

# Panos Charalambous

## COLUMBIA - Die Ruinen von Athen

April 29 – September 19, 2026

### Athens

CITRONNE Gallery – Athens presents the solo exhibition 'COLUMBIA - Die Ruinen von Athen' of Panos Charalambous. The exhibition COLUMBIA comes as a sequel to the artist's prior show, AMVRAKIA.MIA (CITRONNE Gallery, 2024). The title comes from the historic Columbia record company of Rizoupolis, an emblematic landmark of the Greek record industry. The artist expands his research around memory, sound experience and their physical traces.

The project touches on a broader sonic culture in which voice, song and music were incorporated in the record. The time when the Columbia factory was demolished is decisive, as a historical site turns into ruins and ultimately into a residue. This residue, what survives loss, lies at the core of the work of Panos Charalambous.

The artist makes use of the architectural elements of the gallery's exhibition space to replicate the gate of Columbia, i.e. the memory of the factory. In this way the entry to the exhibition is turned into a gate to memory. This spatial prelude hosts the first section of the modular installation, the audio room. An oversize table carries vinyl records, turntables, speakers, strings of tobacco leaves, sea shells, an embalmed eagle, pointed helichrysum leaves, Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*—a 'personal', contemporary still life. The sound generated by nature or the records does not come from any visible speakers but through the tobacco leaves and the sea shells, which turn into conduits of sound.

The vinyl records as a structural element are approached like bodies marked by wear, use and time. The embalmed eagle balances symbolically between the living and the surviving, between power and weakness, just as the entire installation balances between sound and echo, between presence and absence. The pointed helichrysum leaves and the shells make up a harsh, almost liminal Mediterranean entity. The printed presence of Thomas Mann introduces inner experience, endurance, depth.

In the second installation of the show Panos Charalambous goes back to an emblematic formal and conceptual element of his practice—the musical floor. Here, the musical floor becomes a field for rephrasing the dissection of memory. The artist uses broken vinyl as stamping presses on the canvas which he then goes on to paint. The vinyl pieces themselves have left imprints and scratches—the morphology of wear. Vinyl as a bearer of sound, memory and recordings becomes a tool of visual script.

A frieze made up of individual tile-like pieces extends along two walls of the gallery's back room. It retains the memory of the floor, but is now elevated from a horizontal to a perpendicular level. The musical floor, formerly a site of walking, action and sound activation, is now a wall, an image, a successive surface, almost an archival strip. Nevertheless, it remains something more than a painterly composition: it acts as a partial reconstruction of a sonic and functional past. Under the frieze, vinyl is heaped like a mountain of fragments. This 'mountain' is the sculptural equivalent of the ruin. The video with hale hitting the vinyl comes as a random, violent attack against the already worn matter. The impact on the vinyl generates unpredictable, almost destructive sounds.

This installation acts as the conclusion of the exhibition, not because it 'completes' the path but because it condenses it. The musical floor, the imprint, the painterly processing, the frieze, the mountain of fragments and the hale video make up a locus where sound becomes image, the image becomes a trace, the fragment becomes a bearer of memory and reactivation. More than just laying out objects in space, Charalambous mediates between sound, matter and memory.

Panos Charalambous is among the major and distinguished practitioners on the contemporary art scene of Greece. His work has been presented in documenta 14 and the 58th Biennale of Venice,

at the Greek Pavilion. His long course combines artistic research, teaching, practice and institutional presence. His practice has formulated a distinct influential field in contemporary Greek art.

A series of audio happenings throughout the exhibition will underscore the sonic aspect of the project.

The exhibition is accompanied by the publication COLUMBIA, by Citronne Gallery and Eikostou Protou Press. Featuring texts by Panos Panopoulos, Tatiana Spinari-Pollali, Yorgos Tzirtzilakis and Panos Charalambous, this bilingual (Greek-English) edition constitutes a 'printed exhibition' in which word and image come to document the artist's multifaceted work and research.