

## **Ephemeral Phantoms and Magical Apparitions of Light**

**Nakis Panayotidis was born in 1947 in Athens. After having studied architecture and the fine arts in Turin and Rome, he settled in Switzerland in 1973. Ever since he has been living and working in both Bern and on the Greek island Serifos, one of the Cyclades. In 1994, the first large Nakis Panayotidis exhibition to take place in a museum was mounted at the Kunstmuseum Bern. Twenty years later, after many further international solo exhibitions of his work, the Kunstmuseum Bern is devoting a comprehensive retrospective to this multifaceted artist and leading representative of Arte Povera.**

Panayotidis embraces the times he lives in with ardency, despite the fact that mythology and the art of antiquity are intrinsic to his life. A realist by nature, he always begins with what he sees around him. VEDO DOVE DEVO. These three words in neon on the façade of the Kunstmuseum Bern put Nakis Panayotidis's key message in a nutshell: "I see what I must." Everything is always related to the angle from which we view it, perception is never unequivocal. Nakis Panayotidis's art interlinks art and light and is never static. Again and again his work captures opposites in a momentary balance: high and low tide, breathing in and out, throwing and falling, day and night, life and death. Permanent motion and change are the key concerns of his art.

### **An Untiring Improviser at Work**

In his objects, photograph installations, pictures and neon works, Panayotidis reflects on the meaning, the value and the truth of what he sees. His goal in art is to articulate this in momentary chance images, so it becomes apparent to us as viewers too, acquiring a permanence that endures beyond the moment and thus enables us to see the invisible. Nakis Panayotidis's art primarily addresses basic issues of human existence. In his work he engages with philosophy and mythology, with social equity and inner freedom. He has a remarkable easiness about him in finding inspiration and art materials where he is currently staying or living. In this way, Panayotidis begins each work anew as an untiring improviser, probing the new circumstances he is faced with in his immediate surroundings. In keeping with the tradition of Arte Povera, he employs highly diverse materials such as stone, straw, lead, iron, copper, lamps etc. Often he integrates obviously worn-out and discarded objects in his artworks. He likewise works with valuable art materials such as bronze. But this too is not treated with more respect than if it were wet dirt. He is interested in chance and fleeting occurrences, which is evidenced by his preference for incorporating light and steam in his creations. Steam metamorphoses his sculptures into phantoms, neon tubes behind photographs and drawings transform pictures into magical apparitions of light, hardened tar makes his works on paper bulge precariously, his upside-down neon script confronts us with all sorts of riddles.

### **An Exhibition Organized in Close Collaboration with the Artist**

The exhibition is one of a series focusing on leading Swiss artists who are related to Bern in some way. Each is organized in close collaboration with the artist. Sculptures, installations, paintings, drawings and photographs that were executed since the early 1970s will be on show. One aspect that the exhibition will be highlighting is the recent work Panayotidis made especially for it. The show in Bern has inversed the chronological order of the works. Beginning with the present, our visitors proceed into the past, step by step. The artist's older works will be presented in different ways and in new combinations, making it clear that Panayotidis does not differentiate between the different creative phases in his work and obliterates the line separating old and new.

**Contact person:** Brigit Bucher, [brigit.bucher@kunstmuseumbern.ch](mailto:brigit.bucher@kunstmuseumbern.ch), Tel.: +41 31 328 09 21

**Images:** Marie Louise Suter, [press@kunstmuseumbern.ch](mailto:press@kunstmuseumbern.ch), Tel.: +41 31 328 09 53

## The Exhibition

**Duration of the exhibition:** 21.11.2014 – 15.03.2015

**Opening:** Thursday, November 19, 2014, 18:30

**Curator:** Regula Berger, Matthias Frehner

**Admission:** CHF 18.00 / red. CHF 14.00

**Further venues of the exhibition:**

MACRO, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma, April–September 2015

Hess Art Museum, The Hess Collection Winery, Napa, USA, planned for 2015 / 2016

**Drawings:** For the exhibition, 12 original drawings, 30 x 42 cm, grained paper, by Nakis Panayotidis will be on sale at the Shop in the Kunstmuseum Bern. Price per drawing: CHF 3'000.00 with 20% discount for members of the Verein der Freunde Kunstmuseum Bern and the Bernische Kunstgesellschaft BKG. For more information please visit [www.kunstmuseumbern.ch](http://www.kunstmuseumbern.ch) from November 20 onwards.

**Film:** Nakis Panayotidis: Are you talking to me? Thierry Spitzer (director), 32 mins, in Italian with subtitles. The film will be screened in the exhibition.

## The Catalogue



### **Nakis Panayotidis: Das Unsichtbare sehen/ Nakis Panayotidis. Seeing the invisible**

Ed. Kunstmuseum Bern, Matthias Frehner and Regula Berger. With essays by Bruno Corà, Matthias Frehner, Sabine Hahnloser Tschopp, Donald Hess, Petros Markaris, Thierry Spitzer and Hans Christoph von Tavel. German and English. 312 pages, 100 color illustrations. Scheidegger & Spiess, Zurich. ISBN 978-3-85881-444-9

## The Poster



F4  
89,5 x 128 cm  
CHF 20.00

## The Supporting Program

**Öffentliche Führungen:** Sonntag, 11h: 23. November 2014, 4. Januar 2015, 1./15.\* Februar 2015 und Dienstag, 19h: 9. Dezember 2014, 24. Februar 2015 (\*mit der Kuratorin Regula Berger)

**Rundgang mit dem Künstler:** Dienstag, 20. Januar 2015, 19h **Griechische Mythen einst & heute:** Sonntag, 8. März 2015, 11h – 12h30. Die Geschichtenerzählerin Esther Rohner entführt in die griechische Götterwelt und schafft Verbindungen zu den Werken des Künstlers Nakis Panayotidis (Mundart). Für Kinder ab 9 Jahren gratis und Erwachsene Ausstellungseintritt **Filmreihe «Radikales Kino aus Griechenland» im Kino Kunstmuseum:** [www.kinokunstmuseum.ch](http://www.kinokunstmuseum.ch)

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**KUNSTMUSEUM BERN**  
MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE BERNE  
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BERNE

HODLERSTRASSE 8–12 CH-3000 BERN 7

T +41 31 328 09 44 F +41 31 328 09 55

INFO@KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH WWW.KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH

**MEDIEN-SERVICE**

**SERVICE DE PRESSE / PRESS OFFICE**

T +41 31 328 09 19/44

PRESS@KUNSTMUSEUMBERN.CH