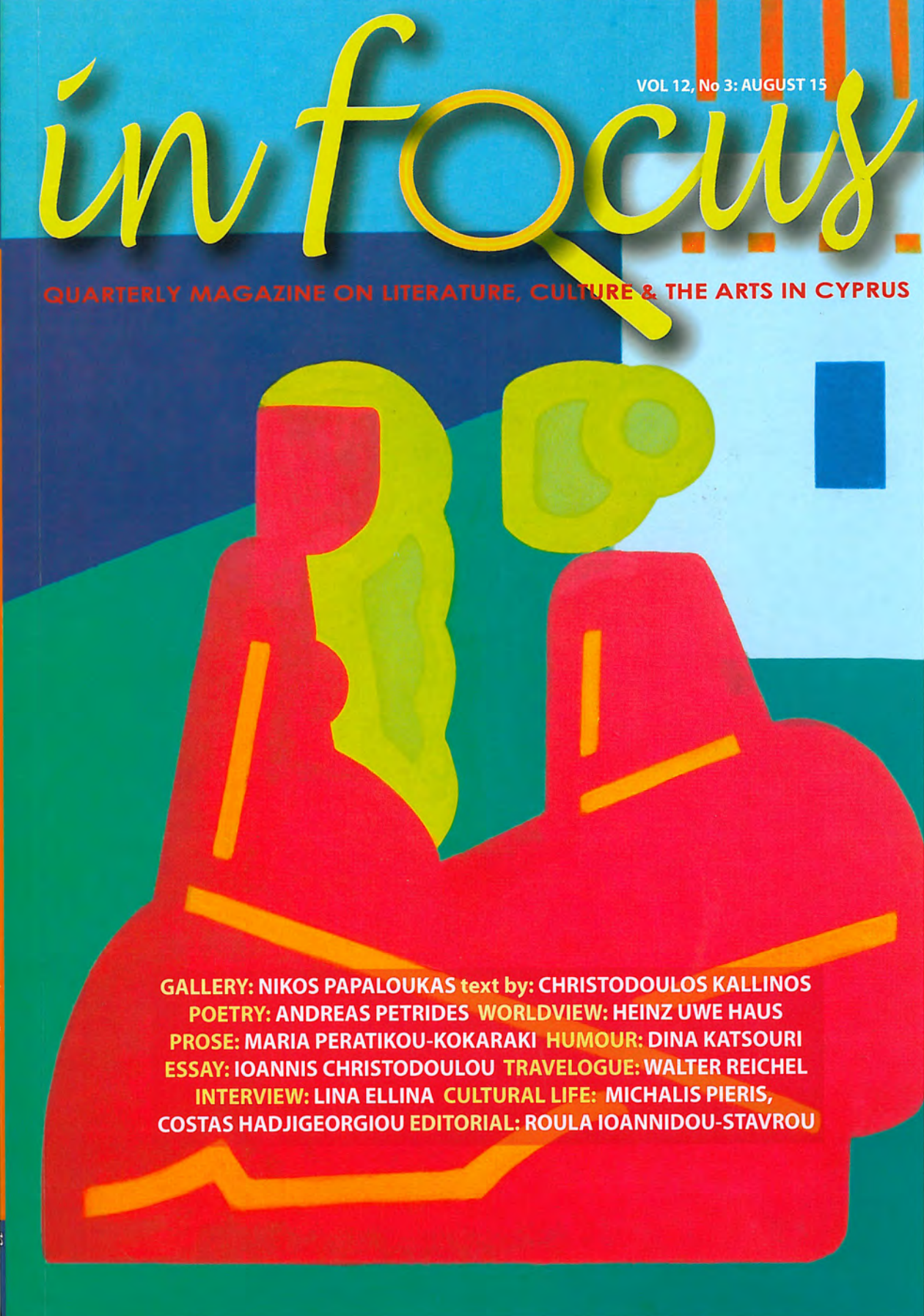


in focus

A stylized illustration featuring two figures in red and yellow against a background of blue and green. The figures are rendered in a flat, cut-out style. The figure on the left is red with a yellow head, and the figure on the right is red with a yellow head. The background consists of a blue upper section and a green lower section, with a white rectangular area on the right side. The title 'in