

ONASSIS STEGI



Plásmata II: Ioannina

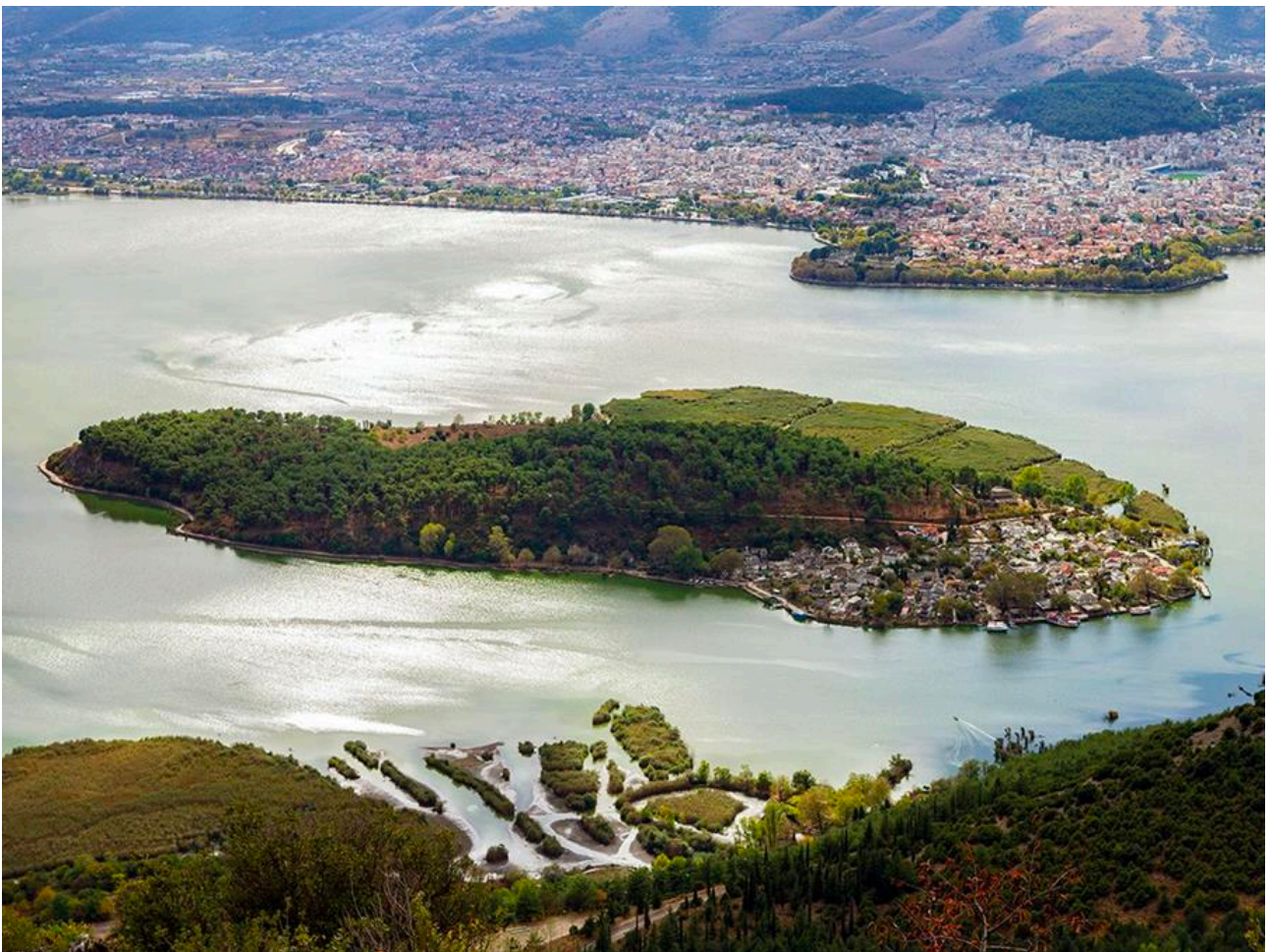
Human, Metaphysical, Digital, Strange

16.06 – 09.07.23 | Opening Hours: 18:00-23:00 | Free entrance

For the first time, Onassis Stegi is moving its summer art exhibition outside its Athens base to present *Plásmata II* in the historic city of Ioannina in Northwest Greece for three weeks in June and July 2023. A cross between an exhibition and a festival, the event connects the historic lakeside city with nature, art and the digital in the open air, installing works of art at 28 points of the city and the waterfront by 19 Greek and international artists and artistic collaborations, with concerts, workshops, discussions, and guided tours

