

## Press Release

Muratcentoventidue Artecontemporanea

### ***OLYMPUS OFFSHORE***

**Lydia Dambassina**

Muratcentoventidue Artecontemporanea is pleased to present ***Olympus Offshore*** a solo exhibition by Greek artist **Lydia Dambassina**.

Born in Thessaloniki, Lydia Dambassina moved to Lyon at a young age, where she completed her secondary education. She subsequently attended the School of Fine Arts in Grenoble and earned degrees in psychopathology and pedagogy from the Universities of Paris V and Grenoble. Her professional background also includes research in psychiatric epidemiology and work as an art director in film production.

Her multidisciplinary practice spans painting, video works, installations, photographs and texts that explore social and philosophical issues: economic inequality, the environmental crisis, personal and collective identity, the role of women, and the impact of migration. Many of her works explore the duality between human life and nature, between past and present, using found objects such as goat skulls, vintage scales, decaying soil, or seeds—poetically transformed into tools for reflection.

Lydia Dambassina is an artist whose [works are reflections](#) on humanity and contemporary society. Through an interdisciplinary practice, she pursues a discourse that combines severe aesthetics and political engagement, elevating the everyday into a universal vision.

Her themes—from economics to climate, from identity to social injustice—are more relevant than ever today. Her installations range from the personal to the political, inviting the viewer to engage with realities that are simultaneously global and intimate.

*"Much of my work revolves around life and its traumatic constraints caused by economic inequality and the destruction of nature... Identity and its formation, often autobiographical, are at the center of my research..."* Dambassina defines her art as *"a collective therapeutic space" aimed at freeing the mind from the constraints imposed by structural inequalities.*

She has developed a personal poetics in which symbolic narrative and aesthetic research merge into a powerful visual language, capable of interrogating the viewer and raising profound questions about the relationship between the individual and the collective. Her works reflect a continuous tension between the private and the public, between the intimate and the political, staging objects, images, and sounds that become tools for reflection.

Since 2004, her work has focused on the global economic and moral crisis and the exponentially growing inequalities, as demonstrated by the project, *Party's over – Starts over*. It touches on various aspects of the crisis afflicting Greece and beyond, due to the absolute dominance of international markets over the popular sovereignty enshrined in the Constitution. The project,

created in large-format of staged photographs combining images with textual fragments, often taken from Greek and French daily newspapers, in which images and texts engage in a dialogue on the global crisis, with a particular focus on the crisis. Greece and the collapse of Lehman Brothers.

Lydia Dambassina's work has received recognition for its ability to combine conceptual rigor and aesthetic sensitivity, she is also known for her commitment to the Athenian cultural scene, contributing to artistic and intellectual dialogue through collaborations with independent spaces, curators, and other artists. Her art stems from a humanist vision deeply rooted in the protection of nature and social justice. Her life choices also reflect these values: she has cultivated an organic garden, planted over 300 trees, and promoted conservation as an art form.

Her work has been presented at international institutions and festivals and in numerous solo and group exhibitions, in Europe, Switzerland, Sarajevo, Russia, and Turkey, it is included in the collection of the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens (EMST), Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki (MOMus), Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève and events such as the Athens and Thessaloniki Biennials.

**In the present exhibition, *Olympus Offshore* (2025),** Lydia Dambassina approaches the untouchable grandeur of nature and its sovereignty, its exploitation, economic inequalities, freedom and confinement, nonconformity, memories, and her own personal experiences. The Mount Olympus dominates the scene – once home to the Olympian Gods, with their passions and human-like myths. Today, the twelve richest people on the planet have become the new gods, and nature, condemned to the omnipotence of money, is destroyed; economic inequalities collapse democracy, and the whole Earth spins without myths and without hope.

In her work ***The Greatest Desire***, a man of a certain age, with the strength of his youth, expresses the revolutionary longing for radical change – the hope for a new future.

Desire -whether for freedom, dignity, love, or survival- becomes a metaphor for resistance and hope in a fragile and divided world. The artist explains the video: *"In this difficult situation Greece finds itself in, I wanted to find out what the people of this country most desired. The answers were varied and all interesting. Of the 54 interviews I conducted, I only kept one, in which a man with the most dynamic and radical opinions states that "what I most desire is to see this civilization razed. " and the video ends with the following sentence: "Homeland melancholy after the 8 o'clock news".*

Lydia Dambassina always tries to weigh things, though always knowing that nothing is ever balanced. We see two scales in ***Untitled***: the first holds a glass sphere – like those of oracles – a globe without countries or borders, with credit bank cards; then comes the golden replica of a single human bone, with its specific weight, facing Mount Olympus, all set against a golden background.

The installation ***"Privilèges"*** brings together a photograph, a small white table, a stone, and a constellation of 266 keys and padlocks, shaping an environment with a ritualistic and deeply symbolic atmosphere.

The photograph portrays a female figure wrapped in a *zurolo-mantyà*—a garment reminiscent of psychiatric hospital uniforms—gazing toward the mountains. The image evokes both constraint and longing for escape: the mountains, majestic and unspoiled, stand as a refuge, mirroring isolation while also embodying freedom.

The keys refer to the many dwellings that have marked the artist's life across different countries. At the same time, the multitude of keys becomes an emblem of the precarious shelters that have hosted the artist: places that can be home and prison alike, memory and boundary, testimonies to the suffocating cycle of daily tasks and the madness they sometimes provoke.

Dambassina interprets the keys as a metaphor for contemporary mobility: for those privileged enough to travel without barriers, passports and house keys symbolize a form of freedom.

The title "***Privilèges***" thus opens a reflection on voluntary migration, identity, and the privileges of a globalized world.

