



ATELIER OMROS  
& LA GALLERIA

For you Omiros.

Marlene and Peter Saile

Published on the second exhibition of Atelier Omiros & La Galleria.

**OMIROS**

**:a WHOLE wOrLd:**

October 5th, 2019

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A curated exhibition of select Omiros paintings from his Pure Abstraction, Four Seasons, Fashion, Sports, Equestrian, and Formula 1 series.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Marlene Saile

The journey began with the exhibition of Omiros' paintings from his exploration of the Byzantine period (running from approximately 330 CE to the mid 1400s), the subject of the first catalogue. Therein, he painted the iconic holy stories of the Byzantine Empire as an artist living in the 20th and 21st centuries, more than 500 years after the end of that storied era.

The journey continues with this second exhibition, titled :a WHOLE wOrLd:

The exhibition title comes from one of the abstract paintings selected for the exhibit, "*Two Colors: A Whole World*," itself a vast composition measuring nearly eighteen feet wide. This centerpiece of the new exhibition hangs amid an array of other stunning works, where the magnificence of Omiros' oeuvre can be viewed across a range of topics and themes, depicting everything from the Four Seasons to Formula 1, and spanning from the 1960's into the 21st century.

Alive with expressionist color and dazzling motion these masterful paintings reveal the thread of Omiros' oeuvre, his *Free Space*. In its essence, *Free Space* is Omiros' unique way of communicating his feelings by either eliminating or creating perspective as between background and foreground.

Challenging and revising the existing canon, Omiros is taking his place among the great painters of his time.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the support of Omiros' family: Dr. Paul Hriso, Dr. Emmanuel Hriso, Ambre Hriso, and Chloe Hriso.

I further wish to thank my husband Peter Saile, Omiros' longtime private art dealer, for his encouragement at every step of the way in the fruition of this exhibition.

As with any project, there are always little elves in the background who assist in the most unexpected and meaningful ways, as well. You all know who you are, but to name a few, Cynthia and Armand DiBiase, Nicole Gardner, Linda Johnson, Susannah Leighton, Yalda Bahari, Michael Reiss, Robert Reiss, Pio Frascella, Hope Lourie Killcoyne, and Al and Lynn Jacobsen.



# FOREWORD

Peter Saile

It is often on the cusp of the least expected that providence allows you to come into contact with someone so talented that it blows your mind. And so, on just such a day in January of 1991, I met Omiros.

I was immediately struck by his technical mastery of color, shape, form, line, and perspective—or better yet, the lack of perspective... and yet, imbued with the insinuation of perspective. He was so cool, funny, friendly, knowing his way, and he made me some coffee. We sat down and talked. For hours. The day slipped away as I looked through the paintings. I knew that I must work with him. I said, "I want to represent you." He said, "You want to be my dealer?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I like to sell to collectors only. Can you do that?" I said, "Yes!" He said, "Super!" I said, "Should I send you a contract?" He said, "Here is the contract," as we shook hands. The contract is still here, even nine years after his death. He would eventually call me his third son.

Years later, on another of those least expected days of abundance, I met my wife Marlene. She saw a book with some of his abstract paintings, and soon I could not get her attention anymore. She began to talk about the technique and how unique it was, and would not stop talking. Who was I to stop her? She was understandably entwined with Omiros. Marlene had studied art history, and is an art historian, curator, and cultural law attorney. She said to me, "One day I want to do an exhibition of his work." And so, she did The Byzantine. She also presented a painting of The Virgin Mary and the Infant Jesus to His Holiness Pope Francis. Her plans now are to bring The Byzantine Exhibition to the Vatican Museums.

Now comes a second exhibition, opening a door to the magic that Omiros created. Omiros was quite courageous in that he could contemplate many states of perspective, view, and thought at the same time. Having two competing ideas in color and form had once been disturbing to him, but as he embraced the multidirectional, he gained his own perspective: a magical way of seeing and expressing. He even embraced two themes in one painting.

:a WHOLE wOrLd:, very descriptive of his masterpiece, presents this multi-flow of direction with his paintings in streams of color, action, figure, and abstraction.

I am proud, happy, thankful, and joyous to continue being a part of Omiros' journey, with his family and my wife Marlene as fellow travelers. Welcome to Atelier Omiros & La Galleria, and this second exhibition of ":a WHOLE wOrLd:."



# INTRODUCTION

Michael Reiss

I did not know what to expect on the day I attended the opening reception of The Byzantine by Omiros at Atelier Omiros & La Galleria in Bedford, New York. It was December 15th, 2018, and surprisingly nice weather: sunny and not too cold.

Upon entering the quintessential Bedford farmhouse, I was transported into another time, feeling I was connecting to a higher spirit. Mesmerized by sublime, elongated otherworldly figures seemingly stretched from the heavens, I knew I was in the presence of genius. And it was Marlene Saile, the curator and executive director of the gallery, who presented this genius in the most elegant, sophisticated, and love-filled setting.

As I tried recollecting art from the Byzantine Empire, I could only think of the Renaissance masters. Yet, here was an artist from the 20th and 21st centuries painting these holy icons.

Questions came to mind. Why had I never seen Omiros? Who was he? What else has he painted? I soon discovered Omiros was a master of many periods, subjects, and themes. Beyond painting The Byzantine, he painted Massacres, Venetian Masks, Mythology, Sports, Fashion, Four Seasons, Dances, and so much more that I cannot begin to describe in this short writing. Omiros is truly one of the most prolific masters of post WWII art. But more significant for the story of modernist art is that Omiros created his own pictorial language, his own palette, his own calligraphy in an instantly recognizable style.

