

The Thief of Light

Nakis Panayotidis, a Complete

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The raised fist: Nakis Panayotidis's art is unique in many ways; it cannot be pinned to individual movements. There is no continuously followed theme or consistently practiced style, no specific technique or material that has been decisive for this artist. He remains open to all options when it comes to realizing an idea that is new and necessary for him: all styles, all materials, all techniques are at his disposal. As an artist, he prefers to travel without luggage. He likes to take his materials and inspiration playfully from the immediate surroundings in which he finds himself. A tireless improviser, he also always finds everything that is technically necessary to realize his visions. He orients himself anew every time. He is comfortable using almost every language and uses text to express himself. He does not force language into his personal style but allows it to roam freely. His art repeatedly astounds with its element of unpredictability, even where coherent work groups are concerned. The relationship between the drawings, photographic works, installations, neon works, bronze statues, and installations can seldom be understood only by looking at it: the content and meaning of the works reveal themselves after a deeper reflection on the connections. For Panayotidis, everything revolves around the basic questions of human existence. He begins with what is at hand; he always immediately recognizes the essential; he reacts directly to what he confronts; he never hesitates; he means what he says; he always chooses the most simple and rash form of realization; he is a fighter, yet never aggressive; he is gripping; he takes what he needs; he is extroverted, curious, approaches his opponents, laughs often, and underscores his decisiveness by showing his fist—yet not to threaten or to hit with. The raised fist is for him a gesture of security, a sign of freedom, of self-determination, and of happiness. Indeed, to show the fist also means, I take what I am entitled to, or in the artist's words, "I came to steal so as to create [...]"¹

Arte povera in Switzerland: Greek by birth and Swiss by choice, Nakis Panayotidis is likely the most important arte povera artist in Switzerland. Perhaps it is a problem of mentality that Swiss art has not produced artists who could be considered as direct counterparts to the Italian arte povera. The young Swiss artists who reacted to the minimalism of the 1960s had certain prerequisites and knowledge. They were familiar with concrete art, and they certainly did not travel to Italy for study purposes. Back then, the mecca of the avant-gardists was New York; whoever received a travel grant went there. The Swiss who had been occupied with the minimalism and conceptualism of the 1960s were, with the exception of Not Vital from the Lower Engadine, systematists (Ingeborg Lüscher, Ueli Berger, Flavio Paolucci, Gianfredo Camesi); technically perfect craftsmanship was a given for them (Matias Spescha, Markus Raetz); they took up where the historical greats of Swiss art such as Ferdinand Hodler left off (Helmut Federle) or celebrated the elementary as a distinguishing mark (Daniel Spoerri). These artists reflect the archaic intellectually, or they use materials to stage it. For all of them the confrontation with minimalism and conceptualism leads to the discovery of one new expressive form and a new language derived from this which they thus use consistently. Nakis Panayotidis also sought the archaic, the basic form behind the varying appearances, the lowest common denominator for each of his artistic communiqués. Yet, because he also responded to the conditions with each new work, the archaic for him assumes a different shape every time. And, different from many of his Swiss colleagues, the material and its processing need not be automatically archaic, i.e. raw and primitive, as in the cave paintings of early humankind. The archaic can manifest for him in the traditional materials of bronze, stone, and glass, as with Mario Merz and Luciano Fabro for example, as well as in "foreign" and art-historically unencumbered materials such as lead, wire, neon, or discarded textiles. He prefers to play with *objets trouvés*, which he presents as ready-mades or works into new contexts. And again and again at exhibitions he shows not only

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works that are complete in themselves, but he also transforms profane functional spaces with minimal interventions into powerfully artistic spaces with a great degree of suggestiveness. In Switzerland, apart from Nakis Panayotidis's work, this level of diversity can only be found with Not Vital. Both artists have in common, without knowing each other, their close connection to Italy and to arte povera.²

Greece—Italy: In 1966, the nineteen-year-old Nakis Panayotidis studied architecture in Turin. He came in close contact with Mario and Marisa Merz and arte povera; in 1967 he was in Rome at the Accademia di Belle Arti. His contacts with Jannis Kounellis, also Greek, and with Alighiero Boetti became important. Panayotidis, without ever joining the group, has always remained in a friendly dialogue with the arte povera artists.³ Panayotidis also shares with them the blurring and suspension of the border between artwork and profane reality. His works are always arranged in such a way that in the image that he gives of an object or a landscape, the before and after can be imagined as well. That everything is in a permanent state of change is a central concern of his art. He is just as familiar with classical mythology as with the contemporary world, which is practically unique in his generation. This is due to the fact that he knows the mythical landscapes not only from literary sources but also from the places that he has lived in, grown up in as a child, and that he still seeks out each year.

