

# DECODING<sup>2</sup>PLUS<sup>2</sup>

Art exhibition / 03-13 August 2023

Municipal Art Gallery of Agios Nikolaos, Crete

Maria Kokkini, Antonis Alivrouvas,  
Katerina Geoganta, Katerina Rapani



Curated by:  
Maria Drakaki  
& Georgios Orfanidis

Διοργάνωση:



ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΣ  
ΑΘΛΗΤΙΚΟΣ ΟΡΓΑΝΙΣΜΟΣ  
ΔΗΜΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ

Συνδιοργάνωση:



ΔΗΜΟΣ ΧΑΝΙΩΝ  
MUNICIPALITY OF  
CHANIA · CRETE



# THE PROJECT "CONDITION TWO"

of the Museum of School Life of  
the Municipality of Chania

The identity of the exhibition  
"DECODING 2PLUS2"

The art exhibition "DECODING 2PLUS2" is part of the social intervention of the project "CONDITION TWO" of the Museum of School Life of the Municipality of Chania. This is a new visual exhibition of 4 artists (Antonis Alivrouvas, Katerina Georganta, Maria Kokkini, Katerina Rapani), which is presented in the welcoming space of the Municipal Art Gallery of Agios Nikolaos, in Lasithi, Crete, following a personal invitation from the Mayor of the city, Mr. Antonis Zervos. The whole event is carried out with the creative synergy of two Municipalities of Crete, the Municipality of Chania, and the Municipality of Agios Nikolaos. This pioneering visual exhibition will attempt – outside the city of Chania – to develop creatively, as well as to document the principles and values, in which the Museum of School Life of the Municipality of Chania has invested, starting a social dialogue centered on its rich cultural collection of the Museum itself [known from its recording and documentation program under the name "THROUGH ART" (ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΤΕΧΝΗΣ)]. On the receiving end is the constantly renewed public of the Museum, as was seen through all the processes of sincere extroversions that developed in March 2023 at the Grand Arsenal (Center of Mediterranean Architecture). There, the pedagogical

intention of communicating the meaning of visual art in cultural reference spaces of the Municipality of Chania, outside the Museum, took center stage, and ultimately created new frameworks for the future of art curation and the communication of culture (See details on the Museum's website (vd. details on the Museum's website: <https://school-life.gr/proypothesi-dyo-apokodikopoiisi/>) The first art exhibition of the project "CONDITION 2" with the title "DECODING" achieved unprecedented attendance. In fact, it was observed that several visitors returned knowingly having formed their own small groups; to explore the art spaces. This exhibition has succeeded in documenting in multiple ways the dynamics of cultural



Maria Kokkini / Youth, tempera on wood –  
mixed technique, 60 × 35 cm.

pluralism, to which the composition and connection with different artistic visual codes certainly leads. However, such an approach requires a design, which will be part of the principles of the systemic approach, with an emphasis on the needs of modern artistic communication<sup>1</sup>.

In our new exhibition, here at the Municipal Art Gallery of Agios Nikolaos, another duo of creators has been added. From this fact comes the title: "DECODING 2PLUS2". The emphasis on the principles of cultural democracy, which the Museum of School Life serves with the pedagogy of visual culture, is once again more than evident.

The art exhibition "DECODING 2PLUS2" is not simply, however, a repetition of the exhibition that marked with great success the start of the project "CONDITION TWO" of the Museum of School Life of the Municipality of Chania. It is a new art narration that will be developed with the challenge of an innovative and unified exhibition narrative of the 4 creators, under the scientific responsibility of the Museum of School Life and curated by Maria Drakaki and Georgios Orfanidis. This curatorial proposal, like all the parallel actions of the exhibition, have as a next step the revelation of the value in the dynamics of groups, first in small groups of two persons, and then in the larger groups, with the condition, this time, of the prevalence of the "2SYN2" pattern. The dyad becoming a tetrad exercises the value of sharing within a larger cycle of cultural processes and transcending individual-superficial interests. The "2PLUS2" group acts, dares, expresses itself, interacts with other circles, overlapping communication systems, in the context of an inclusive creative community, with the aim of eliminating stereotypes and discrimination of all kinds, in the year 2023<sup>2</sup>.

The circle of curators, the circle of families, the circle of state institutions, the circle of elected representatives, the circle of the public, specialized or not, interact voluntarily and involuntarily,



Antonis Alivrouvas / Untitled, mixed technique with markers, etc., 50 x 70 εκ.

having so much respect and trust between them. The principles of the systems approach are applied to all exhibition design processes. As Polemi-Todoulou has also pointed out: "[...] The process in the group takes care of change as well as continuity, what we call 'we' as well as 'I', emotion as well as thought, content as well as process, the cohesion but also the different..."<sup>3</sup>.