focus' is written in a yellow, cursive font at the top, with the 'o' in 'focus' being a magnifying glass. The text 'VOL 12, No 3: AUGUST 15' is in the top right corner, and 'QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ON LITERATURE, CULTURE & THE ARTS IN CYPRUS' is below the title.

VOL 12, No 3: AUGUST 15

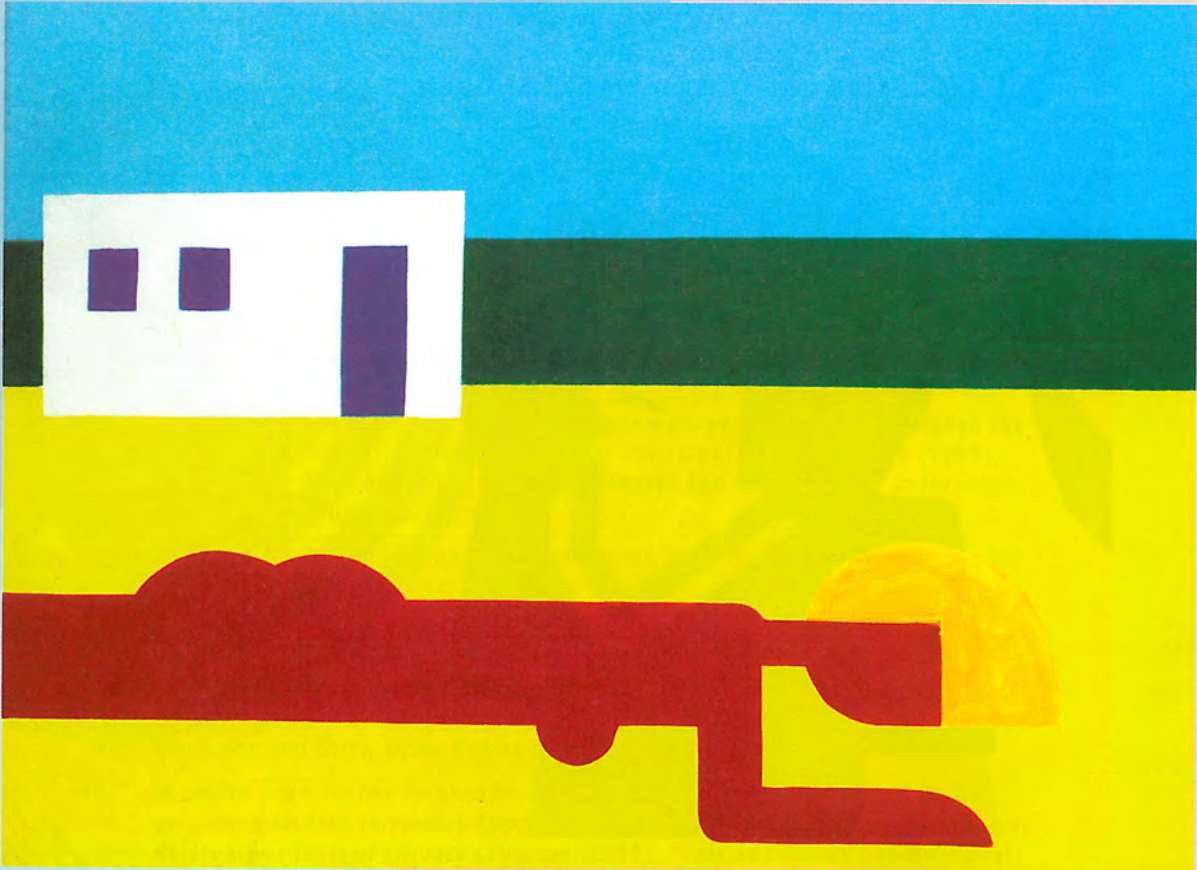
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ON LITERATURE, CULTURE & THE ARTS IN CYPRUS