The sea: "My element is the sea [...]," the artist wrote in his diary.⁴ The sea is a leitmotif in Nakis Panayotidis's art: not as an abstraction, like the view along the coasts of the New World out to the limitless water deserts of the Atlantic or Pacific, but rather as a trusted companion that the artist has known since his childhood. He feels the sea spray on his face, lives with it, boats on it, swims in it, loves its scent; its rhythm pulses in him. It is the sea, whose black waves break on the mossy walls of the port in Piraeus. It is the shimmering blue at dusk that the view takes in from the coastal cliffs of Serifos without dissolving into the abyss. The sea, which the artist knows like his own body, is a basic requirement of his physical and psychological existence. It belongs to him so much that, like one's own hand, it is only perceived if he consciously confronts it. Panayotidis's sea is the Aegean, and it is never endless. It has been sailed since mythical times. It connects an immensely multifarious world of islands. This artist also experiences his sea directly as a bridge to other times, as a site where past and future meet with the present and myths permanently win new forms. The experience of the sea that carries over to his art is that of permanent movement and change. His art is never static; it always concerns the fleeting takes of the turning moment, in which opposites persist in the balance thereof: ebb and flow, inand exhale, cast and fall, day and night, love and hate, life and death.

Realism: Panayotidis loves the present in which he lives, although the mythology and art of the antique period belong to his life like the sea and Agnès and Anastasia Artemis, his wife and his daughter. As an artist he never experiences his present as negative; he does not long for a way out of it into an arcadian past. Greek antiquity as a lost power, beauty, and ideality is not his topic. Not the fragment of an accomplished marble object, not an elaborate canon are interesting to him, but rather the flowing "pre-iconographic condition,"⁵ from which these creations were once able to emerge. Panayotidis is always a realist; he begins solely from that which he sees before him. Only that counts. He does not wake the dead. He does not clone ruins. His point of departure is whatever is at hand; that which all others could also see at the given place. Yet Panayotidis's photographs, paper works, objects, and installations are more than mere images. Surfaces often lie. Horrors lie behind aesthetic façades. A realist does more than merely reproduce the original photographically. Reality never has only one side. "Darkness and luminosity, inseparably intertwined as two sides of one coin: reality."⁶

Existence and genius loci: Panayotidis reflects in his objects, photographic installations, paintings, and neon works, the meaning, value, and truth of what he sees. He makes the surface penetrable. He allows the inner structure, the hidden content, the before and after to come through. It is the goal of his art to bring out, in the momentary random image, that which goes beyond the moment to be permanently present as well: in his orchestrated body fragments, objects of remembrance, and power symbols, in the sea landscapes and ruins of the industrial era, the conditions of human existence become apparent in the genius loci. Additionally, Panayotidis has developed subversive strategies to open and expand reality; real steam transforms his objects into flighty phantoms; behind photographs and visual drawings, hidden neon tubes dematerialize realistic images into magical light appearances, poured tar solidified into waves, allow his paper works to swell threateningly; upside-down neon scripts create an air of mystery. To stage such excerpts of reality so that their temporal fixation becomes permeable is the objective of these interventions.