Warm thanks are given especially to all the artists who participate with empathy and love in the challenge of the project, as well as to the parents of the young creators who encourage and facilitate with their animation the participation of their children in this common artistic action. Also, warm thanks to the Mayor of Agios Nikolaos,

Mr. Antonis Zervos, to the Mayor of Chania, Mr. Panagiotis Simandirakis, to the Deputy Mayor of Culture of Agios Nikolaos, Mr. Haris Alexakis, and to the Deputy Mayor of Culture of Chania, Mr. Yiannis Giannakakis, because they were the first to pave the way, through their fruitful synergy, for this exhibition to be transformed into a product of social contribution, an example of lived cultural democracy; giving undivided trust and continuous support to the project "CONDITION TWO" of the Museum of School Life.

We hope that this original gathering of the two Municipalities from the ends of the island will develop into a strong message of a valuable decoding of "2PLUS2", which will deeply touch the political scene, the respective educational and cultural institutions, society itself. Our goal; the cultivation of respect for diversity, and the acceptance of the other as a legacy for the cohesion and development of the local society, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow.

With respect,  
Maria Drakaki  
*Curator of the Museum of School Life,  
Pedagogue, Adult Trainer*

Georgios Orfanidis  
*Art Historian & Theorist*

# THE "INTERPRETIVE PATHS" in the art exhibition "Decoding 2plus2"

The exhibition "Decoding 2 plus 2" attempts to highlight the expanded possibilities of decoding art works in the modern cultural process.

With the double right to the creators and the receivers of the works of art, the freedom to choose the semiotic resources in the visual event during the creation and reception of the cultural goods. So that everyone can participate equally with creativity without watertight and perceptual stereotypes. The painter Maria Kokkini incorporates the popular QRC into her paintings by connecting her visual statements with poetry. On her painting surface, she composes unique lines, shapes, and colors, highlighting timeless values and social messages. In her creations the visual harmony radiates with incredible consistency, but also with respect to the dynamics of each shape, each line, as they are connected and placed with the care of her handling of color in a perfectly structured expressive landscape. The recipients of her works are therefore effortlessly drawn into feeling the safety of an invisible force that supports the visible structure and protectively keeps all the elements of the painting in their proper place.

In the harmonious juxtaposition of lines, shapes and solids together with color, specific motifs are present each time, ideally shaping the recognizable, structured, and visually expressive language of the painter (see the article written by the curator of the Museum of School Life of the Municipality of Chania, Maria Drakaki "As a geometric balance in painting", published in the newspaper Haniotika Nea, 5/02/2023, available at: <https://www.haniotika-nea.gr/os-geometriki-isorropia-sti-zografiki/>).

The painter Antonis Alivrouvas chooses abstract anthropocentric forms and figures that focus on the features of the face, which are intensified by his mastery of color and the unmistakable movement of the line, in order to compose his visual codes. Therefore, with his color and linear shocking immediacy he invites the recipients of his works to enlist emotion, experience, and imagination in order to restore with him the ideal continuity that makes

sense for them, between his visible and invisible, between his experience and his own dream, as both are accommodated on his canvas.

For Katerina Georganta, watercolor is the medium she handles very skillfully. She perfectly renders the transparency and fluidity of light, with wonderful changes in the quality and intensity of



Katerina Rapani / Pink sunset,  
watercolors, 18 × 24 cm.

colors, in her landscapes and portraits. Her watercolors form an enviable visual language. Here, a maximum brightness is hidden that does not threaten, but respects and balances the continuous flow of alternating colors, the creation of tones and shades, until the final form of color is harmoniously completed. Her works are distinguished by a dreamy breath and a characteristic perpetual movement of tones and transparency, which is not limited to simply capturing the external visual reality on the painting

surface, but eloquently radiates the inner image of the elements of her composition, at the same time giving these elements a sleek clarity. For her, the landscape is the lived landscape of Crete, and her portraits are the people of everyday life; everything evolves in various moments, during the endless alternation of day and night. Therefore, the natural environment of Crete acquires an emotional fluidity, through which the various manifestations of public and private life in Crete, also rarely elsewhere (e.g. Santorini), are re-mapped.