Plásmata II: Ioannina, whose title means ‘creatures’ in Greek, explores the limits of the worlds we make with AI and digital technology. The exhibition presents a series of 28 immersive, open-air artworks and interventions by 19 Greek and international artists and artistic collaborations, most specially commissioned for this event. It takes place in the historic town of Ioannina in Northwest Greece near the Albanian border, a crossroads of culture since Hellenistic times and home over the centuries to Byzantine, Jewish, Ottoman Turk and modern Greek communities, whose traces can still be found in the old town and its historic walls, where the exhibition unfolds. *Plasmata* debuted last year in Athens’ Pedion tou Areos park, where it attracted over 400,000 visitors in five weeks. This year, the site-specific exhibition moves to Ioannina and charts new routes through the old city. This marks the first time that Onassis Stegi, the cultural arm of the Onassis Foundation, has moved its summer exhibition outside Athens.

The exhibition looks critically at how artificial intelligence, digital networks, and mass accumulation of data control our daily life; it focuses on the osmosis of the physical and digital that comprises our new reality – so omnipresent and powerful it is often invisible. *Plásmata II: Ioannina* invites us to seek ways to undermine the power of digital technology and AI through notions of the ordinary, the familiar, and at the same time unfamiliar, mythical, and liquid, which surface in the many-layers of culture in the historic town of Ioannina.



The island of Ioannina in Lake Pamvotida), with the old town of Ioannina in the background.

With *Plásmata II: Ioannina*, Onassis Stegi continues its ongoing discussion on art and the digital, not as something made of shimmering LED screens and computer circuits, but as something organic and ubiquitous that grows in the lake, looks like the rain, exists in the sounds of the birds and the plane trees across the lakeside route. Located in Ioannina – a city at the crossroads of the Balkans and home to many cultures over the centuries – *Plásmata II: Ioannina* gives us the opportunity to develop our thinking in four dimensions (i.e., including time), to look at the depths, networks and stratifications of a city that has developed like a palimpsest, and that extends through the actions and movements of its people beyond the present time and finite place.

Art Paths through the City

Plásmata II: Ioannina is an open-air exhibition that charts new paths between the old city and the waterfront, broadening the dialogue between the material and the immaterial and inviting us to wander through 28 different spots on art routes that meander around the castle, the old town and the majestic Lake Pamvotida. The works in the exhibition become part of the scenery, together with the stories that characterize nine distinct, and at times secret, landmarks of Ioannina. These 28 stations are entwined with the environment of the city and become the springboard for discovering visible and invisible details, existing elements, crevices, urban mythologies, and non-human organisms that converse with the works, Ioannina, and aspects of ourselves and our future.

The artworks by Greek and international artists, most of them new commissions, push the limits of the digital and AI and the relationship of this unprecedented new technology to our bodies, nature, and even our very thoughts, songs, and dreams. These works heed the pulse of the city of Ioannina and introduce us to new *Plásmata* (creatures). The artists have created figures that transform before our eyes, mushrooms that mutate day by day, sculptures that change colors and chant in human and non-human voices, initiating us into the traditional “gianniotiki” silversmithing and knitting, seeking the ways in which artificial intelligence may preserve ancient traditions. Hybrid creatures speak the languages that compose the city’s many communities, revealing voices that can no longer be heard, and materializing local traditions and customs. Forests inside terrariums, animals that have become extinct but are digitally restored to life, and a body made from the women lost in the lake but forever belonging there, invite us to lose ourselves among the forces of nature that remain primeval, potent, and indissoluble.