Everything flows: The rhythm of the sea was, has always been, will always be. Eternal repetition, yet never the same; each time unique yet never reproducible. Heraclitus's short phrase, "everything flows" is knowledge that Nakis Panayotidis constantly formulates anew for our time. Although in no way does it seem difficult for him to create a current of new forms and themes, the recombination of older works which he understands as a fundamental vocabulary is one of his most central strategies. For each new constellation brings further realizations. With this he follows a common practice from 1960s minimalism; one recalls Sol LeWitt's grids or Mario Merz's igloos. As in each of his earlier exhibitions, the artist gains new insight also with his 2014 show at the Kunstmuseum Bern through the site-specific combination of earlier works. He synthesizes the installation *Ladro di luce* (installation 2014, p. 185), that he had produced in 2005 for the eponymous exhibition at State Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki,⁷ combined with the works from Palazzina dei Giardini in Modena in 2012. In Modena, Panayotidis mainly united works from 2010 and 2011 into an installative cosmos of his ideas, whereby he also integrated some early works on paper from the 1980s in order to show the continuity of his work. In the longitudinally angled rooms of the pavilion the newly produced objects stood at the center, for example *Nasconditi sapere*, 2011 (p. 61), *Libertà nascosta*, 2012 (p. 77), *Nasconditi corpo*, 2011–2012 (p. 73), *La rivincita degli zingari*, 2011 (p. 81), and *Kabul, il racconto di un sogno*, 2003–2012 (p. 75). Combined with these were photographic works of river views from Bern and images of the sea (among these, *Con lo sguardo del nomade*, 2009 [p. 107], and *Pensato oltre III*, 2011 [p. 111]), also combined with images of ruins from Greece (among these, *L'ombra fuggitiva della memoria*, 2009 [p. 159], and *L'altra luce*, 2009 [p. 133]). Brought together in a unified way, these spatial elements were symmetrically staged on frieze-height with a new, four-part work with the Greek inscriptions ΔΟΞΑ, ΤΙΜΗ, ΑΞΙΑ, ΑΓΩΝ (battle, price, value, fame; *Katharsis I*, 2012 [p. 83], and *Katharsis II*, 2012 [p. 85]). The exhibition in Modena thus transported the message that we repeatedly confront the same basic existential questions in our lives and that these questions will be repeatedly posed and answered anew in the course of our lives.

Floating fist: In Bern on the other hand, the same mysterious existential models are presented. The "floating fists,"⁸ as bronze casts of the artist's hand, are directly applied to the wall so that the impression is created that someone extend them through a hole in the wall. They clench neon tubes that throw blue and red reflections onto the wall and cast light into the room at the same time. In the installation in Thessaloniki and La Spezia the fragile, existential models are confronted with the rational unambiguity of programmatic legal text. The fragility of the individual that eludes all clear form is questioned by the cold, sober neon lettering; it can, however, with the power of its suggestive emotionality, prevail. The artist always counters a message with an opposing one; none of his theses remain without antitheses. His art is concerned with questions of balance. A message central to his work is that this balance is always uncertain. In the Bern exhibition the installation also opened up other facets of its unfathomable complexity: the light, which shines into the room from the tube,

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does not convey a direct message such as the neon words. The title *Ladro di luce* plays on the figure of Prometheus. He raised the withered stalk of a giant fennel into the sky and lit it on Helios's sun chariot which was passing by. The fire thus stolen from the gods by Prometheus for humanity is grasped in the fist of the artist. He usurped it from Prometheus; he is the thief who robs the thief and thus passes the light on. The artist as lightbringer enables knowledge of the great questions of existence—this is the role in which Panayotidis sees himself. The places and motives which Panayotidis unifies in his entire installation, as well as realizing the integrated media and materials, stretch across enormous intellectual and historical polarities. The interplay of the individual positions produces a scintillating firmament, in which as a superimposed constellation the artist's message is revealed: to recognize this ultra-modern message, one must be familiar with the individual works.

Concept and chaos: Panayotidis's earliest works shown in the exhibition are beholden to the strict spirit of minimal art. Owing to it is the form of the square as well as the neutral, trade-standard wooden dowels which he sticks, like toothpicks, at an angle into the canvas to create the form of a square (pp. 230–245). Similar to Fred Sandback in his spatial installations he forms diagonal connecting lines within the square which at the same time delineate subareas. Since the wooden dowels are colored differently according to the subareas, the square breaks down into same-sized yet varied triangles. The dowels cast real shadows and others the artist has applied in color. With only a few interventions Panayotidis radically questions the stereotypical value-equality in the axiomatic basic forms of minimal art. The square motif set onto the canvas at an angle floats on the light ground seemingly without orientation; the identical subareas are individualized through minimal applications of color; real and painted shadows blur perception. With a minimum of compositional intrusions, Panayotidis removes the perpendicular from minimal art; with the "poor" material of the trivial wooden dowels, he tricks our perception—concept and chaos despite systemization and precision.

