

# Panos Charalambous

## AMVRAKIA.MIA

March 21 – May 11, 2024

### Athens

CITRONNE Gallery – Athens presents the solo exhibition AMVRAKIA.MIA of Panos Charalambous consisting of an installation that brings together the main concepts in the research-based oeuvre of the artist that also grows out of personal memories. It recapitulates the core elements of his work which bears influences of the Humanities, mainly of social anthropology, film, literature, music as well as echoes of Arte Povera and Archive Art.

AMVRAKIA.MIA comprises sound sculptures, wall-mounted works and videos. Each of them is an episode-chapter of a non-linear immersion of the artist in his birthplace, Xiromero of Akarnania, the region that affects the entirety of his work and is meant not as a return to the past but as the origins that shape one's identity and as the basis of new junctures in the present.

The ensemble constitutes a «performative landscape» defined by actions and energies. It forms a «locus», a «whirl» made up of material records, archival material, formations, sounds and events – references to the liquid element, local festivities and to a productive agriculture. The artist's singular rendering of the landscape unfolds in his work for decades and through different variations as shown in the emblematic performance-installation presented at the 58th Venice Biennale (Greek Pavillion, 2019) or the work included in documenta 14 (Athens, Kassel, 2017).

The in situ installation AMVRAKIA.MIA, especially made for CITRONNE Gallery, spreads throughout its premises and creates a juxtaposition between the architecture of an urban apartment and the extensive rural, open-air space. It weaves connections that instead of returning to the past render it relevant to the present.

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Connecting the installation's parts are long irrigation pipes-sound boxes which contain and exude alternating and mixed sounds alluding to local festivities, nature and water.

As the curator of the exhibition, Tatiana Spinari-Pollalis notes: «Water is a powerful element as a notional presence or deafening absence. Its presence is denoted by the artificial reflection of the lake, or it appears as a sound, as 'talking water', through irrigation and water supply pipes».

In the first part of the installation, two large wall-mounted works made from tobacco leaves (Ilios I, Ilios II) allude to Xiromero's once thriving tobacco production, to the process of drying, the sun and cyclical time. In the same space, the reference to Amvrakia lake in the video *La Gazza Ladra* adds a naturalistic element to the work. Walking along the irrigation pipes, the viewer then arrives at the second part of the installation where he is transported to the evocative atmosphere of local festivities. A revolving vinyl record set inside metallic washbowls floating on water, the posters of the legendary singer Takis Karnavas and the sculptural plan view of Amvrakia lake, rendered metaphorically as a dance floor, and next to it the video *An eagle was standing...* of the artist performing a slow «tsamiko» dance on a glass «dance-floor» are traces, visual metaphors of actions organically tied to nature and tradition. They allude to «methexis», to a unity in which the self is found beyond one's limits.

The past and the process of becoming join one other. Time seems to expand as past, present and future become communicating vessels where energies flow from one to the other.

Panos Charalambous derives motifs from a bygone life in the Greek province and projects the identity of the European, Mediterranean South as a periphery. Partly elegiac, his work suggests loss, the evasive while it also rescues from oblivion and makes relevant to the present day old, useless or underrated objects by transforming them into means of artistic expression. Through them he also honors the distinct qualities of a «minor artistic scene» that breathes outside the art of the dominant artistic centers.

Published on the occasion of the exhibition is the book AMVRAKIA.MIA by CITRONE Gallery and Kastaniotis Editions. The edition which includes texts in Greek and English texts by Panos Charalambous, Panos Panopoulos, Tatiana Spinari-Pollalis,

Thomas Symeonidis and Marina Fokidis is a «printed exhibition» where text and image compose a documentation of the artist's multifaceted oeuvre and ongoing research.

In the context of the exhibition at CITRONNE Gallery, Atelier Cycladon 8 (Proveleggios building, Kipseli 8) of architect D. Sotovikis organizes and hosts on March 28, 2024, 20.00 – 22.00 a complementary installation and sonic performance by the artist with the participation of Angelos Krallis and Tasos Stamos.

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