Now, I have the honor to write this introduction for Marlene Saile's second exhibition of Omiros' master works titled, :a WHOLE wOrLd: If on the first exhibition she sought to plant the roots upon which Omiros' oeuvre would rise out of the private collectors' realm, with this new exhibition Saile is letting the trunk, branches, and leaves soar for all to see, with a showing of several of Omiros' most breathtaking paintings.

These works fully showcase Omiros' most important contribution to modernist art. As Jackson Pollock invented "Action Painting," Omiros has invented "Figural Abstraction," created in an expressionistic manner I have never seen. Omiros weaves a fabric from complete abstraction to the other end of the spectrum—figuration—in such so seamless a way that the eye does not notice the change in state, as if watching an ice cube melt and evaporate.

I hope that you all love and enjoy Omiros as I do.



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THE PAINTINGS



OMIROS | MINIMALISM | 1963  
UNTITLED  
GOUACHE | 96.5x61 CM



This painting from 1963, already showing the passage of time on the edges, depicts long, wispy brushstrokes blending into one another in space and perspective through abstract mark making. The grey-toned monochrome palette references his minimalist painting years; however, the purely abstract subject subverts the precision and uniform style of *Minimalism* through a complex and varied composition harking to the future of his works. *Untitled* mediates the relationship between known and unknown, using concepts of line and perspective to create a dynamic space within the work. Separate from another, Omiros' marks would feel familiar: it is his combination, layering, and ultimate weaving of them that begins to approach the *Abstract*. Areas of dark and light are interspersed throughout the work in ways that don't logically point to a distinct sense of perspective. Nonetheless, Omiros' use of shading alludes to the idea that somewhere within the tangled web of lines there is dimensionality. The gouaches from this period are the genesis of the thread of Omiros' painting that would bloom as the mise-en-scène of his works.

OMIROS | ABSTRACT | 1979  
TWO COLORS: A WHOLE WORLD  
Acrylic on Canvas | 185x148 CM





In the '70s, Omiros began painting vast compositions of space, measuring nearly eighteen feet wide and more, in a similar style as the previous one, which is the centerpiece of the exhibition.

The large-scale horizontal work expands in all directions, with long, muscular brushstrokes in vibrant teal and blue, as rich red hues flow on its surface across the center, while shorter, impressionistic strokes in soft, muted white and flesh-toned pink rest beneath. Primarily horizontal in orientation, the lower half of the work is broken up by thin drip marks, abundantly emerging from the center of the canvas downward. The interplay of vertical and horizontal creates a dynamic composition that seemingly divides the canvas into three distinct planes of space by using short, blended strokes in the upper half, bold elongated marks at the center, and thin vertical marks in the lower register.

Omiros' limited color palette emphasizes the diversity in both tonal range and mark making present within the work, as it plays upon its title. *Two Colors: A Whole World* is at once insular in its description of what it is made from—"two colors"—and broad in its declaration of what it is, "a whole world." In choosing red and blue—the colors so often associated with the iconography of the Virgin Mary and Christ as the primary colors for this piece—there is also a curious allusion to the artist's subsequent Byzantine paintings begun in the same year. The exploration of space through abstraction approached by Omiros here is the conception of space as a transcendent entity, translated visually as an amalgamation of three-dimensional attributes that, ironically, exist on a flattened plane, a surface where space is both ambiguous and free.



OMIROS | FASHION | 1993  
SOPHIA  
Acrylic on Canvas | 80x60 CM



*Sophia* is neither heavenly nor heathenly, in yet another tongue-in-cheek reference to the artist's Byzantine period. Sophia is, however, graced with the name of a biblical figure. Her pose is aloof, yet she is not immodest, and stands slightly slouched while gazing directly at the viewer.

Omiros was an artist drawn to shape and color in ways many could not understand themselves. In *Sophia*, Omiros combines the figuration of high fashion editorial style against the backdrop of his familiar mise-en-scène abstracted style.

Swathes of blue, red, green, and yellow surround her. Fragments of a figure are shown obscuring areas of her face, perhaps other identities she had worn throughout the ages. The painted collage quality of this work breaks up the fragmentation of Omiros' liberal brushstrokes, while dripping colors surround the figure as if to comment upon the increasingly modernized world dominated by aesthetic stimulation.

In another sense, *Sophia*, in reference to her mythological significance, carries the symbolic meaning of intelligence and wisdom, among other attributes such as skill and cleverness. Through this lens *Sophia* can be viewed not only as a commentary on aesthetic values, but on the age of information and mass communication that she occupies, becoming a figure representing the duality and adaptable qualities one must take on to exist in modern times.

OMIROS | FASHION | 1999  
HANNAH  
Acrylic on Canvas | 73x54 CM



The most figurally explicit of Omiros' fashion painting series, the figure's body in *Hannah* is in full contact with the viewer. Using a palette consisting of deep, rich, violet and black, there is a shimmering quality to this work that draws the viewer's eye in via a dynamic composition and careful detail.

*Hannah's* dress, an elegant black halter, plunging neckline, and split leg opening, reveal her long, sexy, slender legs, as she appears to move forward with deep pleasure with the awareness that her exterior is fully in the spotlight.

Attention to the figure's clothing is marked by the glistening highlights Omiros paints in opaque white. These shadows and highlights play upon aspects of *Hanna's* movement across the composition. As in all of the fashion paintings featured in this exhibition, there is an acute, saturated sense of isolation, par for the course. *Hannah* is no exception to this, as she is rendered a solitary figure against a highly abstracted background. The figure becomes removed from a narrative reality, as Omiros opts to place her in an aesthetic one.

The choice to reference Hannah, a biblical figure often associated with earnestness and prudence as a cultivated and glamorous figure acts as a type of criticism of traditionally pious values. In furthering these observations, the violet hue of the figure's skin evokes a regal quality to her character, referencing purple as the color associated with queens, likening her presence not to that of the divine, but of contemporary royalty. Omiros' compositional choices here are undoubtedly influenced by the time in Paris when he attended the haute couture fashion show of a grand couturier Omiros knew.





