Modern Sanctuaries

Modern Sanctuaries exhibition aims to highlight how aspects of antiquity, which precisely touch upon human existential problems, are always capable of speaking

about today through new groundbreaking forms. Modernism delves into ancient forms to speak universally.

Lofos art project is proud to present Athens Sanctuary, a video installation in the form of a tetraptych, directed by the well-known American director of Greek origin Richard

Ledes and made in collaboration with interdisciplinary artist Alisha Trimble (aka Aliki Pavli), also of Greek origin and who choreographed the work, designed the costumes and dances in it. “Athens Sanctuary” combines contemporary dance with original techno music and is inspired by the tragedies Oedipus at Colonus by Sophocles and Eumenides by Aeschylus.

Both The Eumenides and Oedipus at Colonus have to do with the Stranger, a non-citizen being received into the polis of Athens; In the case of Orestes, in order to find justice, and, in the case of Oedipus, in order to end years of exile and exclusion. In the first play Orestes comes to Athens fleeing the Furies who seek vengeance for the matricide he has committed and is provided a jury trial. In Oedipus at Colonus, the blind figure of Oedipus who has been guided to Athens by his daughter Antigone, after years of wandering in exile for parricide and incest, is offered sanctuary.

Athens Sanctuary, by bringing together these two tragedies, underlines themes that reveal the delusional quality of total segregation and exclusion as either a collective or individual goal and, on the contrary, advocates for the necessity of acknowledging alterity as an inalienable component of our individual and collective subjectivities.

The relevance of this work becomes obvious in a period when war and genocide, in addition to tens of thousands of victims (and indeed in the majority of children – to the glory of progress) also give birth to hundreds of thousands of refugees, who are treated with brutality and exclusion at the borders of modern fortresses.

This video screening will be combined with an art exhibition that will bring together art works, which do not use antiquity to confirm an ideology of Greek superiority, but highlight its universality in the context of a groundbreaking modernism. The exhibition combines works of Vasso Katraki, Panos Sarafianos, Kostas Andreou, Mary Hatzinikoli, Theodoros Papagiannis, Vana Xenou, Roubina Sarelakou and Efi Spilioti.

The starting point for this exhibition is the works of the painter and teacher Panos Sarafianos, who worked at the National Archaeological Museum as an artist for the

restoration of ancient representations and reliefs. In a series of his works from 1967-1968, he starts from the Boeotian tombstones but also from the colors of the white lekythons and creates a surprising movement on the abstract forms

of the warriors, while ancient idols, geometric as well as neolithic, are the source of inspiration for one of the most groundbreaking series of abstract expressionism works, the ebony signs of a world of collective creation.

Vasso Katraki deeply studies the Cycladic idols, but also the masks of ancient tragedy, and with her elongated abstract forms expresses all the anxieties and rebellions of modern human being.

Costas Andreou decomposes the form of the ancient column introducing the void as a building block of the modern expressionist sculpture, while transforming the form

of the owl in a loving embrace.

Theodoros Papagiannis’ totems combines ancient forms with Epirus’ traditional folk art to symbolise the grandeur of the human survival during immigration and exile, while his couples praise eternal love even after death.

With Mary Hatzinikoli’s large abstract ceramics, ancient Greek geometric depictions acquire a life of their own and transform into self-existent beings. Meanwhile her inspiration from ancient Greek forms led her to produce a

series of ceramic utilitarian objects, while Roubina Sarelakou, inspired by the ancient statues dress

pleats transforms them in dynamic autonomous forms.

 Vana Xenou highlights that immersion in collective memory is the method for transforming the world and in this way an exhibition can be transformed into a modern mystagogy and

Efi Spilioti’s Sacred Veil of the goddess Athena transcends us in the realm of the creational Spirit.

Opening 28/6/2025 19:00

Duration 28/6-31/7 18:00-21:00 (Mondays closed)

Lofos art project Velvendou 39 Kypseli