Emblem and symbolism: The early paper works are not drawings but instead collages of the "poor" materials of wrapping paper and tar, which point to Panayotidis's roots in *arte povera*. The motifs in the paper works *Illuminare*, 1986 (p. 229), *Luce*, *La mia Africa*, and *L'Oriente*, all from 1987 (pp. 227, 213, and 217), bespeak programmatically the antithetical arc of suspense which Panayotidis constructs with his visual cosmos. Light bulbs and sickles are emblems of politics and consumerist society in the twentieth century which Andy Warhol⁹ and Jasper Johns¹⁰ reflected artistically with pop art. The two works *La mia Africa* and *L'Oriente* likewise reproduce object forms— the outline of the continent of Africa and a form covered in a burka. These forms are, without making iconographic references to advertising language of the twentieth century, realizations of archaic symbols. They refer above all in their material realization to Mario Merz's "prehistoric" symbolic language of the igloo and spiral forms, without being quotations thereof. The sovereign melding of *arte povera* that rekindles the prehistoric, primal conditions and the anonymous mass-medial language of pop art lend the four paper works their suggestive power of expression and originality.

Tar and lead: The two light-themed works, *Illuminare* and *Luce*, each show a naked light bulb hanging from a cable in the image field. In the first image it becomes clear at the edges of the light bulb, that the original white light source has been extinguished by the black tar. In the second work, the light bulb is constructed of lead-gray painted paper, and this form is then glued onto packaging paper. The tar bulb sends out ringlets of white light rays, like in a comic illustration; the lead bulb on the other hand radiates yellow light. In both works the light is covered up as if in an eclipse. The light sources are covered not only with lead or tar; their power to radiate is further limited by obstructive objects—the lead bulb by a black tar sickle, the tar bulb through a lead-colored meteorite or atomic mushroom cloud that drives into the image from the right. The tar and lead bulbs do not emit light. They are as dead as extinguished planets. Seemingly responsible for this are the obstructive objects that intrude in the other material's color. The two works, created shortly before the fall of the Iron

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Curtain, bring succinctly to a point the fixation with and encrustation in political thought which could not be permeated by the light of reason. The anarchist Panayotidis, who in 1968 came to Bern to visit Mikhail Bakunins's grave at the Bremgarten Cemetery and who met his wife Agnès here and later became a resident of Bern,¹¹ does not however stage a static balance of the horror. The lead and tar bulbs are on a closer view not completely in the perpendicular; they deviate from their fixed positions and push gently in the directions of the obstructions. What set them into motion? It is the light that falls from outside onto the pastose-sticky tar and breaks at the fault line. The light bulb thus brought into oscillation suggests the smashing of the emblems. Panayotidis, in his subversive-ironic arte povera collages, uses the light bulb as a wrecking ball.

Black that breathes: The two works on paper *La mia Africa* and *L'Oriente* show, in contrast to the technical parameters of light bulbs and sickles in *Illuminare* and *Luce*, bodies defined by irregularorganic elements. In the first, the crude tar form based on the outline of Africa balances on the tip, respectively, the Cape of Good Hope. In the second, a likewise chapped tar shape is constructed as a massive spear-point, which according to the title *L'Oriente* can be interpreted as a woman in a burka with arms touching her body. Behind the burka wearer, the shapes of two additional covered bodies are visible. *La mia Africa* is surrounded by gray which casts glistening wave crests. These recall much more the rifts that separate the continents than the steady motion of the sea. These rift lines are present in a more subtle form in the burka shapes in the background of *L'Oriente*. In each of these works, the black forms do cover any light. The black and gray that is cast in ridges reflects light rather on the borders and animates the relief form as a sizzling wave-like movement. The two forms, *Africa* and *Oriente*, appear to breathe without appearing threatening. Conflicts are present only in those areas where black and gray swallow sources of light. For the artist, light creates movement; movement suggests life and change; change motivates knowledge. The chief attraction of the covered light bulbs consists in the formation of light rays on their surfaces which suggest movement and which give the observer impulses in the recognition process.