OMIROS | FASHION | 1999

GRACE

Acrylic on Canvas | 104x187 CM



Shades of green accented by red and black cover the slender and tall feminine figure standing alone in profile view. Omiros' figure, *Grace*, turns her head to face the viewer. She appears casual, although startled by the sudden interruption of what appears to be a private moment.

There is a voyeuristic quality here, where the viewer has captured the figure in an almost contemplative state. Omiros' familiar technique of using light, energetic brushstrokes is continued in this painting, and his mise-en-scène abstracted background blends well into the figure itself, making for a beguiling juxtaposition between background and foreground, thereby eliminating perspective.

While the green hues lend a sense of tranquil serenity, it is the darker shades of red and black seen toward the lower half of the composition that lead to an ambiguity in the overall mood of the painting. While Omiros' choice in palette creates a harmonious alliance of colors, they allude to the perils of inner expression, darkening gradually in tone as one views the composition from top to bottom. The term "grace" in a biblical dialogue is indicative of divine healing and spiritual power, imbuing the figure here with an otherworldly presence that is both meditative and dignified in its abstracted portrayal. The connection to "Mary," the mother of Jesus, and the gateway to humanity, is not lost.

OMIROS | FASHION | 1999  
MARY  
Acrylic on Canvas | 73x60 CM



In keeping with the biblically themed titling of Omiros' fashion series, *Mary* carries a poignancy that significantly differs from the traditional reference to a religious icon.

Although Omiros was not unfamiliar with the subject of the Virgin Mary—he had painted her image countless times over the course of his career in his Byzantine paintings—using her namesake as the subject of a fashion painting would appear paradoxical, though not without context.

From the hips up, the lone figure leans in a contrapposto pose, her arms folded and hands clasped together. *Mary* gazes directly forward, with a seeming lack of emotional expression—if not relative indifference toward the viewer. The placement of her hands furthers this aura; her arms folded in a slightly guarded gesture, she appears calm yet serious in her demeanor.

Bathed in bright shades of red— a symbolically iconographic color—Omiros' *Mary* actually bears the color associated more often with Christ than the Virgin herself.

Curiously, however, red is also the color associated with motherhood and passion in the Christian tradition. To represent this figure in such a way is to subvert those biblical tropes, supplanting them with the ideals of the modern woman who is independent and autonomous rather than chaste and devotionally virtuous.





OMIROS | FORMULA 1 | 1994  
AYRTON SENNA  
Acrylic on Canvas | 130x90 CM



The subject of this composition, Formula One racing, comes from a limited series of paintings completed by Omiros in the mid to late '90s. For a painter whose aesthetic concerns were already well established in the realms of justice (or the lack thereof), lyrical abstraction, mythology, and holy themes, among others—at this point in the artist's career it would appear almost counterintuitive to depict a subject so industrial and removed from the arguably more narrative subjects of his oeuvre. The choice in subject matter, however, reveals Omiros to be a master adept at coalescing visual references and being deeply inspired by a myriad of diverse muses, portraying them in ways that express familiar themes in his own pictorial language.

*Ayrton Senna* is painted in Omiros' Figural Abstraction, featuring black outlined forms of race cars shrouded in clouds of pale, muted, and opaque white and pink hues of ephemeral evaporation. The repetition of forms, namely circular dark rubber burning spinning wheels that recede into the background of the composition, brings the sonic sense of speeding machines, space, and movement. At the same time, their abstracted representation alludes to unimaginable G-forces and jostling jockeying rival drivers that is beyond everyday comprehension. The use of bold red tones, reminiscent of flags waved at races, coupled with the smoky effect of Omiros' brushstrokes overlaid on top of the cars that move down the track, makes you feel that you are watching Formula 1 driver Ayrton Senna, drive that car.

OMIROS | FORMULA 1 | 1994  
MCCLAREN  
Acrylic on Canvas | 130x90 CM





Compared to *Ayrton Senna*, *McClaren* is far more abstracted, presenting a dynamic display of disjointed figures against a collection of shapes in vivid color.

Angular black lines and faded-out spaces mark the shape of objects, indicating specific pictorial elements, such as axels, wheels, metal frames, smoke, obscured sponsor logos, cars, the number of a racecar and the name of the painting's subject: "Formel 1," aka Formula 1.

A driver facing the background seems to be floating by...

In this way, *McClaren* declares its composition visually, in a more literal sense than previously seen, through its textual cues.

Interestingly, however, is the appearance of this composition to be less figuratively driven, relying principally on the use of color and shape, rather than highlighting any easily recognizable objects.

Omiros' use of Figural Abstraction here serves as a testament to his unrelenting ability to take familiar images, themes, and concepts, and subvert them using his own distinct language, creating a work that speaks uniquely to the artist's own worldview.



OMIROS | HISTORY | 2002  
DON QUIXOTE'S ROCINANTE  
Acrylic on Fabric | 150x120 CM

The outlined figure of a horse nearly fills the entire canvas of *Don Quixote's Rocinante*, named for the horse in the 17th century Spanish novel by Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote. Rocinante, Don Quixote's equine companion, stands with two legs raised high toward the top left of the composition, his head tilted back.

Painted in Omiros' Figural Abstraction, there is an intensity to this work communicated not only through *Rocinante's* bipedal stance, but also in the dark and vibrant red tone used to fill in the horse's figure.

Taking inspiration from Cervantes' humorous yet tragic literary masterpiece, Omiros portrays *Don Quixote* in their first adventure, where the would-be knight mistakes a field of windmills for giants, and attempts to fight them, but finally concludes that a magician must have turned the giants into windmills, intertwined with the horrid hissing of the scaly snake.