See the birds of the lake and nearby Mount Mitsikeli through the eyes of artificial intelligence; hear polyphonic singing; marvel at a flag of flames that waves as if in the middle of the lake; wander with your imagination within an immersive bath of sounds, images, and words for Ioannina and its history; take a dive digitally to the bottom of the lake on a medusa; and live the adventure along with human, metaphysical, digital, and strange creatures.

In these works, scattered throughout the many layers of this old city, we realise that the way we perceive technology today is the perpetual ritual by which its inhabitants have always lived together, forming networks that transcend the boundaries of the lake and the city. These networks are present in every historical period of Ioannina, including the Ottoman occupation, the Modern Greek Enlightenment, in the mingling of the different religious communities; in the local trades of silversmithing, metallurgy, and animal husbandry; in the city’s cross-roads position in the Balkans and Europe, and in its contemporary pulse as a university town for students pursuing new forms of knowledge and innovation.



John Gerrard, *Flare (Oceania)*, 2022, simulation, dimensions variable.

The Sounds of the City

Plásmata II: Ioannina is not just another exhibition; it is rather a festival-like experience bringing together art, digital technology, the city, and nature. It is aimed at visitors of every age, with concerts and DJ sets, workshops, discussions, educational programs, guided tours, and original programming by Movement Radio, Onassis Stegi's 24-hour online radio station.

Highlights of the music program include the exhibition's musical opening on June 16, featuring **Marina Satti's** long-awaited concert at Mavili Square – a special event that will bridge tradition with electronic sound. The lineup also includes reggaeton rhythms by **DJ Rosa Pistola** from Mexico. The next highlight is the appearance of the Italian composer **Caterina Barbieri** at the imposing castle of Its Kale, on June 29. Dubbed one of the most interesting voices in electronic music by the international music press, she brings together the ethereal with the modern, drawing inspiration from the traditions of classical music and the baroque, minimalism, as well as contemporary experimental scenes.

Movement Radio's program is more than a parallel event; it is an intrinsic part of *Plásmata II*, as it expands the visual dimensions of the exhibition, but also unfolds within the same urban and natural context as the artworks. These nuances of many different voices, sounds, and musical approaches establish Ioannina as a mirror-image of the Balkan peninsula, as a hybrid place marked by movements, nomadism, and the historical coexistence of similarity and difference. In the framework of the "Plásmata II" exhibition, Movement Radio attempts to build a map that connects geography with sound. Exploring the fluidity of territorial and musical borders, it will discover the life and sounds that inhabit the cracks of dominant historical narratives, and still reverberate through the foundations of the city of Ioannina. For full program of music and concerts, please click [here](#)

Participating Artists

[Entangled Others](#), [Matthias Fritsch](#), [John Gerrard](#), [Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg](#), [Nikomachi Karakostanoglou](#), [Katerina Komianou](#), [Christian Mio Loclair](#), [Maria Louizou](#), [Maenads](#), [Manolis Manousakis](#) & [Afroditi Panagiotakou](#), [Matthew Niederhauser](#) & [Marc Da Costa](#), [Malvina Panagiotidi](#), [Panos Sklavenitis](#), [slow immediate](#), [Stefania Strouza](#), [Theo Triantafyllidis](#), [Universal Everything](#), [Maria Varela](#), [WordMord](#).

Artistic Direction: Afroditi Panagiotakou

Curatorial Direction: Prodromos Tsiavos

Curatorial Advisor: Yorgos Tzirtzilakis

Associate Curator (Commissions): Daphne Dragona

Music Curation, Movement Radio Direction: Voltnoi & Quetempo

Head of Production: Vassilis Panagiotakopoulos

Technical Director: Lefteris Karabilas

Exhibition Design: Loukas Bakas, Iason Pantazis

The exhibition is a production of the Onassis Stegi, the cultural arm of the Onassis Foundation

Under the auspices of the Region of Epirus and the Municipality of Ioannina, in collaboration with the University of Ioannina.

Read more

[Plásmata II: Ioannina – Human, Metaphysical, Digital, Strange | Onassis Foundation \(onassis.org\)](#)

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