Photo works: For Nakis Panayotidis, light is more than mere illumination that first makes the objects in a room visible. Light has its own value for him. By allowing the illumination to reflect on the fractured surfaces and therefore to flow, or by integrating neon tubes into his works, light is released from its purely functional meaning to become the artistic agent itself. In the photographic works, similar to Baroque paintings of saints, illumination produces hyper realistic light characteristics. These bring a temporal dimension to photography's static momentary immobilization, yet it is clear to see that the external light penetrates the dark image spaces and dramatically brightens them. Panayotidis occasionally installs neon tubes in metal channels over the upper image border, which, being partially concealed by black paint, emit a magical flood of light over the surface of the image. In other cases, these light sources that are typical of our time remain hidden behind the image surface, similar to Romantic dioramas. At the Kunstmuseum Bern, there is an early diorama by Franz Niklaus König, who with his over one hundred poster images showed the main attractions of Switzerland to paying tourists.¹² The light behind the poster image brightened according to its translucence. In this way König let the moon in a painted night sky, shine as a real light into the darkened gallery. Panayotidis pursues other goals when, in an analogous fashion, he has neon light flood through light-sensitive canvases and worked-over photographs. This light reveals, often on one and the same image, opposing manifestations—highly contrasted on the one hand, blurred on the other. It is not the illusion of reality that this artist hopes to achieve, but rather an unreal heightening of photographically mirrored landscapes and premodern factory buildings. This expansion of the momentary impression lends the photographs something dreamily foreign. The frozen time expands into limitlessness. In view of a temporally exact placement, as indicated by specific characteristics, the photographic shot makes use of lighting to construct immensely distancing spans of time. It is as if one looks back from a far-removed future onto our present.

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Through this, the observer's own present is transformed into a mythical place in the past. This collapsing of time upon itself, encompassing the beginning and end of a development, is one of Panayotidis's declared goals: "If a work of art characterises an era, then this work is incomplete. A work of art spans all eras."¹³

Hallucinatory waking dreams: It is not the heroic ruins of classical Greek antiquity that pull the artist Panayotidis in but rather the industrial fields of the urban outskirts and the zones that nature has again taken over. He focuses on details such as those in *L'altra luce* and *Basso ostinato II*, both 2009 (pp. 133 and 137), or he gives panorama-like insights into labyrinthian halls, such as those in *L'ombra fuggitiva della memoria*, 2009 (p. 159), or *La verità e il niente*, 2010 (p. 135). *L'altra luce* is augmented with neon lighting in a black metal channel placed above the actual image. In this, the real neon tube is painted black like the painted light bulbs of the early drawings. Only the hidden back of the tubes is left unpainted and sheds indirect light on the drawing and painting below which shows a wall section with four windowless openings in black. Parallel to the neon zone, across which iron wire is stretched, a platform with demolished iron railing runs in front of the upper row of windows. The discrepancy between the real iron wires and the drawn iron railing repeats itself between the neon tubes, indirectly illuminating the image and the twilight in which the wall appears in the photograph and drawing. Also the black-painted visible side of the neon tubes, through which nevertheless the smallest light particles flow, is in analogous interplay with the window openings of the wall section, painted in black. The platform offers no stability; the black, barricaded openings cannot be entered. The observer hangs in the empty space in front of a wall section without any limitation. The light which acts in the image transforms the imaginary scene restrictively into a hallucinatory waking dream, from which there is no awaking. *La verità e il niente* shows an industrial hall with a diagonally placed roof. This mostly empty warehouse, partially open to the back and side, lies in a dusty haze. Emerging threateningly from the misty atmosphere are a tank and a huge tub. The scene tips into the uncanny through the glittering (neon-)light that pushes through the openings in the building—at the same time, however, also comes from outside of the image world—like a shrill cry into the factory's empty space. The abrupt transitions between brightness and darkness, light and shadow, fog and clarity, transform the architecture, which is in fact simple, into a threatening spatial labyrinth. With this, Panayotidis has created an impressive equivalent to Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Carceri*, 1745–1750.