GALLERY: NIKOS PAPALOUKAS text by: CHRISTODOULOS KALLINOS
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COSTAS HADJIGEORGIOU EDITORIAL: ROULA IOANNIDOU-STAVROU

NIKOS PAPALOUKAS

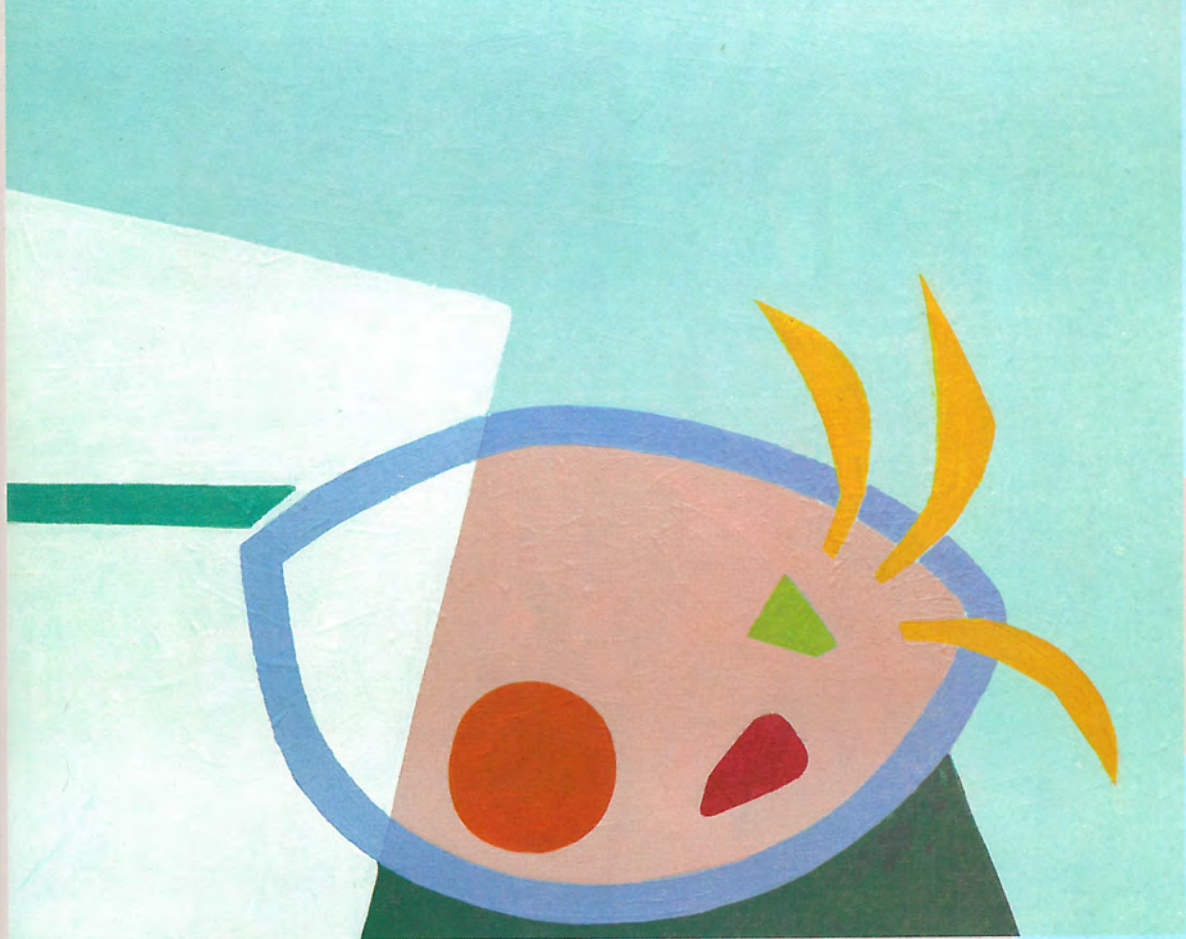


"Boy with horse," Acrylic on canvas, 60x60 cm, 2007



This page top: Acrylic on canvas, 50x70 cm, 2012 | Bottom: Acrylic on canvas, 50x70 cm, 2012

