



Exhibition

GEORGE HADJIMICHALIS Works from 1966 to 2022

Exhibition dates:

PART ONE: 21.09 – 05.11.2023

PART TWO: 23.11.2023 – 14.01.2024

TRANSITION: Sunday and Saturday 11 & 12.11.2023 and 18 & 19.11.2023

Benaki Museum / Pireos 138

PRESS KIT:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/la7co86higabv9l4x3a8d/h?rlkey=c69x15esyv4umjy5crmdv8eho&dl=0>

Benaki Museum presents **the major retrospective exhibition of the eminent Greek artist, George Hadjimichalis**. The exhibition will extend to all spaces of the Benaki Museum / Pireos 138, and will be presented in two parts; PART ONE from **September 21st to November 5th, 2023**, and PART TWO from **November 23rd, 2023 to January 14th, 2024**. The works exhibited document the artist's journey through the adventure of painting these fifty-six years. The exhibition also includes works that will be shown to the public for the first time.

In the interval between the first and second part and, specifically, on the weekends 11th-12th, 18th-19th November 2023, **the exhibition space will remain open to the public, so that they may witness the TRANSITION** and experience the process of setting up an exhibition behind the scenes.

The retrospective exhibition *George Hadjimichalis. Works from 1966 to 2022* is a **collaboration between the Benaki Museum and the Cultural Non-Profit Company 2020**, under the artist's own curatorship. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) supports the exhibition as a Lead Donor as part of its Employee Donation Matching Program. .

The exhibition is accompanied by the book *GEORGE HADJIMICHALIS – Works from 1966 to 2019*, designed by George Hadjimichalis and edited by Stavros Petsopoulos. It is available in two languages (Greek and English) from AGRA Publications.

Throughout the exhibition's duration, **parallel events** will take place, as well as **art workshops** led by the Benaki Museum Education Department, where contemporary artists will invite children to engage in a dialogue with the artist's work. Additionally, the Education Department organizes **two meetings for visitors with memory difficulties or dementia** (Educational Programme: *It's Museum Time!*) and for **visitors with low vision or blindness** (Educational Programme: *Seeing with the Senses*).

The Benaki Museum, recognizing the scope and distinctive nature of the two-part presentation of the extensive retrospective exhibition of George Hadjimichalis , has **introduced a special multiple-visit ticket (€16). This ticket will grant visitors the opportunity to attend the exhibition as many times as they desire throughout its entire duration.**

THE EXHIBITION

George Hadjimichalis (b. 1954) stands as one of the most prominent contemporary Greek painters. The retrospective exhibition at the Benaki Museum unveils **over half a century of artistic creation**, commencing in 1966 with the artist's inaugural paintings at the age of 12. This is followed by the sections *“Mourning”* (1968-1969) and *“The First Years of London”* (1971-1974). However, in the subsequent segments of this retrospective exhibition, the strict linear chronological order is disrupted, offering the viewer a meticulously curated path that maintains its vibrant and dynamic relevance in the present.

The work of George Hadjimichalis is multi-faceted and often consists of extensive thematic segments, the production of which requires systematic and long-term research. In these thematic sections, Hadjimichalis narrates a story and invites the viewer to traverse the expanse of the artwork, to step into it, and to fathom its narrative. Through this, he explores aspects of the concept of memory, underscores the significance of archives and highlights the relationship between the past and the contemporary visual arts' reality.

Oftentimes, events and situations serve as a starting point for his works, not necessarily "significant" in the conventional sense, but events that, though initially appearing as of minor importance or eccentric to the large corpus of history, are, in fact, fragments of the collective memory that ultimately concern us all.

A focal point in George Hadjimichalis' work revolves around the discourse and potentialities of visual space. Hadjimichalis in his work does not seek the illusion of the third dimension. Instead, he uses painting to "unfold" the works in space, creating compositions that integrate various media -such as photos, videos, sculpture, digital prints, texts, constructions, etc. – to facilitate its narrative and serve the subject most effectively. In doing so, he literally immerses the viewer into the visual space, creating an integrated experience. The two-dimensional space of painting expands into the third dimension, allowing the viewer to encounter the image as it is shaped by the experience of life in the postmodern condition.

The featured project, serving as a retrospective exhibition of an important contemporary artist, is part of a series of akin exhibitions organized by the Benaki Museum. **The exhibition will include works previously showcased in Greece and internationally** (including Documenta IX in Kassel, Schirn Kunsthalle, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, MoMA P.S.1, 51st Venice Biennale, etc.), **as well as selected artworks and thematic units being unveiled to the public for the very first time.**

The exhibition's objective is to enable the public to engage with the diverse and multi-dimensional work of George Hadjimichalis, to witness in the exhibition areas of the Benaki Museum / Pireos 138 the varying treatment of visual themes over the years, but also to introduce them to an alternative approach in engaging with the works through the unique exhibition design, which suggests the dual utilization of Museum spaces. An exhibition that invites the visitor to create a personal interpretation of the overall work through the multiple traversal across the spaces.

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2020

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BENAKI MUSEUM / PIREOS 138 | Pireos 138 & Andronikou Str, Athens | +30 210 3453111 | Visiting Hours:
Thursday & Sunday: 10:00-18:00, Friday & Saturday: 10:00-22:00, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: closed |

Exhibition ticket: €12, €9 (Part I), €12, €9 (Part II) and €16, €12 (multiple-visit ticket to Part I and PART II)