Simultaneity: In the landscape and sea images *Con lo sguardo del nomade*, 2009 (p. 107), and *Pensato oltre III*, 2011 (p. 111), and in the view of a wooded path along the Aare in Bern, *Costretto a condurvi II*, 2010 (p. 115), the focus is on the transitions into natural open space. In that the horizon line of the sea landscape or the vanishing line in the forest image is brought to a shimmer through the neon source applied behind the image, the central perspective of the image's composition is jarring. Along with the temporal polarity that opens up in Panayotidis's light pictures—the industrial present and the mythical cavern—there is also a spatial element: the observer is at the edge of the sea or at the beginning of the path and, at the same time, as if struck by lightning from the furthest distance. These experiences of coincidence suspend the borders of space and time and, as in a classical Greek oracle, bring about a comprehensive simultaneity.

Writing on the wall: For objects in art, blurriness is not an issue. The readymade, repurposed as an everyday object, remains one even if it changes its meaning. Panayotidis presents found objects in the same way as his own prepared casts of hands and feet, such that their contours dissolve into the mist before our eyes. That which he lets emerge through the external light source the sculptor achieves by means of a clever intervention: he creates steam which envelopes the objects makes them invisible to us. In the circles of arte povera and conceptual art, it was Joseph Beuys, who in 1984 with his work *Thermisch-plastisches Urmeter* was probably the first to create a steam installation and with this to actually apply his concept of sculpture as the transformation of aggregate

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conditions.¹⁴ While Beuys elevated the steam itself to an object of creation, Panayotidis uses it to question his own sculptural installation. Out of the open drawer of a children's table from a second-hand store—the work is titled *Nasconditi sapere*, 2011 (p. 61)—steam rises. This also extinguishes the words written in Greek letters on the ground, *Nasconditi sapere* (hidden knowledge). Because the steam flow is interrupted for two minutes every five minutes, the writing becomes legible in an established rhythm before it begins to fade from view once again. The light bulbs, which have been smashed into pieces on the small table, lend the installation a dimension of violence and destruction. The concealed message in the black drawer from which the fog rises is writing on the wall, as described in the Book of Daniel from the Old Testament (Dan 5.1). The script, present, then gone from view is a reference to King Belshazzar's ridicule of God that leads to the destruction of Babylon, while the smashed light can be discerned as hubris on which the writing on the wall is based. Yet there are no indications that this interpretation is intended by the artist. Panayotidis does not create image puzzles that require deciphering. His art is always an oracle, like the disturbing child cages of Louise Bourgeois.¹⁵

Hands and feet: Panayotidis's installations are as mysterious as the expression of the sphinx—for example the axe with the softened handle of light (*La rinvicita degli zingari*, 2011 [p. 81]), the backlit white shirt in the glass case (*Nasconditi corpo*, 2011–2012 [p. 73]), the notes pinned with glass shards onto a canvas covered with glass (*Because the Poem*, 2013 [p. 57]), and *KABUL, il racconto di un sogno*, 2003–2012 (p. 75), a melancholy homage to friend Alighiero Boetti, who commissioned his rugs to be woven in this place. The most complex are the installations prepared from the bronze casts of his feet and hands. *Corpo-natura*, 2012 (p. 71), shows the crossed fists of the artist in a case of plexiglass from which steam rises. The fists lie on a white bed of paraffin which is studded with dried black cloves. One cannot smell the cloves, yet one still senses their scent—in the way that the mere thought of a good meal causes one's mouth to water. The fists are presented as body fragments. In contrast, the feet of the work *Libertà nascosta*, 2012 (p. 77), stand side by side in such a way as if they were left over from an antique bronze statue. The pair of feet are also enclosed in a sealed-off plexiglass cover; here, too, the artist lets steam emit, which transforms the massive bronze objects into weightless shadow images. The bronze feet and fists are direct descendants of classical Greek statues, yet in the foggy conditions it cannot be discerned whether these are original fragments or modern falsifications. Panayotidis achieves, through the element of steam in the manner of weightless shadow plays, the suspension of the borders between original and copy, antiquity and the present, sculpture fragment and figural quotation. The aggression of the balled fists, the readiness of the aligned feet to march on call, transform into a play of dreamy, clove-scented melancholy.