With her artworks, Katerina Rapani invites you to a tender tracing of color in the vast nature, with the ancient symbol of the tree as a favorite element-protagonist. Her subject choices transform everyday images into bright new frames. She herself, preferring warm colors, seeks the journey to new "places", realistic or not, as well as the revelation of the exciting dynamic that is naturally hidden in a highly aesthetic artifact. Her creations often indicate the possibility of surpassing the previous limits, and the conquest of new knowledge-techniques. Undoubtedly, more nuances, more forms, more contrasts are now emerging. There is something consciously unfulfilled, however, that "pushes" each receiver to read the visual work as an open message, without a specific end. Color acts as a pivot in each reading. Sometimes clear and thicker, sometimes transparent, sometimes in many (alternating) tones, the artist vividly maps the special character of the Cretan landscape that inspires her, perhaps identifying this landscape, sometimes, with her rich inner "emotional place".

Maria Drakaki

*Curator of the Museum of School Life,  
Pedagogist, Adult Trainer*

# THE MUNICIPAL GALLERY OF AGIOS NIKOLAOS AS AN INCLUSIVE SPACE

Notes on a new category of  
narrative art.

A museum/art exhibition (permanent or temporary) is broadly defined as the arrangement of objects within narrative frames and spatial borders for the purpose of expressing a specific cultural meaning-myth (fabula). The various items in an exhibition are combined with supporting structures and discourses, thus becoming extensions of a different narrative plot (intreccio) each time, in order to trigger emotions, provide new experiences, cultivate knowledge, and probe the intellectual axes of the public by showcasing timely concerns and delivering critiques of them<sup>4</sup>.

The process of giving meaning to the whole is associated with the arrangement and the placement of all the above in a three-dimensional - or, better yet, multi-dimensional - space<sup>5</sup>. The techniques used to place the objects and the accompanying texts in the space affect our perception of and reaction to them. Of course, the combinations of items, that is, their placement in sets suggests the existence of established, or at least developing, social attitudes and ideas, or even fluid content, as is the case of ideological constructs, that is, ideas or views invented to support other beliefs and personal-propagandist intentions



Katerina Georganta / Love, watercolors,  
50 × 57 cm.

without corresponding, however, to the actual state of affairs at the moment in question. The exhibition as a combination of objects and other elements for the purpose of a direct transmission of a coded concept constitutes a "system" and/or a "practice" of representation with powerful psycho-cultural ramifications, especially in the case of cultural contributions based on the value of inclusion, the participation in artistic creation on equal terms, a type of acceptance that does not stop at a superficial highlighting of what is different through meaningless (written) references.

Georgios Orfanidis  
*Art Historian & Theorist*

## Notes

1. For example, vd. Πολέμη-Τοδούλου Μ. (2005). Μεθοδολογία Εκπαίδευσης Ενηλίκων: Η Αξιοποίηση της Ομάδας στην Εκπαίδευση Ενηλίκων. Τόμος Γ. Πάτρα: Ελληνικό Ανοιχτό Πανεπιστήμιο.
2. In further detail, for all this educational and cultural background, see below Maria Drakaki's text about "Interpretive Paths", where, inter alia, the principles of the systemic approach (Πολέμη-Τοδούλου, 2005 and 2010), the values of inclusion/inclusivity (Perkins, 2008) and the importance of connected experience in circular education (Dewey, 1916/1997) are analyzed. Also, vd. <https://www.chania-culture.gr/services/events/ekthesi/egcheirima-proyrothesi-2-ekthesi-zografikis-apokodikoroiisi/>
3. Πολέμη-Τοδούλου, Μ. (2010). Η Συστημική Προσέγγιση – Κλειδί για έναν Νέο Εκπαιδευτικό Σχεδιασμό. Μετάλογος, Συστημική Εταιρεία Βορείου Ελλάδος, 18, 1-27, εδώ, 17. The same idea has been expressed in: Πολέμη-Τοδούλου Μ. (2005). Μεθοδολογία Εκπαίδευσης Ενηλίκων: Η Αξιοποίηση της Ομάδας στην Εκπαίδευση Ενηλίκων. Τόμος Γ. Πάτρα: Ελληνικό Ανοιχτό Πανεπιστήμιο.
4. Mygind, L., Hällman, A. K., & Bentsen, P. (2015). Bridging gaps between intentions and realities: a review of participatory exhibition development in museums. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 30(2), 117-137, here, 117-118. Sitzia, E. (2016). Narrative theories and learning in contemporary art museums: A theoretical exploration. *Stedelijk Studies*, 4, 1-15, here, 1-2.
5. Hall, S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London, UK & Thousand Oaks, CA, USA.: Sage, in association with the Open University, p. 8.



Διοργάνωση:



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