Ultimately, the installation emerges as an intimate self-portrait of the artist, weaving together personal experiences of displacement and the emotional bonds with abandoned places.

The videos: "*The Invisible Balance*" (2012–2025), a perpetual-motion swing that, before the cockcrow, allows us to dream and reflect on our responsibilities; and « What Remains Is the Memory of a Bygone Era » in which the scene is illuminated by a video projection of 33 original slides entitled *Le Lac (The Lake)*, 1976–2009), an entirely autobiographical work, a hymn to life and freedom, nature, love, and coexistence.

## **Venue**

Muratcentoventidue-Artecontemporanea

Via G. Murat 122/b – Bari

## **Opening**

Saturday, October 11, 2025, 7:30 PM

## **Date**

October 11 – November 30, 2025

## **Opening Hours**

The exhibition will be open on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays by appointment

Information

3348714094 – 392.5985840

[http://info@muratcentoventidue.com](mailto:info@muratcentoventidue.com)

<http://www.muratcentoventidue.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/MuratcentoventidueArtecontemporanea>

[https://www.instagram.com/muratcentoventidue\\_bari](https://www.instagram.com/muratcentoventidue_bari)

## CV

**Lydia Dambassina** is a contemporary artist, (b.1951, Thessaloniki, Greece). At the age of fifteen, she moved to Lyon, where she completed her secondary education and since then has shared her life between Athens, Kea and Paris.

Her multidisciplinary practice spans painting, photography, installations, text-based works, and video projections. Since 2004, she has been developing a series of staged photographs combining images with textual fragments, often taken from Greek and French daily newspapers.

A recurring focus in her work is the critique of **economic inequality**, **religious absurdity**, and the broader crises of our time, all underpinned by a strong ecological awareness. Her professional background also includes research in psychiatric epidemiology and work as an art director in film production. She has participated in solo and group exhibitions in Europe, Switzerland, Sarajevo, Russia, and Turkey.

---

She has presented her work in **solo shows**, including the following: *Deadline*, Municipal Art Gallery, Chania, 2025· *Olympus Offshore*, Murat Centoventidue Arte Contemporanea, Bari, Italy, 2025· *Lorem Ipsum*, City of Athens Arts Centre, Athens, 2023; *Mors*, Museum Katsigra, Larissa, Greece, 2018; *Gini Coefficient*, Yeni Jami, Thessaloniki, Greece, 2016; *2100 mots d'amour*, *2500 mots d'amour*, Underground Ottoman Fountain of Splantzia, Chania, Greece, 2015; *Party's over-Starts over*, State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, 2012; *Party's over-Starts over*, Museum Alex Mylona, Athens, 2012; *What scratches the glass from the inside*, Ad Lib group dance, Festival of Athens, 2008; *Real Freedoms that people enjoy*, Nuit Blanche, eglise Saint Eustache, Paris, France, 2007; *Family story*, Gallery Eleni Koroneou, Athens, 2007; *Family story*, Hôpitaux Universitaires, Geneva, Switzerland, 2007; *Wonderful rooms*, Ad Lib group dance, Athens, 2006.

She has participated in **group exhibitions** (selection, 2007-2025): *a Cabinet of Curiosities*, MOMus, Museum Alex Mylona, 2025· *The goat, Mali Veni property*, MOMus-Museum of Contemporary Art, 2024· *Μεταπολίτευση*, Pireos 260, Festival Athens Epidaurus, 2024· *Herstories. Photographic Practices*, 1974-2024, MOMus – Thessaloniki Museum of Photography, 2024· *From now on*, MOMus-Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, 2024· *Natura Patiens*, Arts Centre of the City of Athens, 2024· *Flags*, Murat Centoventidue Arte Contemporanea, Bari, 2024· *Vanitas*, MOMus, Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, 2023· *The Butterfly Effect*, Mouzakis - Butterfly textile factory, Athens, Greece, 2023; *reality check chapter II: inner sanctum*, Psychiatric Hospital of Attica, Dafni, Athens, 2022; *Project Art Forest, L'arbre dans l'Art contemporain*, Le Grand Séchoir, Le Musée de l'eau et le Couvent des Carmes, France, 2022; *Radium Palace*, K-Gold Temporary Gallery, Ag.Paraskevi, Lesbos, Greece, 2021-22; *Peintures à l'eau*, Galerie Analixforever, Geneva, 2021; *Prasinoperama*, Museum of Fishing and Naval Art, Perama, Greece, 2021; *reality check*, Psychiatric Hospital of Attica, Dafni, Athens, 2021; *Looking Out Looking In*, Murat Centoventidue Arte Contemporanea, Bari, Italy, 2018; *New Acquisitions*, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, 2017; *Shared Sacred Sites*, Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, Yeni Mosque, parallel programme of Thessaloniki 6<sup>th</sup> Biennale, Thessaloniki, 2017; *Genii Loci, Greek art, 1930-2016*, Museum Manege, Saint Petersburg, Russia, 2016; *Tradition Reversal*, Collection of Thessaloniki State Museum of Contemporary Art / Collegium Artisticum, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014; *Unhappy ready-made*,

KUAD gallery, Istanbul, Turkey, 2014; Proposal for the Monument dedicated to the Holocaust Jewish victims in Athens, Jewish Museum of Greece, 2011; *Others*, a selection of works from the Biennials of art of Marrakech, Istanbul and Athens in Palermo, Museo Riso, Fondazione Puglisi Cosentino, Catania, 2010; *Heaven*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Athens Biennale, Athens, 2009; *Heterotopias*, 1<sup>st</sup> Thessaloniki Biennale, State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, 2007; *Places*, Benaki Museum, Athens, 2007.