

# Wyer Gallery

## Press Info

**Aliki Panagiotopoulou**

**The royal M**

**Solo Exhibition 5 July – 4 August 2007**

**Private View 4 July 18.30 – 20.30**

Wyer Gallery is delighted to announce Greek artist Aliki Panagiotopoulou's first solo show. The exhibition opens with a private view on Wednesday 4 July.

Panagiotopoulou addresses philosophical and cultural ideologies surrounding concepts of self. Her work deals with a series of eschatological anxieties to do with transitions or coming-of-age and alludes, in its subtext, to the inevitability of Falling (and failing) alongside alternating circuits of hope-despair. In the royal M, she continues her ongoing series of Definition Drawings, inspired by Nietzsche's idea of the revaluation of all values, and introduces new collaged and sculptural works constructed from a diverse range of objects including discarded bed frames and wooden doors, antique lamps or metal funnels, whose apparent and implied symbolism she juxtaposes and exploits. In both her installations and her finely made works in pencil on paper, Panagiotopoulou draws cathartically on very personal experience within a framework of traditional mythology, to achieve a unique rhetorical mode of expression.

Panagiotopoulou's drawings move through explicitly dark narratives, evoking melancholic or malign atmospheres. They depict dreamlike scenarios disparate in time, space and place, yet which build episodically until a new reality locks into place. In one recent work, she depicts the disembodied head of the mythological figure of the unicorn emerging from, or hovering surreally within, the midst of a dark forest. The reference to the medieval myth of the unicorn has become a recurring one in Panagiotopoulou's work and, through it, she draws on a historical weight of implications about complicity and victim-hood. Whilst utilised with a purposeful degree of suggestiveness and ambiguity, Panagiotopoulou's use of symbols and analogy seem to interpret, or perhaps warn against, a Fall from innocence into experience, guiltlessness into complicity and a cursed life universally delivered through coming-of-age.

Somewhat dominating this current exhibition is a theatrical trompe l'oeil of giant, hand drawn and appliquéd Classical arches. Dissecting the gallery across its mid-point, they establish a sense of threshold, integral to Panagiotopoulou's concern's about final events, and evoke a sham aura of reverence crucial to the farcicality of self-veneration indicated in the exhibition's title. The arches create a passage through the exhibition, helping to define a sense of relationship between the viewer, space and art object and opening up the gallery space into a semi-performative area. Just beyond this threshold, in a logical continuation of her investigations on paper, Panagiotopoulou has created an installation work that pushes the ideas and concepts of her drawings even further. Melancholia, suggests a Paradise Lost and a sorrow whose origin lies in the recognition of 'the blight man was born for.'

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Elsewhere in the exhibition, however, we find older characters seemingly inured to loss. In Eros for instance, an elderly couple is seen tumbling through space and time, dancing on a suspended platform whilst laughing maniacally, whether in mockery or joy it is unclear. Or, in her latest large-scale drawing entitled Self an older character is depicted coolly looking on, the drawing's harsh mechanical inferences perhaps denoting the self, inured to all loss.

Greek artist and Slade graduate Aliko Panagiotopoulou lives and works in Athens. Her exhibition with Wyer Gallery follows the success of her recent participation in Art Athina (Visual Kidnapping and The Contemporary Greek Scene, curated by Nadia Argyropoulou). She graduated from the Slade School of Art in 2005.

Ends

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Notes to Editors

1 Images and further information are available at [www.thewyergallery.co.uk](http://www.thewyergallery.co.uk) or on request.

2 The Wyer Gallery is located at 191 St John's Hill, Battersea, London, SW11 1TH.

3 Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday, 10 to 6 and Saturday 10 to 5, or other times by appointment.

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