



## Press Release

### **Varvara Roza Galleries and The Blender Gallery Present Manolis Anastasakos 'Mythos', a Solo Exhibition by one of Greece's Most Renowned Contemporary Artists**

**Manolis Anastasakos set to take the London art world by storm with exhibition in the heart of St. James's, Mayfair**

**LONDON, 30 September 2021 – Varvara Roza Galleries** (based in London) and **The Blender Gallery** (based in Athens) are joining forces in the pursuit of one common goal and passion: to present Greece's most outstanding contemporary artists to the global art market and make a splash on the contemporary art scene as London prepares for Frieze week and auction season kicks off.

Varvara Roza Galleries Founder Varvara Roza, an academic, patron of the Greek arts and respected former politician of the Greek political scene, is on a mission to introduce contemporary Greek art to the London art scene and establish Greek artists on a global level, with an ongoing series of exhibitions and events showcasing approximately 60 pieces of artwork from five different artists. Featuring both emerging and established Greek talent, the series will be a three-month celebration of Greek art in the UK capital. Roza is teaming up with Blender Gallery Managing Director Jason Theophanidis, a bilingual British/Greek entrepreneur based in Athens, Greece.

The series of Varvara Roza Galleries/ Blender Gallery exhibitions will all take place at 8 Duke Street in the heart of London's St. James's, an epi-centre of the London cultural scene with its iconic auction houses Christie's and Sotheby's, Mayfair galleries and the Royal Academy of Arts all within a stone's throw of each other.

Launching the series of exhibitions showcasing leading Greek artists is **Manolis Anastasakos** with his hotly anticipated "**Mythos**" series. This solo exhibition of such an established figure of the contemporary Greek art scene will run from 1<sup>st</sup> of October to 21<sup>st</sup> of October, with an invitation only private view taking place on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October.

**Manolis Anastasakos** approaches worldly myths with consistency and artistic structure. He essentially presents the archetypal forces of imagery at a level of abstraction, as well as the spiritual liberation at a level of pluralism. They are myths found in the depths of existence, glorifying all sorts of multi-layered inner heterotopias. During the exhibition at 8 St. James's 15 pieces from Anastasakos's 'Mythos' series will be on display for the first time in the UK.



© Courtesy of Varvara Roza Galleries and the Blender Gallery / Manolis Anastasakos, Mount Meru, 160x160, Acrylic on canvas.

The 'Mythos' series is a reflection of our world and our inner selves, seen through the prism of mankind's epic tales, since the beginning of time and across the globe. Anastasakos has selected myths from the Near East, Egypt, China and of course Greece. Christian iconography is also part of this work. Each myth is depicted in detailed design, indulging the viewer in a game of motifs and hidden meanings. He started producing these art works in 2014 and continues until today. He regards this work as the epitome of a philosophical quest as an artist and a human being, meaning that the research for it has been undergoing for much longer.

The 'Mythos' series was first presented in Greece in October and November 2020 by Varvararoza Galleries and The Blender Gallery.

### **'Mythos' by Manolis Anastasakos**

Manolis Anastasakos approaches worldly myths with consistency and artistic structure in his work. He essentially presents the archetypal forces of imagery at a level of abstraction, as well as the spiritual liberation at a level of pluralism. They are myths found in the depths of existence, glorifying all sorts of multi-layered inner heterotopias.

The Mythos series is a general reflection of our world, shaped by the stories of mankind throughout time, and at the same time a specific mirror of the self.

As the viewer – receiver analyses the works using sensory and spiritual cues, their details embellish the original image of the world. Man is made of stories and experiences throughout time. In Anastasakos work, we seek those stories in their most ancient form. A fresh, radical, contemporary vocabulary of art is embedded in his work.

His work is a bold approach that brings together what we perceived up until now as the two disparate ends of art. Abstraction and minimalism are combined with baroque elements and pluralism, in compositions of mythical depth. Each of these works of art, viewed merely as objects, are handled by the artist with freedom and at the same time with ascetic abstinence, therefore preserving a sense of higher, sacred struggle. The Mythos series, allows to the viewer, to redefine the way in which he interprets a work of art. These works become the incentive to merge archetypal stories with the nowness, in a fresh and artistic way. They invite our gaze and our spirit to take a journey in an artistic and almost Mythical sacred place.

The Mythos series is a maze-like straight line, shaped from what we all call effortlessly “life”. It induces the viewer, through the time of the artwork’s viewing, into a new vocabulary of art and worldly myths. Through distance, analysis and critical thinking undertaken by each viewer, the work reveals its hidden sides and its true nature, which eventually reflect the nature of the viewer himself.

