



PRESS RELEASE

**Ioannis Savvidis**

**The Lake**

**Solo Show**

The latest series of works by Ioannis Savvidis, "The Lake" is to be presented for the first time at the exhibition space of DL Gallery in Athens (Akadimias 6) and comprises 14 horizontal drawings (landscape format).

The exhibition is held on the occasion of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising of mostly Greek-speaking, Orthodox opponents to the Ottoman regime in 1821.

The ink and aquarelle works in the exhibition are inspired by historical depictions of the Athens Acropolis made by Western travellers-scholars between 1790 and 1886. The original compositions were faithfully copied at first, but then became parts of a new, expanded landscape enriched with new elements.

With the extensions created around each of the 14 drawing, Yannis Savvidis comes in to dynamically change the look of the foreign, imaginary depiction and interpretation of the site, filling them with plots and twists that lead nowhere while time and space remain fluid and diffused in his drawings.

The conversion of these historic images into phantasmagorical fairytale landscapes transforms the drawings into what they had always been: depictions of desires.

The attempt of Yannis Savvidis to break free from the one-sided dynamic of a 'single reading' and create a new and open scope for interpretation was done with a systematic playfulness. In all his works the Acropolis is repeated, the coast of a lake reappears and small children engage in various activities, while all fourteen drawings can be joined end-on-end to form a closed circle—a periscopic landscape.

This idea echoes the famous 'panoramas'\* and 'myrioramas' that were popular in the Western world around the time of the Greek uprising. Indeed, a special series of Hellenicoramas featured landscapes inspired from the Greek regions of Roumeli, Attica and Moreas.

The works in the exhibition examine the discrepancy between the western narrative of an idealized, ancient-styled but fantasized Greece and the overlooked cultural realities of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century which formed a varied Balkan setting in which the glorious ancient past was almost irrelevant.

This a priori conflict and lack of cohesion as one of the main causes of our dysfunctions and failure to understand and accept our culture as Greeks, along with the complexes it creates to this day, is a key concern in the entire oeuvre of Yannis Savvidis.

(After January 2022, "The lake" will be next exhibited in the specially laid-out space of ENIA GALLERY in Piraeus.)

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\* An artificial, composite term coined in the 18<sup>th</sup> century at the time of the 'discovery' of the landscape through tourism. The first panorama was built by the Irish painter Robert Barker.

Exhibition opening: November 23, 2021 from 18:00 to 22:00

The exhibition is on view: November 23 to December 31, 2021

Opening hours: Tuesday / Thursday / Friday: 11:00 - 20:00  
Wednesday / Saturday: 11:00 - 16:00

Free entrance to the public.