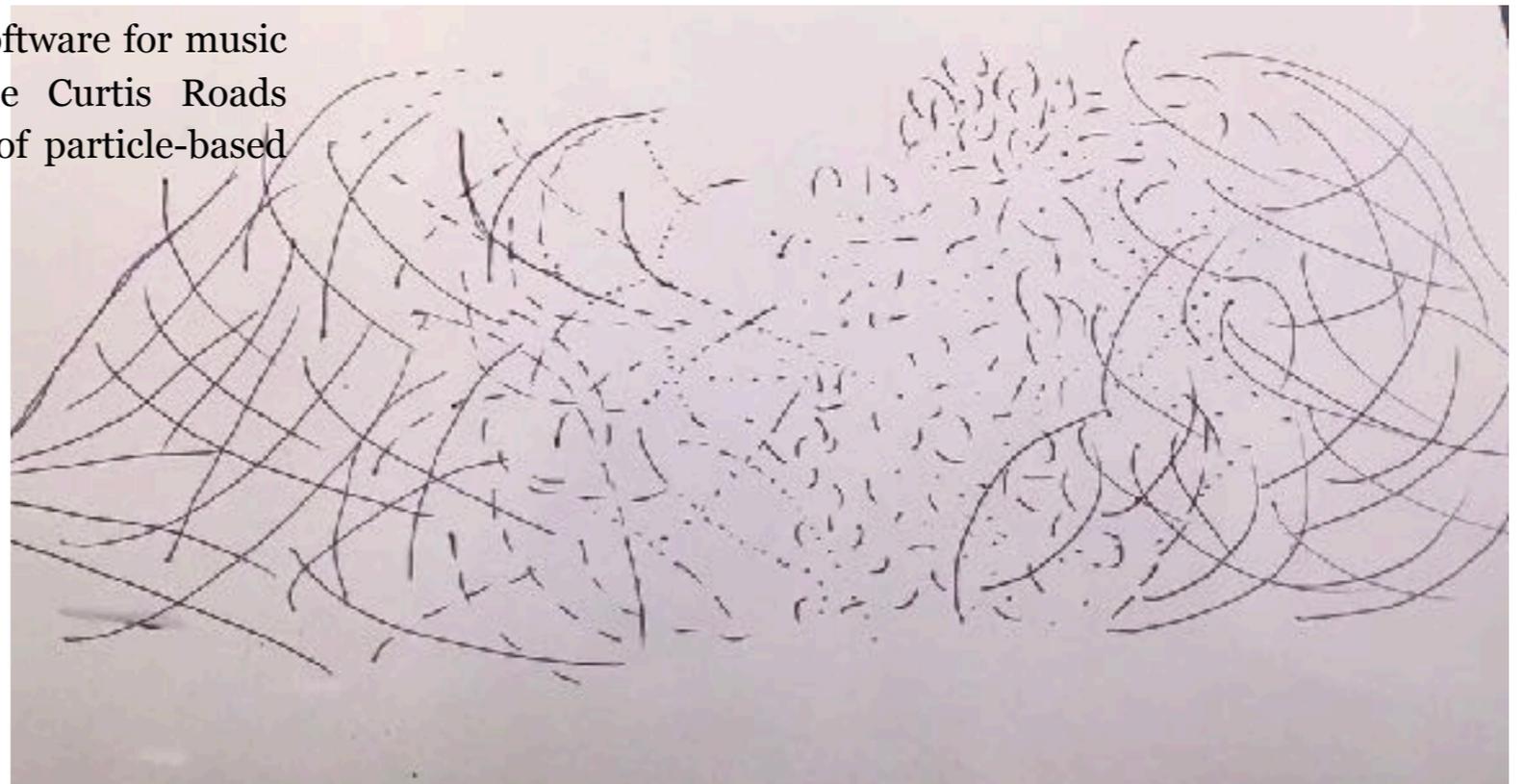
It follows the structure in the graphic score. Swarms of glissando start and end the piece. The central part is a chaotic organisation of the same material. Except for sine *glissons* the material is cello (sustained or pizzicato), voice samples recorded from the street and singing from the orthodox Mass that I recorded at Agios Nikolaos.

IX was coded and executed in Supercollider, a software for music programming. Reference for this work is the Curtis Roads publication *Microsound*, fundamental overview of particle-based synthesis.

The title suggest number 9 but looking closer and connecting the score to its title I wanted to homage IX - Iannis Xenakis, illuminating and influential for his theorisation of granulation and probabilistic generation of musical material.

listen at

<https://soundcloud.com/ilgulliver/ix-1/s-UBxiSd6MXNQ>



# Choreographic work

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## Dafni's Presence

Inspired by a workshop with Danseatelier in Copenhagen I was curious to explore potentiality in the means of dance and choreography for compositional purposes. Moreover I wished to establish a connection with some local actors in the discipline for future collaboration. On the Onassis website I found Dafni Antoniadou profile and I contacted her for meeting and working together during my stay in Athens.