To this effect, the composition is consumed by a sense of raw emotion and vitality, depicting its subjects as wild, free, and uninhibited by the constraints of sanity.

In another sense, there is a lyrical quality to this work that appears to consider the tragic passage of this novel and romantic aspects of its subject's source. The themes of justice and morality prevail throughout Omiros' deepest concerns about society and its ills. *Don Quixote's Rocinante* can be considered a symbol of Omiros' concerns, as well.



OMIROS | SPORTS | 2003

JUMP

Acrylic on Canvas | 84x100 CM





At the turn of the 20th century, Omiros began to paint a series of athletes participating in a variety of Olympic sports. Using his familiar Figural Abstraction, in this *Jump*, a jockey is depicted on horseback vaulting over a hurdle.

Flattened lines and bold colors demark the forms of the figure and horse, and while the jockey is rendered largely featureless, the horse is shown in far greater detail.

The action of the scene in *Jump* is captured by the soft contour of the horse's body, as if to demonstrate the speed at which it is moving down the track.

The horse, whose trained face can be seen as it leaps forward, lends a sense of urgency to the composition.

The abstracted background removes the subject of *Jump* from the environment typically associated with sporting events, namely, large loud crowds gathered to watch in excited anticipation.

Yet the feeling that many entwined spectators are cheering and living vicariously with the rider and his horse is unavoidable through the haze of the movements.



OMIROS | SPORTS | 2003

JUMP

Acrylic on Canvas | 107x137 CM

In another composition focused on equestrian sports, in *Jump*, a jockey and horse are saturated by dark red, brown, and black on the left side, and lighter white and yellow tones on the right.

The scene is electrified by the moment as the horse and rider cross over the hurdle, dividing the canvas between the dark and light sections of the composition.

In the abstracted background you sense the frenzy of other competitors trying to catch up to this rider and his horse, who is faster than theirs.

*Jump* expresses the action of the scene primarily by using color rather than figuration.

Even though the abstracted forms blend into one another across the canvas, it is through the chromatic change that *Jump* becomes more legible.

The bold red tones used in the left half of the composition reinforce the urgency of competition, indicating the movement of the pair into the foreground by referencing a color that can be associated with life, passion, and adrenaline.



OMIROS | FOUR SEASONS | 2005  
SPRING  
Acrylic on Canvas | 123x147 CM





As an artist, Omiros was unconcerned with the rigid conventions of academic painting. The landscape genre, a hallmark of this long-standing tradition of painting, is approached by Omiros with the spontaneity and liberation of the Impressionists, and the emotion and energy of the Abstract Expressionists and Lyrical Abstractionists.

*Spring* fills the air and space of the composition with the bright, pastel hues that represent the season. The clear blue sky, rich and pure in color, is interspersed with strokes of white clouds that seem to float across the top the canvas with a sense of lightheartedness.

Various shades of pink cherry blossoms emerge from the lower right of *Spring*, stretching across the bottom of the piece, which is made up of short brushstrokes and dabs that build upon one another, creating an appearance of fullness. The abundance of life and growth captures the essence of the season with its lush representation of plant life emerging against the previously barren winter. The shades of pink, white, green, and red complement the deep blue of the sky, where a lack of movement in terms of broader and longer brushstrokes used to depict it, are offset by the energetic bursts of color shaping the delicate flowers as they rise toward the sky.



OMIROS | FOUR SEASONS | 2005  
SUMMER  
Acrylic on Canvas | 123x147 CM

Whereas *Spring* ushers in new life within Omiros' Four Seasons series, his depiction of *Summer* acts not only as a continuation of nature's bounty, but the successive decline into the colder metamorphosing autumn and impending desolate winter.

*Summer* uses short, blended brushstrokes that appear to question where the plant life ends and the particle filled expanse of sky begins.

Using a palette consisting of muted yellows and greens, reference is made to the ultimate conclusion that the bright and delicate colors of the previous season have faded into maturity during the summer months.

In *Summer*, Omiros further obscures his renderings of plant life, the particular subject being wheat, in the lower half of the composition, as if to remark that they will soon be gone, passing on as the seasons so naturally do.

Much like *Spring*, *Summer* reflects Omiros' vision as an artist able to surpass art's historical traditions in painting when it comes to his representation of well-established genres.



OMIROS | SPORTS | 2005  
BEACH VOLLEYBALL  
Acrylic on Canvas | 93x124 CM





*Beach Volleyball* depicts a brightly hued palette of pinks, yellows, blues, and oranges, four figures are depicted participating in a game of volleyball.

Two parallel white lines cut across the top center of the composition horizontally, marking the placement of the net, thereby separating the four figures into groups of two on each side.

The ball is shown in the top left of the scene, as one of the players exerts her arm towards it.

The spacing of the bodies and their gestures demonstrates the tension among them as they compete. In the frenzy of fear of loss and hoping to win, the vivid colors reflect this emotional state of being in their movements.

Omiros at the crossroads of figuration and abstraction achieves the equanimity point: zero gravity. Only in the physics-free space of abstraction could one play volleyball thusly.



OMIROS | PURE ABSTRACTION | 2008  
1041  
Acrylic on Fabric | 109x91 CM

In the final decade of Omiros' life and career, he abandoned the figure entirely, embarking on his period of Pure Abstraction. He circled back in time, fully extending the thread of his oeuvre to the era when he first came to Paris, painting only abstractly.

