

# CHRISTINE PARK GALLERY

## Vangelis Pliarides: *Shapes of Love*

19 February – 19 March 2022

**Private View** | Saturday, 19 February 2022, 4 – 7 pm  
Unit 102, 225 Anfu Lu, Xuhui District, Shanghai 200031  
Tuesday to Saturday, by appointment only between 12 – 6 pm

### For Immediate Release

CHRISTINE PARK GALLERY is pleased to present *Shapes of Love*, a solo exhibition of new paintings and watercolours by Vangelis Pliarides. This is the artist's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery and the first exhibition in the gallery's new space in Anfu Lu, Shanghai. The exhibition presents different stages of love in the form of feelings and thoughts. Pliarides's works are a visual diary of ideas created on his terms, allowing the viewers to have access to the artist's intimate perception of Love. In the last two years, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many individuals all around the world were separated from their families and loved ones. As a result, we rediscovered that love can be expressed even in moments of loneliness. For example, a moment of solitude that one might have invokes a sense of nostalgia, which can be interpreted as a shape of love captured in Pliarides's works. For Pliarides, lovelessness, desire, loneliness, and contemplation are all linked to love. Adverse to overdramatic and eagerly romanticised conceptualizations of love, the artist would like the viewer to get a sense of truth and sincerity in his works.

Pliarides's oeuvre is characterised by the presence of a solitary figure. Glancing at the elongated limbs of the figures and broken-up depictions of human faces, the viewer is invited to take a closer look. At that moment, hidden messages are revealed. For instance, in *Hikkaduwa Beach* (2020), long legs and arms are an allegory of the sentiment of longing for someone we cannot be with, yet our mind is unable to let go of them. In *Equilibrium* (2021), a man is attempting to find balance in his environment, not just with his body, but internally. Similar to the protagonists of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the men and women in Pliarides's works are visited by ghosts of their past. *Shapes of Love* is an abstraction. Inspired by Cubist techniques, human faces are analysed, broken up, and reassembled. The fragmentation of the figures stresses the existence of multiple feelings and desires inside each of us at any given time and the difficulties in knowing our real selves. Therefore, the playful representation of a man who is having a Hollywood experience reveals something darker and deeper. Even eagerness to belong in the world of movie stars by intensifying physical exercise and the use of social media uncovers feelings of nostalgia.

For Pliarides, solitude provides an opportunity for discovering one's true desires, in the belief that it requires being outside of one's comfort zone to truly know oneself. In *Alone Again or Eat Banana* (2020), created whilst Pliarides was isolating at home during the first year of the pandemic, a lonely figure is

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banished on an island alone. Hence, moments of reflection stimulate a process of self-evaluation. Pliarides decides to counter the heaviness of these emotions by ironically portraying the figure in the act of eating a banana. The tropical landscape in the background is influenced by the artist's travels, an ever-ending source of inspiration for him. As an homage to India and Indian movies, *Love Me Please (Dingha, West Bengal, India)* (2020) attempts to convey the feelings of awe that Pliarides experienced during his trip to India thanks to the saturation of colours that surrounded him. A solitary man on the beach shows small writing on his forearm: *Love Me Please*. Circling back, Pliarides is once again concerned with the idea of love that so many artists, writers, and poets before him have tried to represent.

After guiding us around the world through memories of his travels and adventures, Pliarides accompanies us back to Greece. *Cavo Fonias* (2021), which depicts the beautiful and dangerous spot on the island of Icaria, provides the setting for the representation of a human figure voluntarily falling off a cliff, an appreciation for devastating beauty. On the coast, nature is so appealing that even death itself would be magnificent, art itself. In *Competitors* (2021), the representation of the forest close to the artist's house where he retreats every day to spend time with his thoughts and feelings symbolises a process of deep contemplation. In this painting, a specific curve of the forest appears where a figure inspired by a dinosaur that his son had drawn for him stands. It has a human face. A man behind a tree is instead retreating as if he just lost a battle. The two figures are competing for the love of someone they both desire, yet they are sharing the agony that comes with the act of love.

For further information or press inquiries, please contact the gallery at [info@christinepark.net](mailto:info@christinepark.net) or WeChat Official Account [cpgallery](#).

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## About the Artist

Born in 1964 in Thessaloniki, Greece, he graduated from the Aristotle University, School of Fine Arts in Thessaloniki in 1989. He finished his studies in London at the Royal College of Art by obtaining a Post Experience Diploma (PED) in Painting (1992) and a Master of Fine Arts in Painting (1994).

He received awards and fellowships from the British Council, the Fulbright Foundation, and the RTZ plc. His artworks are included in various public collections, such as AstraZeneca (Sweden), Alfa Laval (Sweden), Scania (Sweden), Södertälje Konsthall (Sweden), Union of Swedish Artists (Sweden), Royal College of Art (UK), British Council (UK), Fulbright Foundation in Greece, Frissiras Museum (Greece), Foundation Sana-Huja (Spain), and Musée d'art moderne et contemporain (MAMCO) (Switzerland). He is currently a Professor of Painting at Aristotle University, School of Fine Arts. He lives and works in Thessaloniki and London.

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## **About the Gallery**

CHRISTINE PARK GALLERY is a young gallery dedicated to supporting both emerging and established international artists. Located in TriBeCa, New York's burgeoning art hotspot, and Anfu Lu, in the historical heart of Shanghai's former French Concession, the gallery has an extensive program of solo shows, conceptually curated group exhibitions, and special installations. With a constantly developing roster of innovative artists, the gallery prides itself on exhibiting works in a range of media, seeking to provoke cross-disciplinary debate and extend the boundaries of the current contemporary art scene.

Our vision is to provide a platform to allow artists to develop and gain greater recognition. Therefore, as well as providing a commercial space that artists can use as a canvas to realise their projects and present their works to the public, we actively foster relations with art foundations, public museums, and private clients.

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