Our sessions were structured to grow creative consciousness and practical tools for bodily expression. A typical session would be as follow.

After some muscle warm up and tension relaxation we undertake guided exercises. Here I define three main themes addressing:

- The body in the room: perception and consciousness of our presence in the room in relation to other objects and performers.
- Creativity: our ability to improvise figures given a specific image. Ability to follow unspoken instruction from another body touching ours, create a sensible and fluent connection through *instruction, interpretation, fast response, movement*.
- Presence: our ability to perceive and direct our presence on stage. Concentration and gathering of energy toward a specific goal (image, representation, emotion).

Following Dafni's instructions I sensed a-kind-of-will, the same intention of some experimental music, I recognised the mechanism and I tried to go deeper. Through movement the idea gain reality (we could say a virtuality) allowing to instantly test its strength. The spacial and inner movement of such figures (musical figures, compositional ideas) find a virtual dimension. I think this training can be precious for further discoveries if I manage to keep it alive and grow through it. Established a first connection with Dafni I am convinced we will work on a collaborative project once the conditions will be opportune.

## Improvisation with Dimos Vryzas

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I had the pleasure to meet Dimos Vryzas, violin player from the improv scene. We recorded 4 sessions in his home studio. The material is now being mixed and we are planning gigs for the summertime.



Beside our sessions I built for Dimos a looper in Supercollider.

He wanted a system able to work standalone without pedals or any other manual control.

The violin plays only acoustic from the centre of the room. In order to record a loop he moves close to the mic, the system starts recording when the input signal is above a certain threshold (loud enough). It stops recording when the signal goes below the same threshold. As soon as the recording stops the playback starts and loops on the speakers. The system always playback the last 4 loops recorded - so nr. 5 overwrite nr. 1 and so on.

extract from improv session [https://soundcloud.com/ilgulliver/3mins\\_vryzas-miracapillo/s-7z7TOaRDknk](https://soundcloud.com/ilgulliver/3mins_vryzas-miracapillo/s-7z7TOaRDknk)