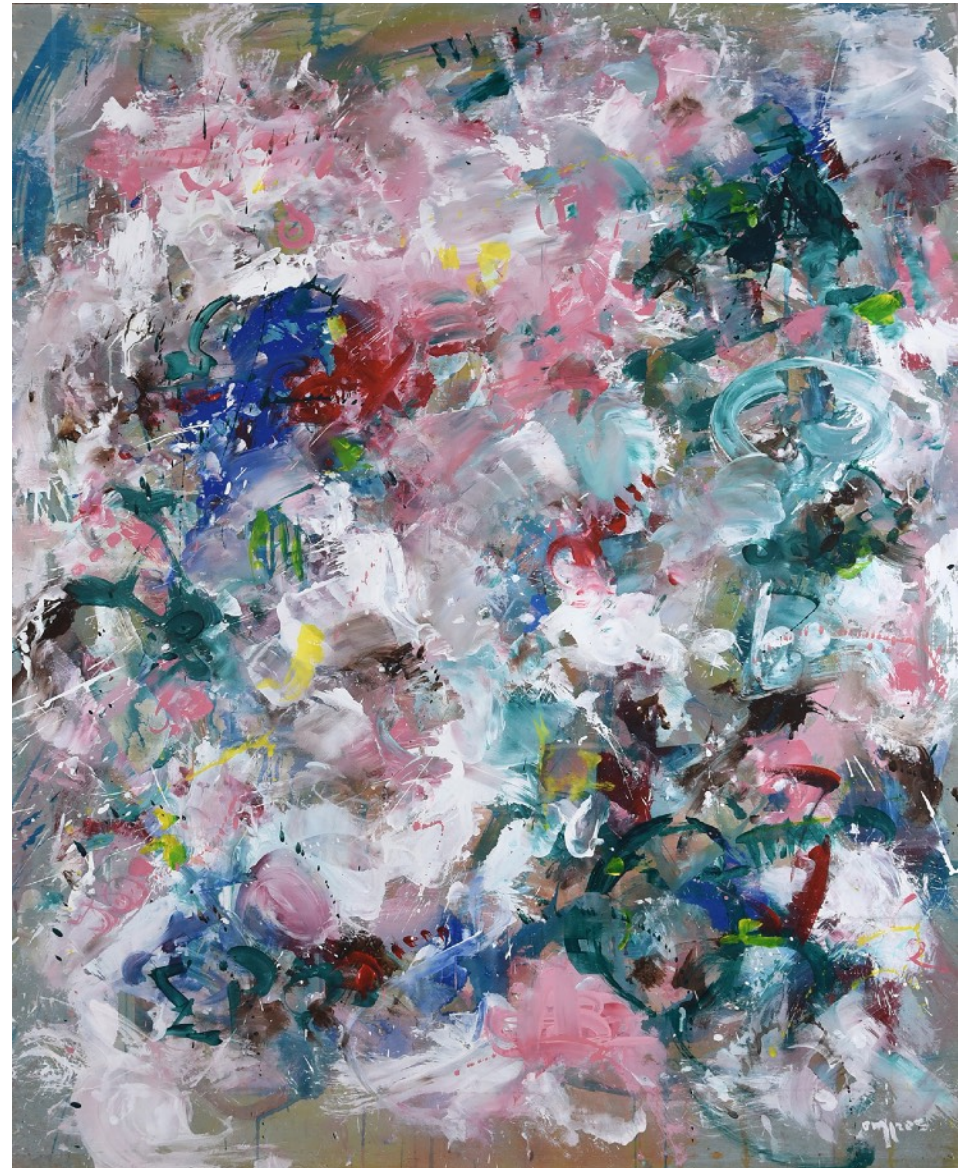
In *1041*, sweeping brushstrokes evince an ethereal tone using a thick, opaquely applied painting technique.

There is a balance between large gestural movements and delicately placed marks, creating a tension within the composition—one that is mesmerizing in its circular, spiraling, and calligraphic movements.

Color is the primary motivating force in the emotional content of this work, wherein layers of pure pigment combine in ways that express both a distinct rhythmic quality while simultaneously expounding the chaotic beauty and spontaneity of the universe.

*1041* affects the viewer personally and deeply with its subtle use of hues that blend into one another, such as the rosy shades of pink and soft sea-foam greens, the sudden bursts of richly pigmented blue and deep red.

Omiros uses color alone to communicate his inner vision of space and the “virtual” particles rapidly bursting into and out of existence in a visible display of consciousness, with the lighter and softer hues placed on the outer edges of the composition, and darker tones focused away from the edges of the canvas.



OMIROS | PURE ABSTRACTION | 2009  
1151  
Acrylic on Fabric | 101x81 CM





Omiros uses highly potent, pure tones to build his composition in *1151*.

Shades of yellows, violets, and reds move in waveform across the canvas without effort. There is no observer yet. They are free in the plein-air openness that dares to be embraced and coalesced by the observer effect.

The dark tones absorb the sudden bursts of bright yellow and orange that seem to appear and disappear.

The overwhelmingly light palette that Omiros favored in previous works is not emphasized here.

Instead, there is a more serious consideration for color, with a focus on the push-and-pull effect created by pairing complementary colors such as yellow and violet, blue and orange.

*1151* is seemingly a meditation on the human condition in that the lighter colors represent the outward appearance of the self, while the darker hues are indicative of inner, private lives.

Omiros' vision is sharp, and he is able to perceive his free space in a strong manner. The colors acquire virtues such as perspective, harmony, purity, simplicity, and beautiful non-figural form.

OMIROS | PURE ABSTRACTION | 2009  
992  
Acrylic on Fabric | 101x81 CM



Shades of green, pink, and white command the composition of 992, with varying tones of blue and yellow emerging below and above the surface of these dominant colors.