Opposite page top: Acrylic on canvas, 40x50 cm, 2012 | Bottom: Acrylic on canvas, 120x170 cm, 2011



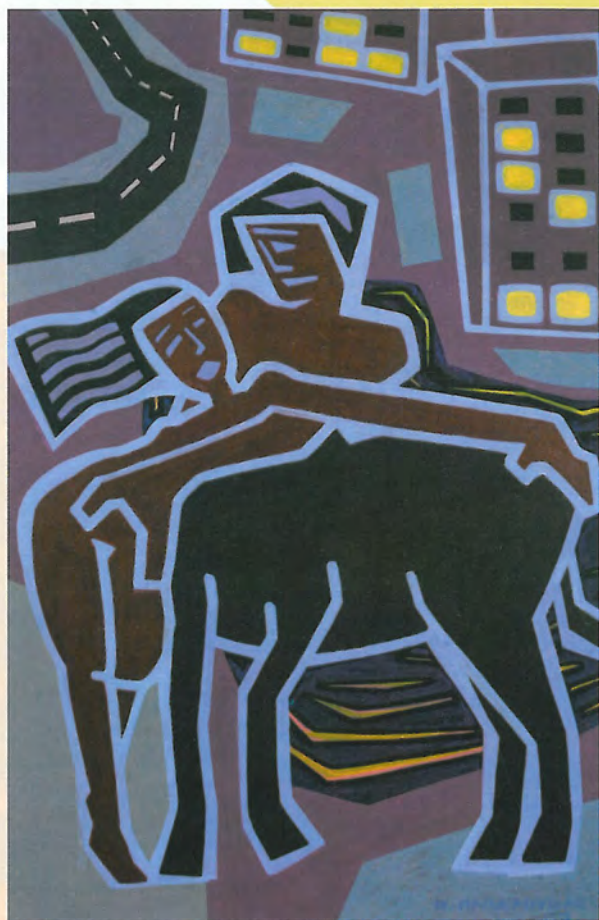




Opposite page top left: "Coffee shop 1," Acrylic on canvas, 90x45 cm, 2007 | Top right: "Coffee shop 2," Acrylic on canvas, 90x45 cm, 2007
 Bottom: "Zeimbekiko" Acrylic on canvas, 150x180 cm, 2010 | This page top: Acrylic on canvas, 60x80 cm, 2008 | Left: Acrylic on canvas, 90x90 cm, 2008
 Top right: Acrylic on canvas, 40x50 cm, 2009 | Bottom right: Acrylic on canvas, 40x50 cm, 2008



Top: "Ithaca," Acrylic on canvas, 60x60 cm, 2007 | Bottom: Acrylic on canvas, 38x78 cm, 2007



Left: "Achilles's horses," Acrylic on canvas, 120x78 cm, 2008 | Right: "Centaur," Acrylic on canvas, 150x100 cm, 2007 | Bottom: Acrylic on canvas, 65x100 cm, 2005



Acrylic on canvas, 66x100 cm, 2006

NIKOS PAPALOUKAS: PLACE-LIGHT-MAN AS MEMORY AND AS EXPECTATION

by Christodoulos Kallinos

I have had the pleasure of following the development of Nikos Papaloukas, his artistic investigations and creative progress, since his early steps as a painter. In this brief article I wish to add some pointers concerning his more recent work, having already dealt at length with his earlier work in two previous articles.^{1,2}