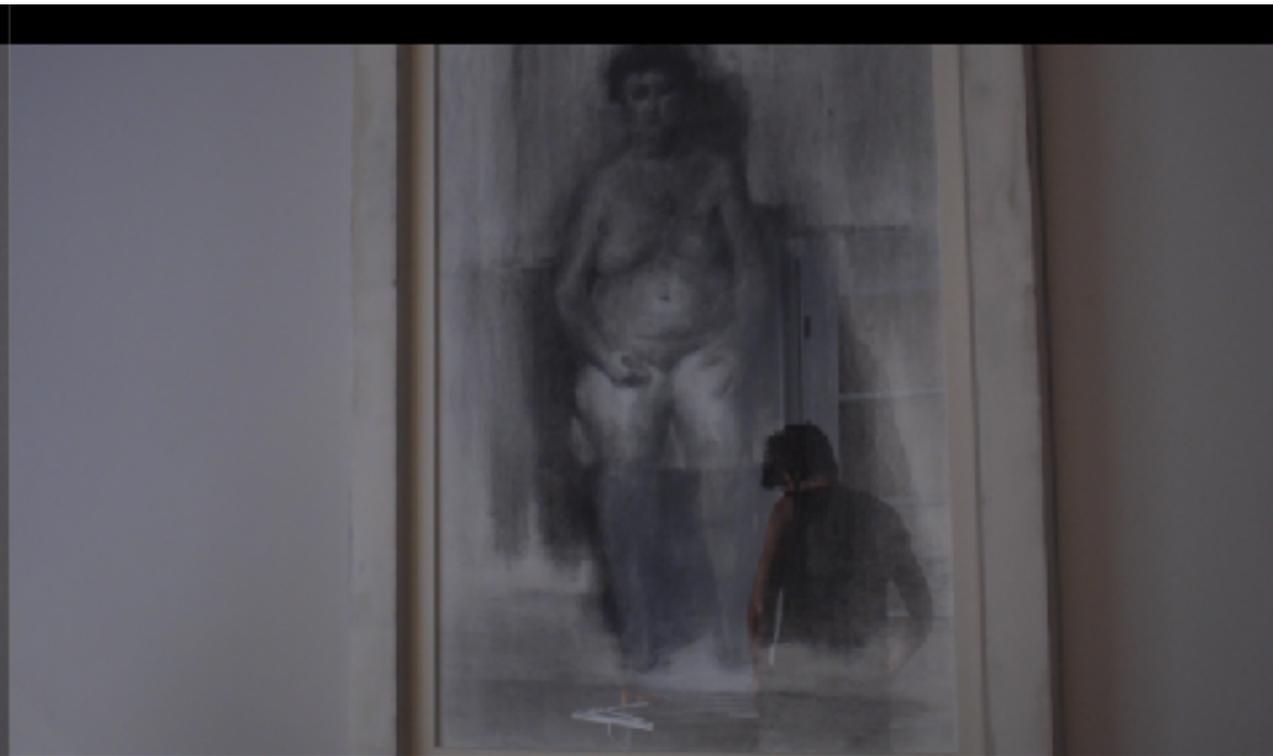
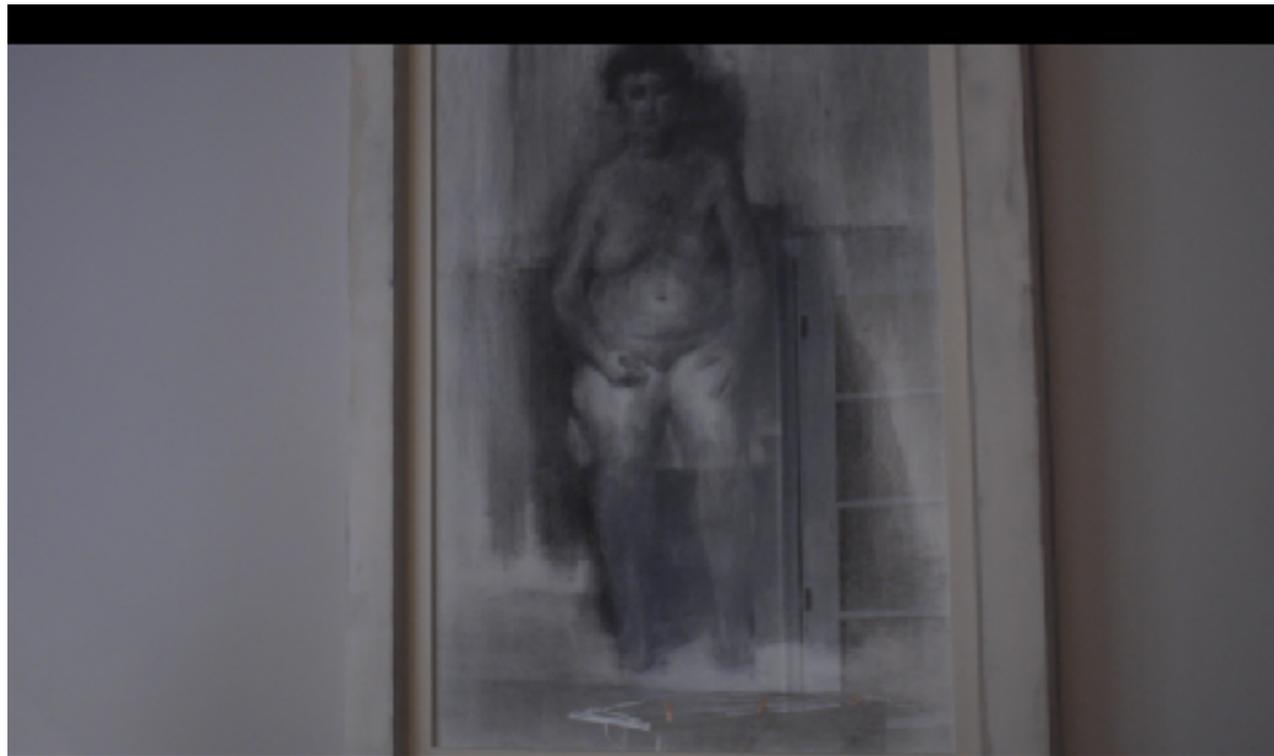
Archeological Museum, Athens - Sept. 17th 2020

Looking for Ariadne

**A film idea**

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Inspired by a Borges' novel on the Minotaur, I started a correspondence between Theseus and Ariadne in February 2020.

I write as Theseus who forget. He doesn't know why he left Ariadne in Naxos on the way back from Crete to Athens. At the mercy of elements, castaway, unable to find her, he remembers sensorial details of light and smell but forgot his age and origin.

Through him I explore the human condition of wandering among a labyrinth of ideal and concrete memory. He collects amulets - sound and video recordings - to be morphed and re-arranged.