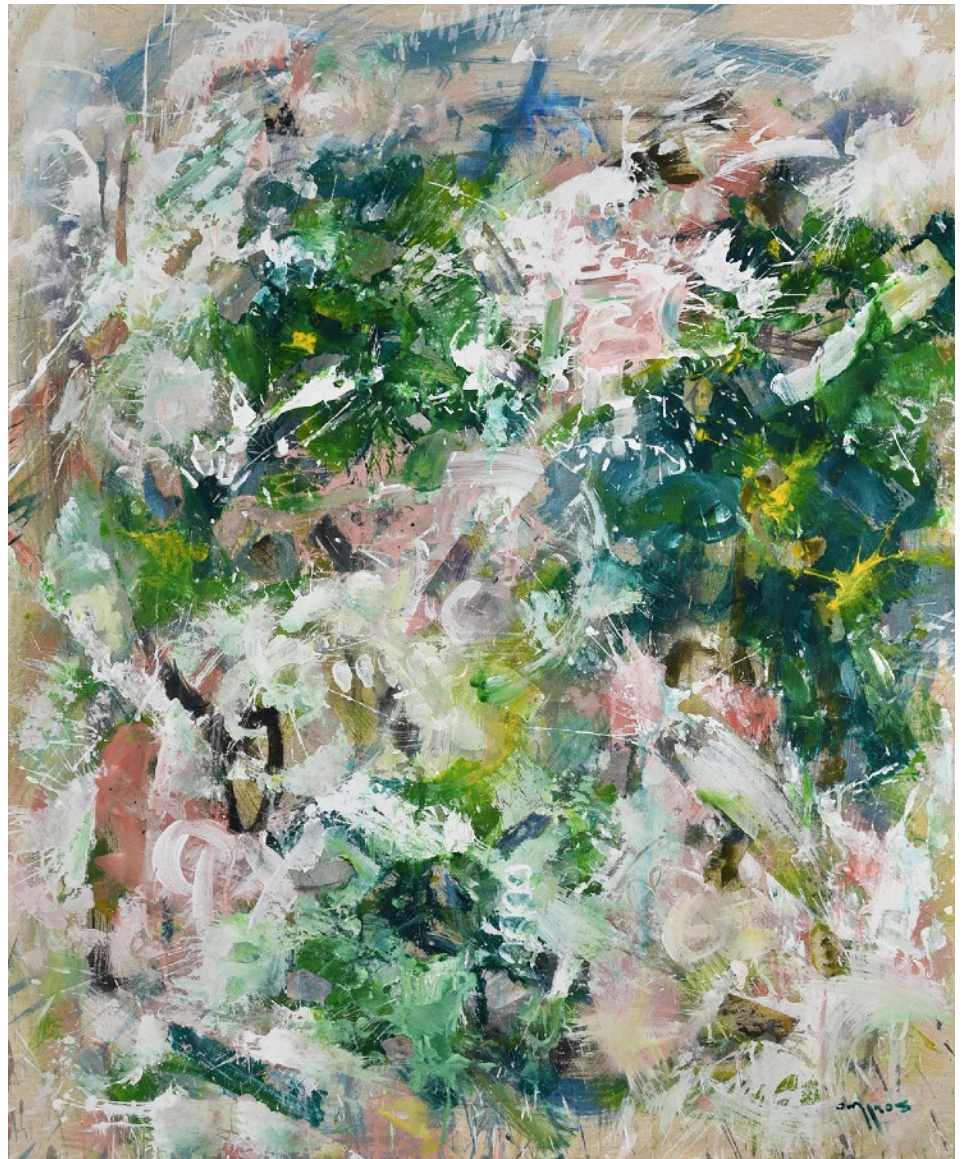
The abundance of primary colors is a natural motif Omiros frequently employed in his Pure Abstraction paintings, alluding to the beauty and bounty of the natural world.

There is a sense of jaunty openness to the composition, creating a pleasant visual character through the pairing of complementary hues of green and pink, yellow and blue.

These tones, adjacent in their chromatic values, give 992 a well-balanced temperament, complemented by Omiros' light-handed brushwork, giving this painting a sense of ease, comfort, and bien-être.

