

Head & Hand | Akamantis

Kyriaki Costa

29 July - 27 October 2023



Curated by Evagoras Vanezis, Monika Asimenou
Map compilation and editing: Christina Lambrou

Consultant from the Department of Antiquities: Margarita Kouali

Design and organization of tours:

Antigoni Michael, Archeologist – tour guide, specialist in Cultural Heritage affairs.

Constantinos Perikleous, Terra Cypria: Biologist – Conservation and Wildlife Scientist

Acknowledgments: Eftychia Zachariou, Zoi Makridou, Natasa Michaelidou, Sebastian Wurst

Graphic Design: Popi Pissouriou

Display Design: Lara Alphas

Text Editing (Greek, English): Daphne Montesantou

English Translation: Loukia Hadjiyianni

Exhibitions:

Anassa Hotel & Local Archaeological Museum of Marion-Arsinoe,
Polis Chrysochous

Museum Visiting Hours:
Monday – Friday: 08:00 – 16:00
Saturday: 09:00 – 15:00
Sunday and Public Holidays: Closed

Within the framework of the project, two guided tours will be held around Polis Chrysochous and Akamas. The first tour will take place on Friday 25 August 2023 by Antigoni Michael and the second one on Saturday 2 September 2023 by Konstantinos Pericles. More information about the tours and parallel events that will run throughout the duration of the project will be announced soon.

“Head & Hand: Akamantis” is under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment. The whole project follows the principles of sustainability fostering the respect to the environment as well as its protection. This is achieved both by the mindful usage of natural resources and of the utilization of the existing facilities and materials (natural environment, findings/exhibits of the museum, old and “useless” materials from the hotel establishment).

Creative Concept:

«... We ourselves are sea, sand, coral, coral, seaweed, beaches, tides, swimmers, children, waves... seas and mothers.»

Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément

"The Newly Born Woman", Theory and History of Literature (Vol. 24), 1986

« The "trail" of a thousand steps on the Akamas peninsula is ephemeral. A series of "visits" to the region, that begins during my childhood, produces an ever-evolving body of work. Themes such as feminism, ecology, the concept of care and myth intertwine to create an organic work that raises questions while it allows emerging dialogues, shifting conversations and the redefining of meanings. Head and Hand / Akamantis* ultimately invites visitors to experience in the place of Akamas an inner, emotional experience in an enigmatic, allusive, silent, almost invisible way.»

Kyriaki Costa, 2023

* Centaurea Akamantis is a shrubby indigenous plant of Cyprus

Kyriaki Costas' new project "Head & Hand: Akamantis" develops and evolves through the invocation of memory, stories and myths of the region of Polis Chrysochous.

The sensual element and its expression through myths of the region is of primary importance here, while water - the predominant element of the the artist's research - connects the stories with their material presence. While the myths of the region are numerous, the most widespread is the one of foam-born (“aforgeneia”) Aphrodite, in which the goddess bathed herself in a spring in the region of Akamas, from which pure and cool water gushed forth. It

was there where Adonis fell in love with the goddess immediately after drinking the spring water. It is this sudden alchemy of love that gives rise to this project. Out of this complex of myth springs an invisible feminism, which is validated through relevant references to the area as well as through its toponyms, which are mostly feminine.

The design of the project is a reflection of the artist's peregrinations in the region, a practice that determined the creation of the works for the current exhibition. Using traditional and contemporary techniques, and through an anthropological perspective, Costa turns her interest to the "enchanted" waters and the objects of the ancient and modern culture of the wider region. As a need to fulfill desires, she creates works similar to contemporary offerings, from which allegories emerge directly linked to the ritual and erotic element which is characteristic of the region. Her works are hosted at the Local Archaeological Museum Marion-Arsinoe and the Anassa Hotel, while at the same time, participatory guided tours both inside the city and along the nature trails of Akamas enliven the stories.

At the Local Archaeological Museum of Marion-Arsinoe, Polis Chrysochous, the artist, inspired by the archaeological findings, as well as other objects that testify purification ceremonies and the direct association of water with funeral rites, proposes a series of works - contemporary offerings to the healing and restoration of humans' relationship with the environment. Ancient water pipes from excavations of the Department of Antiquities, which are presented in the exhibitions, bear witness to the actions and interventions of humans in their efforts to make the area habitable. Alex Ioannou's short film "No Drop to the Sea", which is hosted at the exhibition, acts as a complementary element, as it explores, through the voice of Vrahimis Ioannou, the technical achievements related to the water infrastructure which transformed the peninsula of Akamas and the area of Paphos in the mid-20th century. All the above contribute to the creation of a dialogue which connects the past with the present.

The works at the Anassa Hotel testify a more intimate preoccupation of Costa with themes such as the flow of time and the space between the real and the imaginary. The artist enters the warehouses of the Anassa Hotel to collect materials that are no longer of any use to the hotel, such as bedding and various metals, which she reuses as raw material for her works, placing them in a new cycle of life. The forms of the sculptural works, as well as the images that the artist creates, are on the threshold of representation and abstraction, transporting us to a world where humans coexist with mythical and unreal forces. Alongside these works, she opens a dialogue with the community as well as the sculptor A. Moditis, exhibiting works of his own and giving them a different connotation and materiality.

Finally, a specially designed map connects the exhibition spaces with the surrounding area as well as with points where water sources have been traced. Through this roaming, a new reading of the region emerges, where myths, water and ecology become the central points of reference.

Kyriaki Costa is a multidisciplinary artist and researcher, with a particular emphasis on art as an anthropological practice. Her work explores and brings together myth and history, philosophy and psychology, climate and ecological concerns. She creates artworks and installations in collaboration with practitioners from many disciplines such as artisans and technology specialists. Often producing participatory environments, she stages social and political interventions which critique different contexts and surroundings.

<https://www.kyriakicosta.com>

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