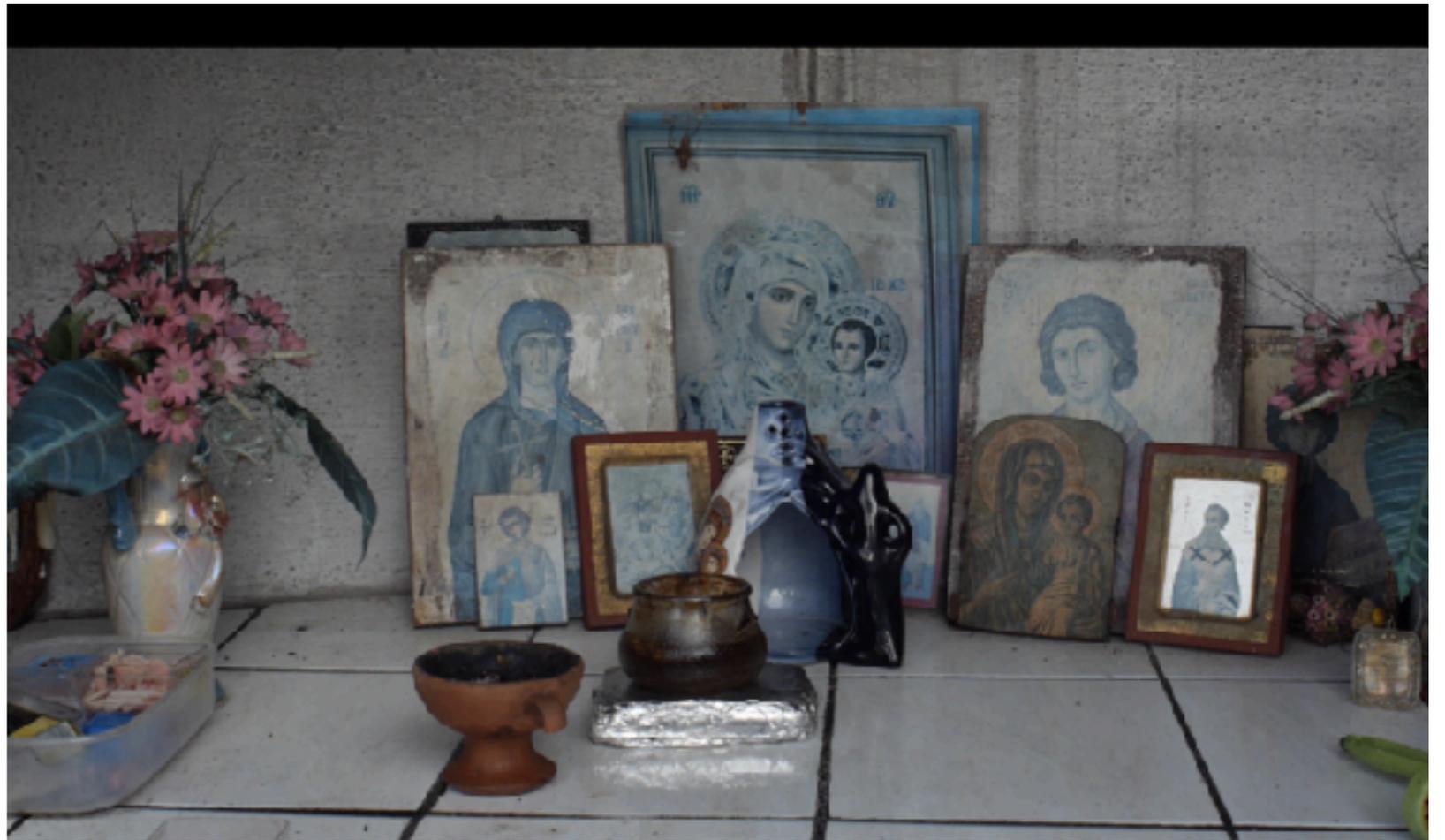
During my stay in Greece I shot some footage thinking of this plot. The idea is to merge letters and footage for a film project to be edited next year.

Meanwhile, I am using the same plot to develop a music performance. The research investigates the mnemonic process. How does memory work? It goes without saying that computers might help for the matter. It is not my goal to approach it from an AI perspective. I think of an algorithmic system arranged to explore a possible movement of the brain dealing with pieces of information sensible for a re-discovery of the same ones (loops).

*Salomon saith: There is no new thing upon the earth. So that as Plato had an imagination, that all knowledge was but remembrance; so Salomon giveth his sentence, that all novelty is but oblivion.* Francis Bacon: Essays, LVIII

quoted in the beginning of *El Aleph*, J.L.Borges











# Polikatoikia

Another film idea was born while observing the typical architecture of Athens. Intrigued by the shape of building blocks repetition known as *Polikatoikia*, I started reading about the history of this haphazard expansion of the city that today largely impose its consequences on the urbanisation (or lack of planned urbanisation) due to intense and rapid population increase during the 20th century.

For now I only have traces of thought on my notebook. I believe this is a very interesting topic to deepen in future exploration of the city.

I'd like to connect historical development with the current implication of such urbanisation, for instance hierarchical arrangement of such buildings' accommodation.

