

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:**

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IMAGE: *Agora Print Series I* (Detail of *Praia-dise Origami Book*), by **Peter D. Gerakaris**, 60cm x 40cm, Digital C-Print, ©2014**“ISOLAIR” LAUNCHES ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM IN CABO VERDE WITH INAUGURAL SOLO EXHIBITION “AGORA: FANTASIA (PART 1)” BY AMERICAN ARTIST PETER D. GERAKARIS**

PRAIA, CABO VERDE, March 31, 2014 – iSolAIR has launched its inaugural Artist in Residence Program in Cabo Verde which will culminate in a solo exhibition by American interdisciplinary artist Peter D. Gerakaris. Entitled *Agora: Fantasia (Part 1)*, the show will premiere a new series of Gerakaris’ signature origami accordion books in 2D and 3D formats, whose colors and patterns underscore the musicality of Cabo Verde. Located at “Pop-Up Gallery” (on Av. Andrade Corvo across the street from Cinema da Praia – please see attached map) in Plateau, the exhibition will run during the 2014 edition of the Kriol Jazz Festival and the Atlantic Music Expo. The founder of iSolAIR, Marc de Bourcy, and the artist will be present for a **public reception on Thursday, April 3rd from 17h00 - 20h00**.

Gerakaris will present a fresh series of mixed media artworks for the upcoming exhibition, which were inspired by and created during his two-month iSolAIR program in Cabo Verde. Arranged and installed like a “cabinet of curiosities,” *Agora: Fantasia (Part 1)* is comprised of lyrical, micro origami book sculptures displayed in mirrored vitrines. These signature “pop botanica” works by Gerakaris feature meticulously hand-painted motifs and hallucinatory juxtapositions that coalesce into a unique cosmology. The fluorescent, vibratory color palette that the artist has chosen evokes musical overtones, having been invigorated by the plurality of environments, cultures and musical expression unique to Cabo Verde.

While exploring various islands, the artist’s senses were seduced and expanded by the ineffable qualities of the landscape, such as the atmospheric sunlight, varied topography, and brilliantly layered hues of the flora, fauna, and architectural pastiche. Gerakaris also likens the sensuous totality of these “visual tonalities” to the seven harmonious styles of Cabo Verdean music that permeate the air. Having also played guitar with a mélange of local musicians, the artist’s visual sensibility has been imbued with the spirit of the ubiquitous, impromptu *jam session*.

The “analog” origami objects in this exhibition are further complemented by a kaleidoscopic series of eight digital C-prints. Blurring boundaries between art, architecture and design, these high-definition prints are photographic macro-enlargements that transform the micro origami artworks into larger, fantastical environments – a space Gerakaris likens to “pavilions for the collective imagination.” On a more concrete level, the prints simultaneously represent the artist’s vision to create and actualize public and private pavilion spaces in Cabo Verde. When realized on a full scale, these “origami pavilions” would fully integrate art and architecture to generate a transformative, meaningful sense of place for citizens to interact – an *Agora* in the classical Greek sense – where diverse communities can congregate, participate in discourse, and experience the arts.

The final component of Gerakaris’ exhibit integrates relics from the artist’s traveling *boîte-en-valise* (studio suitcase). In addition to sharing selections from an ongoing surrealistic “Mask Series” which the artist recently began in Guatemala and New York City, Gerakaris has orchestrated his collection of Cabo Verdean artifacts and impressions into a series of congruous vignettes. These objects include sketches, palettes, notes and images of his odyssey throughout the islands of Santiago, Sao Vicente and Santo Antao.

ABOUT iSolAIR

Set in one of the most strikingly scenic and culturally unique melting pots of the world, iSolAIR is a new Artist in Residence Program in Cabo Verde. Founded independently in 2013 by Marc de Bourcy (who also serves as the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg's Chargé d'Affaires a.i. to Cabo Verde), iSolAIR's ultimate mission is to serve as a *partage* and vessel for multi-faceted circular exchange and global dialogue. iSolAIR launched its program with American artist Peter D. Gerakaris with the institutional and financial support from the **U.S. Embassy in Cabo Verde**. De Bourcy envisions growing iSolAIR into a "transformative international hub and dynamic circular exchange program that promotes 'diplomacy through art' with a *tri-partage* between Cabo Verde, Europe and the United States of America."

