



PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 22 April, 2015

NEON and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete are proud to present the exhibition

Flying over the Abyss

Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete, Rethymnon, Archaeological site of Fortezza

2 May – 27 September, 2015

NEON Organization for Culture and Development inaugurates its annual exhibition program this year, in the city of Rethymnon, with the exhibition *Flying over the Abyss*, in collaboration with the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete. This large in scale and extent exhibition presents in Crete renowned contemporary artists, within NEON's policy framework to bring contemporary culture closer to everybody throughout Greece.

The collaboration between NEON and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete has developed an exhibition which optimizes the island's very important cultural asset, Nikos Kazantzakis—the thinker, thus creating a dialogue between his theosophical work *Ascesis: The Saviors of God* and the creations of Greek and international artists of contemporary art. Afterwards, the exhibition will travel to Thessaloniki to be presented at the city's Contemporary Art Centre and Ottoman monuments, conjointly. The exhibition will last from November, 2015 up until March of 2016.

The exhibition *Flying over the Abyss* brings about the adjoined curatorship of Maria Marangou, Artistic Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete, and that of art historian, Dimitris Paleocrassas, exploring the passage of man from life to death, while observing, yet drawing its inspiration upon, Kazantzakis' "Ascesis". A synergy of NEON and the Kazantzakis Museum, the manuscript of *Ascesis*, exhibited for the first time, will be hosted at the exhibition, in an interacting process with contemporary art.

In their totality, 33 artworks, by 26 artists, will be on an ongoing dialogue amongst them, the *Ascesis* as well, casting light upon the course of human life – from the trauma of birth to the struggle of life and creativity, unto death. The works will be presented in seven thematic sections: *Birth/Trauma*, *Flying over the Abyss*, *From Creativity to Eternity*, *Touching the Other*, *Twilight*, *Return to the Abyss*.

The exhibition includes works from the following artists: Marina Abramović, Alexis Akrithakis, Matthew Barney, Hans Bellmer, Louise Bourgeois, Heidi Bucher, Paul Chan, Savvas Christodoulides, Robert Gober, Asta Gröting, Jim Hodges, Mike Kelley, William Kentridge, Martin Kippenberger, Sophia Kosmaoglou, Gabriel Kuri, Sherrie Levine, Stathis Logothetis,

Ana Mendieta, Maro Michalakakos, Doris Salcedo, Costas Tsoclis, Adriana Varejão, Mark Wallinger.

All works exhibited are courtesy of the D.Daskalopoulos Collection.

Dimitris Daskalopoulos, founder of the NEON Organization, states: “*The dialogue connecting Kazantzakis’ robust thought with the representatives of the visual art consciousness of our times, urges, individually, each one of us to redefine one’s role and responsibility towards the country, in need of our contribution in order to regain its future*”.

As per **Maria Marangou, Artistic Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete**, “*Hand in hand with the manuscript of ‘Ascesis’, unraveled is the rending of other, revitalizing moments of the contemporary, artistic creation, as they suggest the transcendence over the abyss, reaching, nowadays, its limit with the fears as proclaimed au courant. The Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete receives, with the warmest feelings, the exhibition in its premises*”.

The **art historian, Dimitris Paleocrassas**, points out: “*In an inter-genealogical course, the great Cretan poet, Nikos Kazantzakis, ‘encounters’ 26 international and Greek contemporary artists. The link of this bridging course lays in the inter-temporal unease of the human entity, which constitutes a necessary prerequisite- people are born with the burden of their mortal nature on their shoulders, far off from perfection; a burden they struggle to outflank during the course of a lifetime. The only way a meaning could be ascribed to uplift this struggle is through the element of creativity, human deeds which could shine eternally. It could, also, create the illusion of escaping from one’s inevitable return to the abyss one comes from...*”

According to **Stelios Matzapatakis, President of the Kazantzakis Museum**, “*For us, the elation is great that this exquisite exhibition, thematically based on the paramount work of the Cretan author, is hosting works of renowned artists which grandstand for their scale and cultural value*”.

Exhibition: Flying over the Abyss

Duration: 2 May – 27 September, 2015

Opening: 2 May, 2015

18:00-19:00 at Fortezza

19:00 at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete

Opening hours:

Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete, 32 Mesologiou Street, Rethymnon

Tuesday – Friday: 09:00-14:00 & 19:00-21:00

Saturday & Sunday: 10:00-15:00

Monday: Closed

Mosque of Sultan Ibrahim Han, Fortezza, Rethymnon

Daily: 09:00 – 19:00

NEON is a Culture and Development, non-profit, Organization, founded by the collector and entrepreneur, Dimitris Daskalopoulos, in 2013. NEON aims to bring contemporary culture closer to everyone by giving prominence to the potential artistic creativity has to awaken, emotionally move and motivate. At the same time, it pursues the broader effort of the city's conducive upgrading, as well as the improvement of the citizen's every-day life. The Organization acts towards restoring the civilian's relation to the function and proceedings of the city.

NEON breaks the convention which limits an art foundation to a single space. It acts on a multitude of initiatives and spaces within the broader civic milieu. It is a vibrant and engaging interlocutor with society at large, cultural stakeholders and the wider public, in general.

NEON realizes its mission through free exhibitions, educational programs, talks and events, grants and scholarships, and a network creation of international partnerships, as well. NEON constructively collaborates with cultural institutions, while supporting the program of public and private institutions to enhance the understanding and dispersal of contemporary art. NEON aims at designating culture as the main vehicle for advancement and development.

The Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete is located in the heart of the old, historical city, underneath the Venetian fortress and the Archaeological Museum. Since 2009, the Museum has acquired a high-quality 1,000 sq. m. exhibition space, which has been extended and refurbished to complement the already existing "L. Kanakakis Municipal Gallery" (1992) and the "Rethymnon Centre for Contemporary Art" (1995). It maintains a permanent collection of approximately 650 artworks. It comprises of the creations (oils, drawings, watercolors) by the Rethymnian artist, Lefteris Kanakakis, which span all phases of his oeuvre, as well as works by other contemporary Greek artists from the 1950s to nowadays, covering all artistic expressions- from abstraction to computer art. The Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete presents, in its main premises, part of its Permanent Collection, while hosting, in additional halls of its building and/or alternative spaces it utilizes, temporary exhibitions of national or international interest. Simultaneously, it realizes programs and joint-projects with other, affiliate organizations from Greece and abroad. Since 1992, the Museum has presented 125 exhibitions, both monographic and thematic, while having published 60 catalogues. Concurrently with the exhibitions, guided tours are being available for both children and adults.

For more information, please contact: neon.org.gr or cca.gr

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