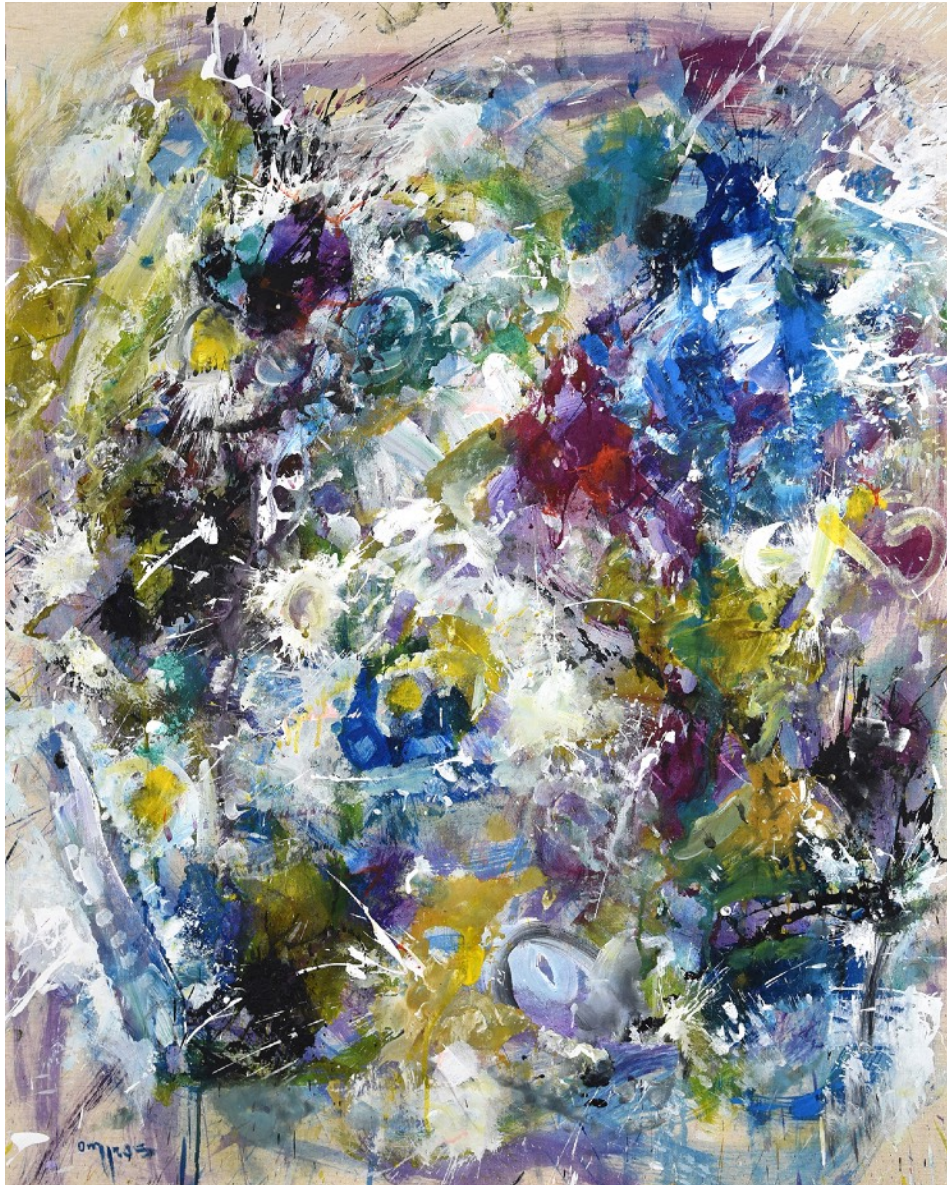
The exploration of color relationships and the emotional affect of their visual stimulation gave Omiros inner peace, satisfaction, and self-realization. Yes! He did it! He created his own pictorial language in art, in his own way.

While the composition of this piece appears casual in its execution, it is also undeniably sprightly and vigorous.





OMIROS | PURE ABSTRACTION | 2009  
989  
Acrylic on Fabric | 101x81 CM



In Omiros' Pure Abstraction painting 989, his approach to color continues his quest through the spectrum of his free space.

It does not depart from earthy tones found in other compositions from this period. That said, while the signature abstract brushstrokes seen in other works by the artist's hand are present here, there is a particularly fulminant quality to the marks in this composition.

Deep violet, black, jewel-toned blues, and yellow ochre expand across the canvas in fluid gestures that reflect Omiros' interest in exploring the conceptual nature of wave, particle, and space—turning science into art.

Gesture alone does not evoke these observations, however, as the color choices made in this composition exude a cosmic attitude.

989 appears as a universe that could infinitely expand past the edge of its fabric, meditating on that which exists beyond what can be figurally portrayed, opting instead to allow Omiros' *Free Space* to manifest itself.

Yet another masterful representation of Omiros' unequalled vision, talent and mastery.

OMIROS | PURE ABSTRACTION | 2009  
997  
Acrylic on Fabric | 101x81 CM



Vibrant and resplendent, 997 exhibits all of the characteristics Omiros sought to demonstrate in his Pure Abstraction period.

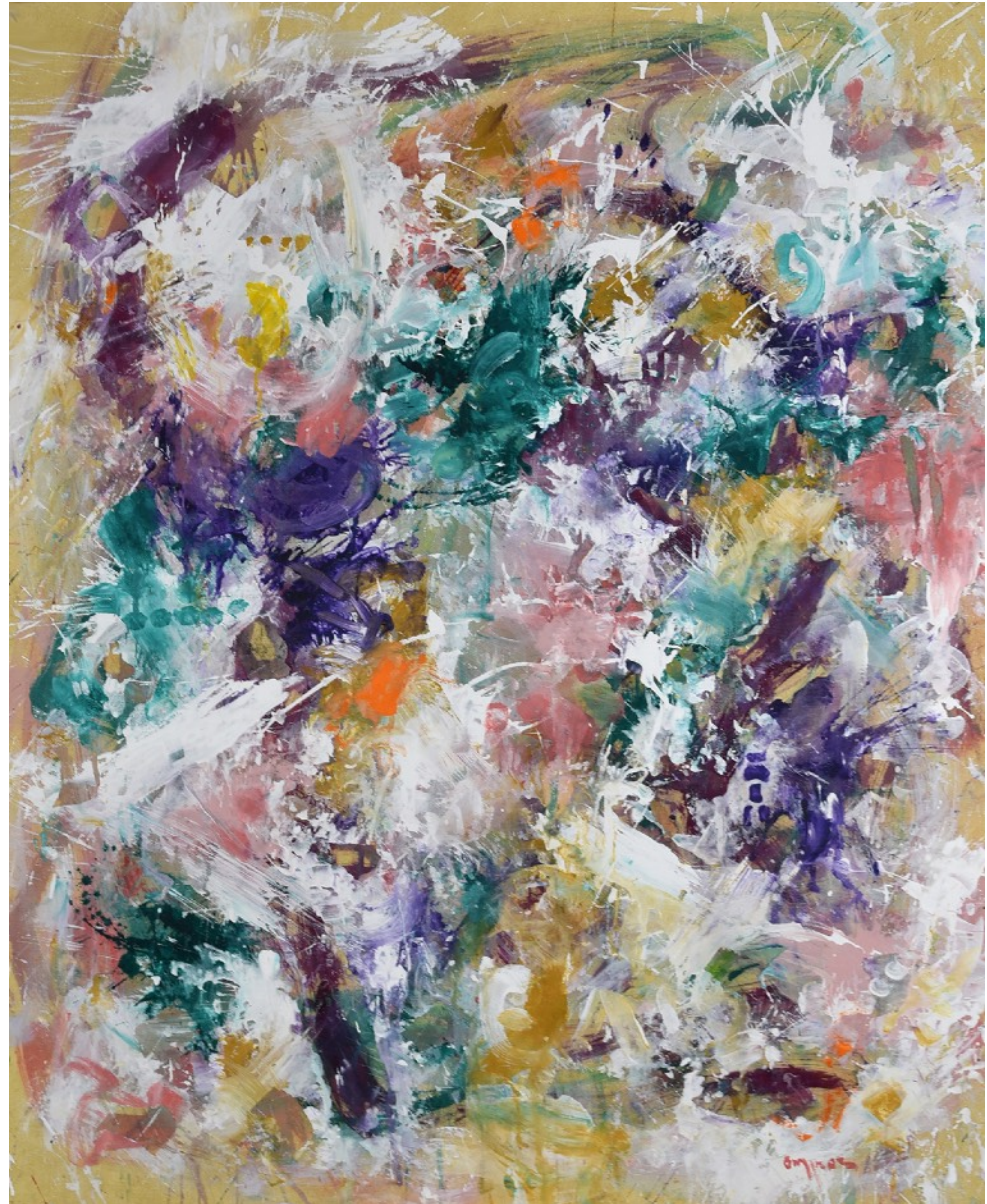
In this composition there is no sense of alluded figuration or overly punctuated and patterned mark-making present.