Select components of cultural exchanges during Gerakaris' iSolAIR residency have included "studio visits" with visual artists such as Tchale Figueira and Joe Wuerfel, musical *jam sessions* with Kaku Alves, Arlindo Evora and Bruce Neves from Cordas do Sol, and Pilada. Gerakaris has also conducted art workshops and interactive seminars for various Cabo Verdean communities, including children and young adults in the Porto Madeira village and in a *Bairro Criativo* center in *Achado Mato*, Praia. Gerakaris was also able to continue an existing collaboration with international art curator and writer Heather Zises of (READ)Art who has advised iSolAIR's curatorial program.

Under the auspices of iSolAIR, and with support of the Cabo Verdean Ministry of Culture, selected international artists will be invited to spend a minimum of one month living and working in Cabo Verde, with the unprecedented opportunity to experiment, create, and exhibit new bodies of work, while experiencing lasting exchanges with local artists, craftspeople, musicians and friends.

iSolAIR would like to express its gratitude for all the support and faith toward the incubation of the program. Special thanks to U.S. Ambassador Adrienne O'Neal who did not hesitate to "think outside the box"; the colleagues at the Cabo Verdean Ministry of Culture for the unwavering creative and human encouragement; the Cabo Verdean Red Cross for offering the exhibition venue at Plateau; Orlando Delgado, the Mayor of the Camera Municipal of Ribeira Grande in Santo Antao for his natural openness; and Heather Zises of (READ)Art for her patience and dedication in bolstering the program's identity and direction.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Peter D. Gerakaris (b. 1981, New Hampshire) is an American interdisciplinary artist whose kaleidoscopic artwork engages Nature-Culture motifs through painting, works on paper, accordion books, and installation. His work is featured in many prominent public and private collections in the United States and abroad including: the U.S. Department of State Art in Embassies Program Permanent Collection (Libreville, Gabon); Citibank (NYC); the Shirley L. & Herbert J. Semler Foundation, (Portland, OR); the Waskowmium (Burlington, VT); the John H. Friedman Collection (Stamford, CT); the Stephen P. Hanson Collection (NYC); the Patrick McMullan Collection (NYC); Jinho Cho Collection (Seoul, Korea); the William Lim Collection (Hong Kong, CH); the Andrew and Heather Rayburn Collection (Cleveland, Ohio); and the Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection (NYC).

In addition to solo shows at venues such as Wave Hill (NYC) and iSolAIR (Cabo Verde), Gerakaris has exhibited at Shizaru Gallery (London, UK); Dieu Donn  Studios (NYC); Chinese Contemporary Gallery (Beijing, China); the Doors Feature Exhibition (Seoul, Korea); the Bronx Museum of the Arts (NYC); Loretta Howard Gallery (NYC); Daniel Weinberg Gallery (Los Angeles, CA); the National Academy of Fine Arts (NYC); and the Mykonos Biennale (Mykonos, Greece). He has also created site-specific commissions for public spaces such as the Bergdorf Goodman Window Displays (NYC) curated by Grey Area.

Gerakaris earned his B.F.A. from Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art, & Planning in 2003 and his M.F.A. from the City University of New York's Hunter College, where he also received the Tony Smith Prize. Additional distinctions include: the Edwin Austin Abbey Fellowship at the National Academy of Fine Arts, the Clowes Foundation Full-Fellowship Award at the Vermont Studio Center; the Sun Room Honorarium at Wave Hill; and the US Embassy Artist in Residence Fellowship in Cabo Verde. Gerakaris has held residencies at the Red Gate Gallery (Beijing, China), iSolAIR (Cape Verde), the Vermont Studio Center, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

He is also an avid guitarist, composer, and producer who focuses on experimental electronic and hybrid-jazz projects. Gerakaris has performed at John Zorn's The Stone, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and CBGBs, plus co-founded Coo Gua and Cosmiciarium Publishing.

SELECTED LINKS

Web Site of Peter D. Gerakaris: <http://www.petergerakaris.com>

Peter D. Gerakaris Instagram Feed: @petergerkaris

iSolAIR Instagram Feed: @isolairart

Recent News & Press about the artist and his work:

<http://www.petergerakaris.com/news/>

<http://www.petergerakaris.com/press/>

EXHIBITION LOCATION