Cracks of light: All of the works exhibited at Kunstmuseum Bern are autonomous artworks, yet at the same time they are the building blocks of a superordinate cosmos. The artist abolishes the borders. He creates complex animate relationships between the past and present, between myth and civilization, reality and dream. Light is hereby the medium that suspends the contradictions. For Panayotidis light is the energy of life—essence and not mere illumination. It connects the oppositions and thereby enables realizations that are unique.

- ¹ Diary entry by Nakis Panayotidis of 20 April 1993, published in: Hans Christoph von Tavel (ed.), *Nakis Panayotidis, Mnemographie*, Bern 1994, p. 109.
- ² For Not Vital, see: Alma Zevi, "When Sculpture Becomes a House," in: *Not Vital*, exh. cat. Cabinet d'arts graphiques des Musées d'art et d'histoire Geneva, Bielefeld/Berlin 2014, pp. 25/26.
- ³ Message from Nakis Panayotidis to the author, Bern, 22 March 2012.
- ⁴ Diary entry by Nakis Panayotidis of 14/15 April 1993, published in: Hans Christoph von Tavel (ed.), *Nakis Panayotidis, Mnemographie*, Bern 1994, p. 109.
- ⁵ Germano Celant, "Eine andere Kunst" (1968), in: idem, *Arte Povera*, Basel 1989, p. 27.
- ⁶ Bruno Corà, "Nakis Panayotidis: Apologues on the Sense of Freedom," in: *Nakis Panayotidis. Ivresse rêvée*, exh. cat. Tornabuoni Art, Paris 2010, p. 34.
- ⁷ Bruno Corà (ed.), *Nakis Panayotidis. Ladro di Luce*, Bern 2005, pp. 216–223. The installation was shown in 2006 at Centro di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea della Spezia in a reduced form.
- ⁸ Message from Nakis Panayotidis on 28 August 2014.
- ⁹ Cf.: Andy Warhol, *Hammer and Sickle*, 1976, acrylic on canvas, 183 x 218.4 cm, Stiftung Sammlung Marx, Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, reproduced in: Heiner Bastian, *Andy Warhol – Retrospektive*, exh. cat. Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin 2001, p. 213.
- ¹⁰ Cf. Jasper Johns, *Light Bulb II*, 1958, 7.9 x 20.3 x 12.7 cm, bronze, collection of the artist, reproduced in: James Rondeau / Douglas Druick, *Jasper Johns – Gray*, The Art Institute, Chicago 2007, no. 81.
- ¹¹ See: Kai Uwe Schierz, "Light, Matter, Remembrance: Work between Myth and Utopia," in: Bruno Corà (ed.), *Nakis Panayotidis. Ladro di Luce*, Bern 2005, p. 82.
- ¹² Cf.: Marc-Joachim Wasmer, "Schweizer Landschaftsmalerei: Zwischen Entdeckergeist und Touristenklischee," in: Christiane Lange / Matthias Frehner, *Das Kunstmuseum Bern. Höhepunkte der Schweiz aus sieben Jahrhunderten*, Munich 2010, pp. 38–47.
- ¹³ Nakis Panayotidis, "Aphorismus," in: Bruno Corà (ed.), *Nakis Panayotidis. Ladro di Luce*, Bern 2005, p. 121.
- ¹⁴ Joseph Beuys, *Thermisch-plastisches Urmeter*, 1984, reproduced in: Theodora Vischer, *Skulptur im 20. Jahrhundert*, Basel 1984, p. 187.
- ¹⁵ For example: Louise Bourgeois, *Passage Dangereux*, 1997, mixed media, 264 x 355 x 867.5 cm, Hauser and Wirth Collection, reproduced in: Frances Morris (ed.), *Louise Bourgeois*, Tate Modern, London 2007, pp. 202/203.