

Dirty Humanism

The title of this mini-survey of recent Greek art includes a kind of trans-lingual pun: a word which is pronounced (and written here) as the English word 'dirty', but actually means worry or trouble – an appropriate concept, given the disastrous recent auctions of Greek art in London, not to mention the general state of Greece's own economy. As for modern Greek art as an identifiable cultural, rather than commercial, category – well, that's more problematic, especially given the proportion of artists exhibited here who were/are actually based abroad.

The ironies of Greek identity are, certainly, one of the main themes. Several works refer to the history of its art and culture – from Nanos

Valaoritis reimagining Greek myths with his surrealist collages from the 1960s, through Stelios Faitakis's street-art derived combos of sci-fi imagery and Byzantine motifs (pictured), to the aggressive iconoclasm of Dionysis Kavallieros's muddled wooden sign, 'Oedipus!!!'



Faggionato Galleries Central

Did You Kill Your Mother and Fuck Your Father Again?. Yet amid such brash, ostentatious amusements, it's the more considered, ambivalent works that tend to stand out: Rallou Panagiotou's dyptich, for instance, where a kitsch swimsuit pattern has

been traced and carved into marble – or, conceivably, vice versa.

At the same time, the exhibition also offers a more straightforward, historical perspective. Modernist architectural designs, Arte Povera masterpieces, and contemporary rising stars (Athanasios Argianas's tear-tracks rendered in metal are particularly elegant) are all covered, yet various expected names are omitted – no Takis or Jannis Kounellis (not that there'd be room to physically squeeze anything else in here). As a result, and despite some genuinely fascinating individual pieces, the show as a whole feels slightly incoherent and contradictory – not really dirty, particularly, so much as messy. **Gabriel Coxhead**



Stelios Faitakis, 'Kakerlakon sind die Zukunft', 2009