



Nikos Varytimiadis: The Unknown

17 February - 18 March 2012



Curated by Evi Baniotopoulou

The Gallery @ Idea Store Whitechapel presents 'The Unknown', an exhibition by Nikos Varytimiadis comprising of prints, collage and sculpture. This is the artist's first solo show in the UK.

Varytimiadis is concerned with the differences and similarities between myth and reality, and the ways in which these are expressed in the experience and assumptions of daily life. He also seeks to understand how we identify ourselves through our perception and definition of otherness, and how widely disseminated beliefs derive from this process. A variety of elements from myths or folk traditions, as well as contemporary culture - drawn from archives, books, tabloids and the internet

- are employed by Varytimiadis, who assembles them in different arrangements. These do not offer a particular narrative, but rather constitute a platform for the creation of diverse stories.

The exhibition seeks to reflect and comment specifically on the character and importance of the space that hosts it. This is a library, an establishment where material is organised into many thematic categories and sub-categories, based on pre-existing, ostensibly authoritative beliefs regarding the classification of knowledge. The assumptions that often result from this system of categorization are underlined by Varytimiadis's work.

The silkscreen prints and collages feature black and white found images of ruined ancient sculptures and nature, especially forests and mountain peaks. Silkscreen printing is used here to suggest the first instances of typography, while the lack of colour is suggestive of old archives and documentaries.

The sculpture is made of wood and paper, organic materials that are symbolic of the existence of humankind through the ages. This work can be seen as the abstract transcription of our mental processes to glean meaning from the visual information on the wall. It is evocative of the mountain peaks in the prints and collages, whilst its entangled geometric shapes could represent a complex web of mental connections and explorations.

Nikos Varytimiadis was born in Jesenik (Czech Republic) and lives and works in London and Thessaloniki (Greece). He has exhibited in the UK, Spain, Serbia, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic as well as various major venues and events in Greece, including the State Museum of Contemporary Art - Costakis Collection, the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art and the 1st Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art. His work has also been integrated into dance and theatre performances. He has been awarded artist residencies in Greece, FYROM and the Netherlands, and academic scholarships and distinctions for his work in Greece and the UK.

Exhibition kindly supported by Donopoulos International Fine Arts, Thessaloniki.