Although Papaloukas began as a painter endowed with a particular sensitivity to colour and to the subjective expressiveness of the human form, he has become increasingly engaged with the architecture of pictorial composition. In his most recent work he has forsaken, to a certain degree, his intoxication with the warmth and sensuality of colour, concerning himself more and more with the visual exploration of plastic values. He experiments with purely conceptual representations of reality, in keeping with the chief preoccupation of modern art from Cézanne onwards. Moving away from more visual and sensory means of representation, he arrives at an anti-naturalistic sense of form, rendering figures in geometrically flat shapes which he integrates into the pictorial space by applying a modern understanding of proportion, harmony, plasticity and perspective. Composition is built with planar forms and controlled lines which allow the release of expressive detail to add to the structural perfection and clarity of the whole. Pictorial exploration arrives at solid plastic forms, rendered with geometrical harmony and lucidity. An expressive plasticity of structure is created with geometric, simplified volumes, clear and absolute in character.

The painter captures objective reality through the object's geometric structure, distinct shapes and symmetrical outlines, whilst composition is based on the abstraction of individual details and the analysis of structural relationships between the simplified forms, which he confines himself to depicting only in their most elemental attributes.

Without a doubt Papaloukas, at least in his most recent work, is in dialogue with the long tradition and multiple varieties of cubist art. His own cubism, however, is of a particular kind. Pictorial forms and volumes are simplified and analysed according to the example of the cubists, but they are not deconstructed. Shapes and colours do not merge with one another, painted planes do not overlap. Painted surfaces, volumes and forms are not fragmented.

Whereas cubism at the start of the previous century rendered form, object, figure or still life analytically, abolishing the autonomy of individual elements, in the case of Papaloukas abstraction and geometric simplification do not eschew form. The outlines of human figures are simplified to achieve an austere purity and economy of expression, form is pushed to its limits, yet his work resonates in favour of form, albeit in its most simplified state.

I would argue that the cubism of Papaloukas is closer to the cubism of Juan Gris, in whose work colour is dominant, than to the intellectualist cubism of Picasso or Braque. Yet I feel that the parallels between the work of Gris and Papaloukas come not from a direct relationship between these two painters but from the relationship of each

to painting, or, more accurately, to the weighty legacy of Henri Matisse and, especially, of Paul Cézanne, bearing out once again the phrase, attributed equally to Picasso and to Matisse himself, that all contemporary painters are the children of Cézanne. Moreover, the foundation stone for the different versions of cubism was laid not by the leading cubists - Braque, Picasso, Gris, or Léger - but by Paul Cézanne himself, who wrote to Emile Bernard that "to depict nature I must use the sphere, the cylinder, and the cone" and maintained that by basing itself on the most fundamental geometric shapes painting could represent all natural and optical phenomena.

