

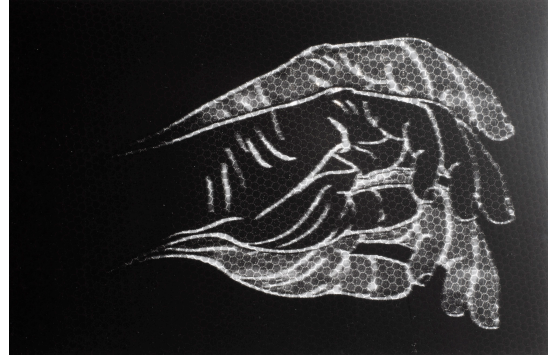
PRESS RELEASE

PARAESTHESIA ANTONIS PITTAS

11 March – 15 April 2023

Annet Gelink Gallery is pleased to announce *Paraesthesia*, Antonis Pittas' third solo exhibition at the gallery.

Paraesthesia, which literally translates to 'abnormal sensation', is a bodily sensation of numbness, tingling, and burning, usually felt in the hands, arms, legs, or feet. Pittas, who suffers from this himself, has connected it to the disorientation and numbness towards violence that are prevalent in today's image-saturated society.



Pittas is no stranger to using words and language in performative ways. In his research-based work, which is grounded in the relation between historiography and contemporary - and political issues, he explores topics such as modernist ideals, safety and control, economic crises, and acts of resistance, as well as violence and vandalism. He is known for creating context-sensitive, mixed media installations in which language plays a key role.

The central piece of the space is a large sculpture made of memory foam, which, upon closer inspection, reads the title of the exhibition. Several objects made from led are scattered on top, as though it were remnants of an explosion. They leave their physical mark on the sculpture, their shape getting imprinted onto the memory foam. As such, objects literally shape and hold memory. The softness of the memory foam creates a sense of safety and protection regarding these gleaming residues and enhances their fragile aspects.

The protective quality of the foam stands in relation to the multiple silkscreen prints that surround the sculpture, which depict abstracted images of explosions. Referencing modernist ideals, Pittas restricted his color palette to red, white, and blue. He made use of prismatic reflective foil, a material commonly used in road signage. The foil's reflective properties, when photographed with flash, invert the image that is visible to the naked eye. By activating the work, the visitor takes on an active and performative role and uncovers what was initially invisible. As such, Pittas' installation raises questions about exposure and concealment, violence and protection, interior and exterior.

In *The Bakery*, several works from Pittas' latest solo exhibition at Centraal Museum Utrecht, which was taken on by EMST, Athens, are on view. In 2019, coinciding with the yellow vests protest, Pittas did a residency at Van Doesburghuis, and studied the history and ideology of Theo Van Doesburg, De Stijl movement and Modernism. His final installation addressed the failure of modernity and collapse of the modernist ideals espoused by Van Doesburg, all set against the current political backdrop of mass protest. Now, in *Paraesthesia*, Pittas carefully blurs the line between the personal, political, and historic dimensions that are present in his oeuvre as well as the viewer's present.

Several works of the exhibition will travel to Japan in November for Antonis Pittas' first solo exhibition at Mujin-To.

Recent solo exhibitions have been held at EMST, Athens (2022); Centraal Museum, Utrecht (2021); Van Doesburg House, Paris (2020); Significant Other, Vienna (2019); Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam (2018); Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen (2017); Narrative Projects, London (2016); Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (2015); State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki (2015). Antonis has contributed to group exhibitions at Ronny Van de Velde Gallery, Antwerp (2020); State Hydrometeorological Institute, Skopje (2020); MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts, Thessaloniki (2019); Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje (2019); Manifesta 12, Palermo (2018); MACRO Museum Testaccio, Rome (2017); BAK, Utrecht (2017); Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2017); Onomatopee, Eindhoven (2016); Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow (2015); 5th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki (2015). Public commissions have been realised for Significant Other, Vienna (2019); Art in Space, Prague (2018); de Appel, Amsterdam (2018); Kunsthal Extra City, Antwerp (2017); and the 4th Athens Biennale (2013).