

Mythistories II

Group Exhibition

September 12 – October 26, 2024

Athens

CITRONNE Gallery in Athens presents the exhibition *Mythistories II*. This is the organic continuation of the exhibition *Mythistories I*, which was showcased at the CITRONNE Gallery in Poros and will run concurrently until September 15. The exhibitions *Mythistories I* and *Mythistories II* function as a unified whole, like communicating vessels.

Mythistory, a term used in science, literature, and art, reflects the relationship between the imaginary and the real, the natural and the supernatural, the rational narrative and the absurd fairy tale. It intertwines different, sometimes even contradictory, spheres of existence. History represents knowledge, while Myth signifies transcendence.

The nine artists—Alexandra Athanassiades, Lydia Delikoura, Iasonas Kampanis, Katerina Katsifarakis, Alekos Kyrarinis, Tasos Mantzavinos, Petros Moris, Nikos Podias, and Nana Sachini—form a collective vision around the individual and shared concepts of Myth and History. In the second part of the exhibition in Athens, the participating artists expand on the theme, either through new ad hoc creations or by reinterpreting earlier historical works.

Alexandra Athanassiades presents her work from the series *Memories*, where everyday, often fragile, objects and materials take on a central role. These objects are chosen based on their ability to act as key elements in the narratives she aims to highlight. In its simple, minimalist form, the trunk invites viewers to connect with its presence. It becomes a symbol of time, silently conveying the passage of years.

In *27 Dreams*, Lydia Delikoura evokes the sensation that an indistinct creature may inhabit the 'space' that emerges faintly through delicate lines. The resulting grid serves as a foundation for the environment, with color diffusing through the lines in varying intensities. As the squares of the grid deform, they capture the fragmented limbs of the endangered armadillo species. The work is created gradually, piece by piece, and then collapses, reminiscent of the rise and fall of an ancient city.

In *The Lion of Hebron and the Sacred Deer*, Iasonas Kampanis reinterprets an ancient sculpture from the Hebron region—a city with significant biblical history, symbolizing power, protection, or royalty. He combines it with the Sacred Deer, a figure associated with the divine, nature, and well-known traditions of devotional art. The material dimension coexists with spiritual grace.

Katerina Katsifaraki presents a work composed of prickly pear cactus threads and gold leaves. She explores the interplay between the conceptual and the sensory, as well as the transition from inspiration to creation. The artist utilizes dried, decomposed prickly pear leaves, which she reconstructs and stitches into new organic patterns. In this way, the decayed and discarded is transformed into living material, becoming a cohesive element that echoes the cycle of nature.

Alekos Kyrarinis dedicates his work *Angels and Demons* to Fotis Kontoglou, presenting a modern take on Christian and Byzantine art traditions. He weaves together elements from architectural and decorative compositions linked to Orthodox Christian practices. The work blends art history, religious narratives, and his personal memories from his island, Tinos.

Tassos Mantzavinis draws inspiration from the tradition of Karagiozis and Byzantine art, envisioning the mythical figure of the Dragon through a post-Kafkaesque perspective. Using iron, wood, and other materials, Mantzavinis creates a creature emerging from the depths of the inner world. The Dragon, a force of protection or destruction depending on cultural beliefs, embodies a deeper dark world with surreal characteristics reminiscent of a nightmarish dream.

Petros Moris draws inspiration from statues depicting animal protectors that inhabited the ancient cemetery of Kerameikos in Athens. This inspiration results in uncanny, hybrid creatures in

miniature, sculpted in bronze and engraved with visual and linguistic signs that reinterpret their meanings. In the works of the series *Future Bestiary* (Chimeras), subterranean memory intersects with human-made constructs of the future.

In his work *Mythological*, Nikos Podias reimagines a well-known mythological symbol: the Golden Fleece. Instead of merely symbolizing the quest for a valuable object, it is reinterpreted and transformed into an object of worship. This eternal symbol, crafted from tea bags, also evokes bucolic scenes and forms from the more recent history of Greece.

Nana Sachini is inspired by the Gordian Knot, famously cut by Alexander the Great. Created during her pregnancy, it reflects her personal experience and connection with the fetus. It portrays the knot as a coarse, introspective, and dangerous element, with colors reminiscent of flesh and blood. It also includes photographs of the performance, which are integrated into the identity of the work. In *The Bible of Dreams*, color stains, repetitive patterns, and simple gestures form dreamlike figures, mythical creatures, and fantastical hybrids. Like a code, an almost automatic writing through time, the works embody a deep dive into the artist's subconscious and dreams, influenced by surrounding reality, personal experiences, readings, and research.

Mythistories unfold sequentially from one work to another, forming a cohesive whole while maintaining the distinct narrative identity of each artist.