



PRESS RELEASE

Yiannis Christakos

Solo exhibition

In the Crack of the Space

DL gallery presents on Friday 11th of October 2024 the solo exhibition of **Yiannis Christakos** titled “**In the Crack of the Space**”.

Codified autobiographical maps full of detail, symbols, surrealist transmutations, visual metaphors, allegories. The works of Yiannis Christakos invite us to wander around the labyrinthine paths of his personal universe; to explore it, to get lost in it; to feel the magic of the unknown, of the adventure in a world in flux which is under constant change—social, political, geophysical.

These are artistic maps that combine true and plausible elements into a harmonious outcome. Paintings that look like aerial photographs and allude to actual places. Using recognisable mapmaking codes, their precision and technical perfection deliberately misleads and disorients the viewer.

The paintings are the outcome of an arduous and time-consuming process of synthesising visual information. And yet the seemingly rational and systematic arrangement of the material is rendered through a spontaneous, automatic writing and in a free, open spirit. Scientific knowledge meets the inexhaustible realm of fantasy, experience meets desire, truth meets dreams and lies.

Just as in professional maps, the works of Christakos record cities, towns and villages; rivers, lakes, valleys, hills and mountain ranges; complex urban street networks, regional country roads, railway lines. Similar images from the actual world are hoarded in his cell phone for use at any time. They are a source of inspiration and an object of study; material for daydreaming, pondering and processing, just like the elements of nature he collects in an obsessive manner.

The notion of transformation plays a key role in these works. The cartographic patterns, sketched with pencils, are magically turned into roots, branches, thorns and leaves full of veins; into human arteries, neurons, dendrites and axons. They also point to wrinkles, as a poetic allegory for the passage of time and the importance of memory. The visual transmutations subtly bring into play the alchemic view of the

human organism as a microcosm that corresponds to the macrocosm of the universe.

The infinite offshoots of the lines spread like cobwebs throughout the surface. They represent notes from a life rich in experiences and travelling, building up the encrypted narrative with a minimum of expressive means. In addition to pencils, the artist makes use of resins to coat parts of the works and add transparent volumes and textures. The liquid glass, solidified and razor-sharp at certain points, acts symbolically as an indirect comment on environmental destruction.

Christakos adds also solidified oil paint applied by a fine brush used in repetitive motions reminiscent of sewing or embroidery. The resultant three-dimensional lines produce the illusion of self-contained coloured threads glued onto the surface, good enough to fool even the most experienced gaze. Morphologically and conceptually they allude to drops of 'acid' rain, to gouges and scratches, to patches and stitches.

The son of a stationmaster and a dressmaker, in his studio—his mother's former dressmaking workshop, a space steeped in memories—Christakos creates geographical maps which also remind you of fine lacework and elaborate embroideries. He converses with his past while experiencing the present and envisioning the future. His imaginary landscapes, in addition to taking the viewer along self-referential paths, are also subtle comments on pressing topical issues: the climate crisis, the devastating effects of war, the wounded cities, the annihilation of states, involuntary displacement, violent uprooting, the fluidity of existence and situations.

Bia Papadopoulou

Art historian, Exhibition curator

Official Opening: Friday 11th October 2024 at 20:30 to 23:30

Duration: 11 October 2024 to 22 February 2025

Opening hours: Thursday – Friday 12:00-19:30
Saturday 12:00-16:00

Admission to the exhibition is free.