



## Contemporary Affairs of the Art with Art Athina

Photo: Stefanos Samios / Courtesy of Art Athina

Rub shoulders with the crème de la crème of the Athens art crowd, as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Art Athina, the country's biggest contemporary art fair, and interview some of the city's key gallery owners.

By Paul Pervanas



**Mrs Marina Vranopoulou.**

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

## **Marina Vranopoulou**

Dio Horia Gallery

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**If Athens were a work of art, what kind of art would it be?**

It would be an embroidery piece by The Callas with bright pop-folk colours, crafted by their mother and aunt, with references to Athens' history. An aesthetic that defines their work.

**Is graffiti an art form? What is your favourite mural in Athens?**

My favourite mural is one of the latest I've stumbled upon during my Athens strolls; "The Kiss" by Ilias Papailiakis at Avdi Square. The very definition of when graffiti becomes an art form.

**Favourite past-meets-present corner in the city?**

Not a corner, but a view; that of Athens from atop Acropolis hill. Ancient monuments, decrepit houses, tv antennas and solar water heaters, cars and pedestrians, blending into the melting pot that is Athens.

**How has the local art scene evolved during the last 30 years of Art Athina?**

Athens has definitely put itself on the art world map during the last decades, especially after Documenta 14 back in 2017. A sort of renaissance is taking place, as art is exhibited in daring new locations, younger curators are stepping forward with notable results, and the city's art map is being reshuffled.

**Where is your gallery located? Why choose this neighbourhood?**

In 2022 we moved Dio Horia to the Acropolis area, just a stone's throw from the Acropolis Museum, in a Late Antiquity villa urbana of the 4th century CE. The new space carries a deeply inspiring blend of ancient and contemporary, and along with the ever-present energy of the goddess Athena it makes for an ideal setting.

**What would you say is the most inspiring thing about Athens?**

Its people. The good ones, the bad ones, the typical Athenian characters, the freshly made locals and the cheerful travellers.

**Any secret hangout spots you're willing to share?**

I love the unpretentious beauty and relaxed setting of Okeanida beach in Vouliagmeni. It's a year-round favourite, but most especially during winter.

**What is your most memorable Art Athina moment that comes to mind?**

My favourite Art Athina edition was in 2022. After two years of lockdowns people were once again queueing up for contemporary art. The mood in Zappeion was loose and festive, it felt like hope was back on track.

**What's the most unusual or creative use of art that you've come across in everyday life in Athens?**

Witnessing children's art outside of a school's setting.