**Manolis Anastasakos** commented:

*“We often confirm in a hurry our knowledge of a subject at the same time as we talk about it. The truth, however, can be found in the inner distance we have from the subject and the knowledge we had gained as we approached it in the past. Essential knowledge and awareness of a subject is always gained through concentration and critical thinking. The difference of the distance from a subject allows us to have a clear, distinct and eloquent image.”*

*I chose the theme of Myths because by their very nature these primitive stories are slowly revealing themselves to the viewer-receiver, and they have multi-level reading. They are slowly unfolding as you explore them, and your understanding of them is interwoven with your time and concentration on them. This is how these artworks reveal their qualities to the viewer. Through the distance and concentration of analysis and critical thinking of the individual concerned, the work reveals its hidden aspects and displays its true nature. Which ultimately reflects the nature of the viewer itself. Our present days have few heroes and definitely have no Myths analogous to those that humanity has given us. These artworks seem to be subtle and simple images from the viewer's distance to them, but this results in an intense pluralism. My ‘Mythos’ series appears full of information that has no specific hidden story in the eyes of the uninitiated, but contains within it humanity’s vanity, love and the ambition of human nature. The ‘Mythos’ series communicates in visual terms the stories of human nature that have inspired us throughout time, influencing what we are today and at the same time, reminding us through its aesthetic proposition what human creativity can do.”*

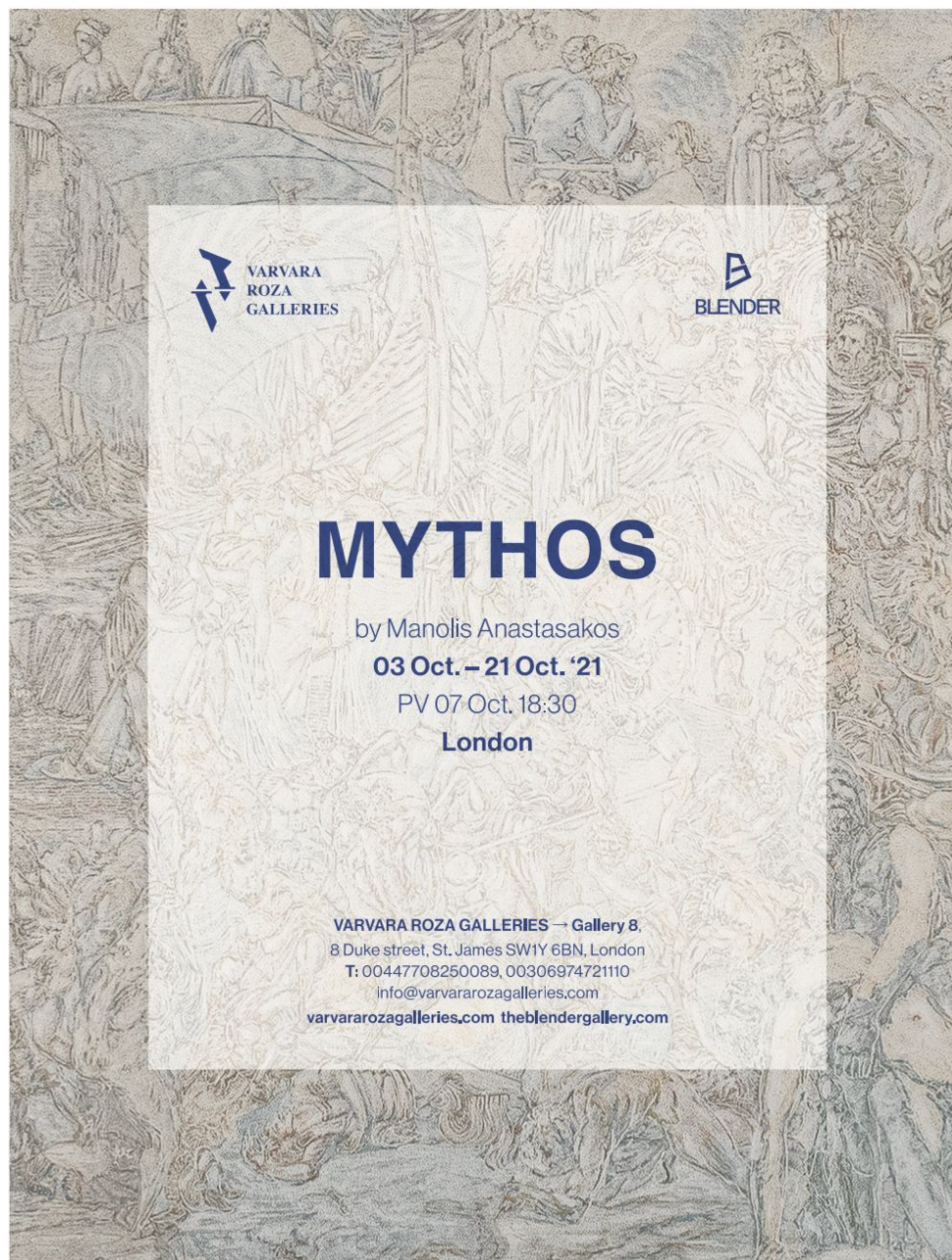
**Varvara Roza** spoke of her desire to introduce some of the most exciting Greek contemporary artists to the London art scene:

*“London retains a strong infrastructure and reputation as a global hub for fine art. It is a multi-national city with artists and art dealers from all over the world visiting to experience and share in its rich cultural heritage.”*



*It has always been and still is one of the most important art centres and a breeding ground for artists to exhibit, grow and find an international audience. The venue for the Varvara Roza Galleries/ Blender Gallery exhibition programme of Greek artists at 8 Duke Street in St James's, the heart of London's Mayfair art district, offers a prime location to give the contemporary Greek art the platform it deserves. The gallery is a versatile space, perfect for promoting a variety of different artists and hosting the different sizes of artwork in our exhibition series. When we unveil the beautiful 'Mythos' works of Manolis Anastasakos at 8 Duke Street this October, the heart of contemporary Greek art can beat loudly in London."*

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## NOTES TO EDITORS:

### ABOUT VARVARA ROZA:

**Varvara Roza** is the owner and Managing Director of **Varvara Roza Galleries**.

Varvara has a track record of organising cultural events on a large-scale not only in Greece but also in London, Paris, Berlin and the rest of Europe. Being a successful businesswoman in the energy industry and former politician in her home country, Greece, she always had a love for contemporary art, and has been collecting for over 20 years. She is passionately combining the two great loves of her life: her political and entrepreneurial life in Greece with her enduring love for art and its evolution. In doing so, she has decided to strongly support and promote Greek Art in London. London is one of the most important art centres in the world, a place that to a large extent acts as a barometer for the global art market. Through her extensive experience working in the cultural sector, she introduces some of the brightest protagonists of Greek Art to the London art market. Varvara Roza Galleries aims to promote and establish Greek Art in the UK and European market.

Varvara Roza says: *"Greece was the birthplace of wondrous works of art. Modern Greece has a thriving artistic community. This generation's art must be promoted and become internationally known."*

### ABOUT JASON THEOPHANIDIS:

**Jason Theophanidis**, a bilingual British/Greek entrepreneur living in Athens Greece, is the owner and Managing Director of **The Blender Gallery**, based in Athens Riviera. With a background in 2D design, Theophanidis worked as an artist, exhibiting in London and Athens, which gave him a unique insight into the needs and requirements of artists and collectors alike. Having truly lived both sides of the industry, and with a deep passion for art, he soon realised that he could do so much more for the industry by helping and managing other artists, which led to him opening The Blender Gallery. Since 2012 he has been working with his team to promote upcoming artists in Greece and abroad, as well as giving established artists a modern space in which to showcase their artwork. Because of his Greek-British heritage and a wanderlust that saw him travel the world, he has managed to bring a multitude of new ideas and concepts to 'The Blender Gallery' that set it apart from other galleries in Greece.

The Blender Gallery is a 400 m<sup>2</sup> state of the art modern gallery, constantly evolving and situated in Southern Athens. Jason specifically designed the gallery to be incredibly versatile in order to meet all artist requirements. The concept for The Blender Gallery was born when Jason was working as a graphic designer and artist in a space shared with other creative individuals that they affectionately referred to as 'the Blender', due to their different disciplines. Jason believes that all creative forms of expression are art forms, and this concept remains strong within the ethos of the gallery today, establishing 'The Blender Gallery' as one of the leading galleries in Athens.

## **ABOUT THE VARVARA ROZA GALLERIES AND BLENDER GALLERY PARTNERSHIP:**

For Varvara Roza Galleries and The Blender Gallery, the reason for choosing Greek artists is obvious: Greece has always been the birthplace of wondrous works of art. Greek art is hugely significant and important throughout history for both Greeks and rest of the world. Modern Greece has a thriving artistic community. This generation's art must be promoted and become internationally known.

In 2019, Jason Theophanidis and Varvara Roza formed a partnership. Sharing the vision to promote Greek artists, together they create opportunities for the most outstanding artists of the Greek contemporary art scene to gain the recognition they deserve, whilst in tandem introducing artists from abroad to the Greek public and collectors. With Jason being British based in Athens, and Varvara being a Greek based in London, they are uniquely positioned to turn this vision into reality, as they combine their networks to ensure that their services of art dealing, curating and marketing across Europe are of the highest level of excellence and integrity.

Despite their plans being delayed due to the pandemic, they used this global turn of events to their advantage to promote the artists privately, to seal some sales prior to the exhibitions, and to further develop their strategy, so that their investment in these exceptional artists is as effective as possible. As both Jason and Varvara specialise in contemporary art, together they have already discovered rare talent of unique cultural relevance and diversity. Dedicated to making contemporary Greek art globally accessible, they have created a long-term strategy of careful steps by placing value in quality not quantity. Always putting faith in personal contacts and teamwork, they stand beside their artists and not opposite them, conversing and listening to their needs while giving them space to evolve. They also invest in building strong relationships with their clients and collectors, truly acting to the best of their interests and advising them accordingly.

### **Gallery location:**

Gallery 8, 8 Duke Street St James's, London SW1Y 6BN, UK

### **Opening Hours:**

Monday to Sunday 10:00am-6:00pm

### **Contact Details**

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