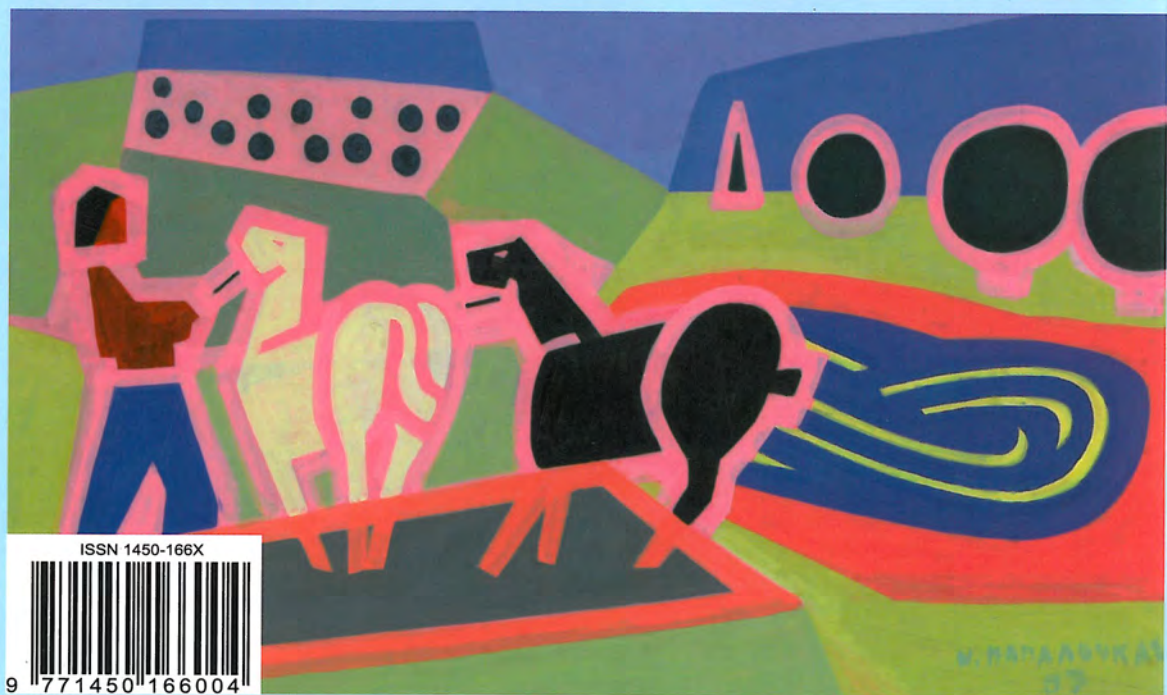
The painting of Papaloukas is inspired on the one hand by the artistic explorations and research into optical phenomena of Cézanne and then Matisse, and on the other hand by the radicalisation and geometric simplification of figurative art of the cubism of Picasso, Braque, Léger and Juan Gris. At its height analytical cubism, mainly in the work of Picasso and Braque, radicalised abstraction by transforming the subject so as to make it almost unrecognisable, but Papaloukas rather follows the example of Gris and the pre-cubic work of Cézanne and Matisse, adopting a daring geometric simplification of analytical cubism whilst retaining, up to a point, post-impressionism's intensity of colour.

His work also differs from classical cubism in its subject-matter. Whilst the cubists confined themselves to specific themes or motifs - e.g. musical instruments such as violins or guitars, people sitting reading a book or a newspaper - and concentrated on the practice of free association of images which they worked and reworked in many successive variations, Papaloukas turns to mythological subjects. Something of an artistic paradox in a painter who experiments with modern morphoplastic methods. He also avoids the trend which was observed during the late period of cubism, whereby the artist imported non-painted materials into the composition in order to render with greater objectivity the identity of the pictorial object being dealt with. The pictorial compositions of Nikos Papaloukas remain, for the moment at least, within the boundaries of what is clearly understood as painting.

Translated by *Suzan Papas*

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1. "The Painting of the Inner Depths", Phileleftheros Newspaper, 18.01.2009, p52
 2. "The Visual Utopia of Nikos Papaloukas", Mandragoras magazine, No.40, 2009, pp132-133

NIKOS PAPALOUKAS was born in Bellapais, Cyprus, in 1969. He studied graphic design and then painting at the Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki (1998-2003). He has presented his work in individual and group exhibitions in Greece, Cyprus and the Ukraine. In the artist's own words: *"Art surmises, through the creation of forms, that which logic cannot grasp. It surmises a truth that exists beyond objects, or a truth that exists within objects and defines them. Through the creation of form, space gives dimensions to time, making it into a present, as a memory and as an expectation. It makes it present in a special and unique way, as it had never existed before. Art being a purely mental function points the way. We can exist in another way. The conjectured event is a piece of evidence. Art can teach us, whenever we come into communion with it. It stirs and enthrals us, whenever we partake of it through an artistic event like holy communion."*



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