

**Varvara Roza Galleries & The Blender Gallery Unveil
Manolis Anastasakos's Solo Exhibition
*MYTHOS: MNEMOSYNE***



Right: 'Narcissus', Left: 'Mount Meru'

October 2 - October 22, 2024

Private View: October 3, 2024, 6:30 pm - 10:30 pm

Varvara Roza Galleries, 8 Duke Street, St. James's, London, SW1Y 6BN

This October, Greek contemporary artist Manolis Anastasakos presents **MYTHOS: MNEMOSYNE** in the heart of London. Debuting during the capital's busiest art month and named after Mnemosyne, the Greek goddess of memory, the show provides a welcome riposte to the surface vacuity of the modern age. A critique of an art industry often driven by the vagaries of consumerism and pop culture, the exhibition offers a sacred space for contemplation of the various mythologies and deeply embedded archetypes that have shaped our individual identities and collective consciousness across centuries and continue to do so.

Exhibited by Varvara Roza Galleries, in collaboration with The Blender Gallery, *MYTHOS: MNEMOSYNE* invites us to see far beyond the walls of Plato's cave and experience a deeper reality, where memory and time intertwine across human existence. Here, classical deities and mystical cities slowly reveal themselves from the veiled depths of huge Rothko-esque canvases, in which the minimalist classicism at the core of Anastasakos's artistic practice reminds us of the personal resonance of mythologies – each work casting epic tales across our own inner landscapes.

"Myths, by their very nature, unfold gradually. The more time and focus you devote to them, the deeper your understanding becomes. My artworks similarly reveal themselves through careful observation, inviting viewers to discover their hidden aspects through critical thought and analysis." – Manolis Anastasakos



'Shadow Theatre', exhibited at The National Archaeological Museum of Greece

This series, which Anastasakos began in 2014, is the culmination of a philosophical and artistic quest that delves into the core of human existence, reflecting the artist's own inner dialogue between antiquity and modernity, offering an intricate interplay of abstraction, minimalism, and the baroque. Through this artistic pluralism, the works transcend traditional interpretations of myth, with each piece acting as a mirror, allowing the viewer to see themselves within the narrative, and uncover personal layers of meaning among timeless stories of humanity – weaving through a panoply different civilisations and iconography.

Set among the works from this incredible series of paintings are also two thought-provoking sculptural installations exploring themes of life, death, and memory. The first, *Shadow Theatre*, presents a crucified skeleton depicted through X-rays and enclosed in a plexiglass frame. Lit by LED lights, the artwork plays on the contrast between light and shadow, reflecting on the fragility of existence. Previously exhibited in the National Archaeological Museum of Greece, this is the first time the sculpture has been shown internationally.

The second, *Once Upon a Time I Was Human*, is an upside-down ziggurat structure made of wood, plexiglas, and resin, with a human skull at its centre. Surrounding the skull are symbolic elements that represent different aspects of life and death. The sculpture's dimensions, symbolising the 40 weeks of pregnancy, suggest death as a form of gestation. Hidden LED lights highlight intricate details, inviting reflection on the transience of all life.



Clockwise: 'Goddess Kalli', 'Hades' & 'Gilgamesh'

Anastasakos has exhibited internationally, with notable shows at the Los Angeles Centre of Digital Art, the Benaki Museum, and the MOYA Museum of Young Art. His solo exhibition *MYTHOS: MNEMOSYNE* celebrates the intersection of mythology, art, and science, inviting viewers to reflect on existence and identity through symbolic narratives that blend ancient myths with contemporary artistry.

MANOLIS ANASTASAKOS IS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

PRESS INFORMATION

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LISTINGS INFORMATION

MYTHOS: MNEMOSYNE

2 – 22 October 2024

Varvara Roza Galleries, Gallery 8, 8 Duke Street St. James's, London SW1Y 6BN

Private View by Invitation Only: 3 October, 6.30 to 10:30pm

Opening Hours: Monday to Sunday from 10:30am - 8:00pm

ABOUT MANOLIS ANASTASAKOS

Manolis Anastasakos is a leading Greek contemporary artist, born in Athens in 1977. He completed his studies in applied arts, fine arts, art therapy, and directing through various state scholarships and participation in European programmes. His involvement in numerous workshops, both in Greece and abroad, provided him with insight into glassmaking and woodcarving techniques. He also studied photography, scenography, and iconography.

Anastasakos has represented Greece in numerous solo and group exhibitions across Europe, Asia, and the United States, receiving international acclaim and awards. His work spans a broad range of disciplines, including painting, sculpture, illustration, engraving, directing, scenography, and art curation.

He is currently the Art Director at the Centre for Biomimicry Greece, Research and Innovation, and began collaborating with NASA's "Space Apps Challenge" programme in Greece in 2016. A significant highlight of his career was his role in the sculpture, painting, and scenography for the closing ceremony of the Athens Olympic Games in 2004.

Anastasakos has a strong interest in street art, particularly wall murals and art installations. In 2011, he earned a distinction in the competition "Art in the Public Urban Space with Painting on the Walls of Buildings in Athens," organised by the Athens School of Arts and the Ministry for the Environment, Energy, and Climate Change. He played an active role in creating these mural artworks.

Several of his monumental works have been displayed in public spaces through European programmes, and his work has been featured internationally in press publications, newspapers, documentaries, interviews, and film productions. One of his main concerns is understanding why people often confuse security with happiness and how art can reshape viewers' spiritual perceptions based on their aesthetics and critical thinking. Although he has not yet found an answer, he enjoys the pursuit of this question.

Works by Manolis Anastasakos are part of permanent collections at the LACDA Museum (Snap to Grid), Los Angeles Center for Digital Art (Los Angeles, USA), MOYA Museum of Young Art (Vienna, Austria), Archaeological Museum (Athens, Greece), the National Roman Museum's Diocletian Baths (Rome, Italy), the Luciano Benetton Collection (San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, Italy), the Benaki Museum, NEON & Marina Abramović Institute (Athens, Greece), and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Palazzo Rizzo (Palermo, Italy).

ABOUT VARVARA ROZA GALLERIES

Varvara Roza, CEO of Varvara Roza Galleries, is an art agent and advisor whose verve and passion for bringing leading contemporary artists, and Greece's brightest artists to the global stage is second to none. Varvara specialises in the promotion of contemporary art by established and emerging international artists, and she is determined to feature a multitude of artistic disciplines with an intent focus on giving a platform to exceptional talent, diversity and cultural relevance. She is dedicated to ensuring the highest level of excellence and integrity within her projects across Europe. @varvararozagalleries

ABOUT THE BLENDER GALLERY

The Blender Gallery is a leading contemporary art gallery in Athens, which aims to promote Greek artists both in Greece and abroad, whilst collaborating with well-established artists and galleries from all around the world. The architecture of the 360 sm exhibition space is specifically designed to meet the standards of a pioneer gallery, allowing the presentation of numerous pieces of art dynamically and interactively, both in group and solo exhibitions. Since 2019 a synergy between The Blender Gallery and Varvara Roza Galleries has been established aiming to present Greek artists abroad. theblendergallery.com | @theblendergallery