Omiros' palette is equally free from the restrictions of a conventional Delacroix color wheel, using a range of highly saturated violet, blue, yellow, orange, and pink hues.

In 997, colors splash against the surface of the canvas, spreading out from their point of contact in all directions.

There is a particular volatility to the composition, arising from the sketchy marks made by Omiros and his choice to layer many colors within and against one another.

While 997 presents a more playful tone than other compositions from this period, there is still a definitive sense of seriousness and tension about it, created through the arrangement of colors and forms that appear at odds with another.



# BIOGRAPHY

Omiros Chrisopoulos (1927-2010), known as OMIROS, was born on February 26th, 1927 in Istanbul, Turkey. Having spent 40 years in Paris, he also lived—and died—in the United States (as an American citizen). But birth, nationality, and residency aside, Omiros was—and remains—universal.

Despite having lost the vision in his right eye at age three, as early as he could hold a pencil and carry a notebook, all Omiros wanted to do was color. As a boy he saw colors and shapes flying in space and landing on his notebook. He was a natural prodigy.

In 1947, 20-year-old Omiros was in Paris, pursuing his dream to paint. He became immersed in the *Avant-Garde* movement, and pioneered painting gouaches in an as-yet unknown style: *Minimalism*. Omiros began to reduce all of the shapes, forms, marks, colors, and tones of his compositions to a point of almost vanishing; so that he might “achieve the absolute minimalism of things.”

In the late 50s, Omiros became fascinated by the infinite expanses of space in the universe. At this time, he called his paintings “*Mon Espace Libre*”: “*My Free Space*.” He wondered: “what happens to perspective at the end of space?” Thus began his quest between abstraction and figuration to see perspective in and out of space like no one has done before.

At this time, he met Yves Klein, Armand Fernandez, Jean Tinguely, Nikki de Saint Phalle, and Lucio Fontana, becoming a member of the Salon des Comparaisons at the Musée d’Art Moderne, as well as the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles. Omiros’ works were shown by the most important galleries of those years, such as Gallery One in both Paris and London, Gallery Apollinaire in Milan, Gallery Taptoe in Brussels (with Ascer Jorn and Ralph Rumny), Gallery Iris Clert in Paris, and Gallery Camille Renault in Paris.

By the early 1970s, Omiros, disenchanted with the Parisian artist scene, eschewed it and began immersing himself in *Abstraction*. At times, these paintings seem like never-seen new art forms, suggesting the life force of nature and deep space itself. At others, they evoke a direct relation to his emotions, moods, and feelings.

By the late 1970s, Omiros, dropped *Abstraction* much as he had *Minimalism*, and found yet another passage in his pictorial journey, this time in quite the opposite direction; namely, toward the *Figurative*. It was as though the abstract had become too unstable, distant, fragile, and unavailable to a man who wanted more meaning. Thus, he began including forms back into his abstractions. This new passage became his own way of speaking in color, form, and abstraction—his own *Figural Abstraction*.

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## BIOGRAPHY Continued

In 1979, Omiros began to paint his majestic Byzantines, wherein he captured the divine with such purity and sanctity that these paintings speak in color and spirit.

Through the 80s and into the 21st Century, his ability to express became unleashed, and all that inspired him, became. He continued the Byzantines, yet as though amassing both his own lifetime and that of humanity, he started painting different periods simultaneously, like ten artists going through time at warp speed. He painted *Mythology, The Massacres, Sports, Fashion, The Four Seasons, The Masks, The Dances* and much more; exploring storytelling—reveling in the folklore, rituals, hyperbole, and personification of nature, natural phenomena, and the body—the latter being where he dared to portray death and suffering.

At the carrefour of abstraction and figuration, Omiros created a new scale, a new definition of surface, a new syntax of relationships among space, pigment, edge, and figure. He was able to displace the hierarchies of figuration with an unprecedented and powerful intricate self-generating structure, forever extending the syntax of his pictorial language.

However, even more so, Omiros proves to be a master adept, at being deeply inspired by a myriad of themes and at being able to paint them in styles beguiling the juxtaposition between background and foreground, always eliminating or creating perspective in his *Free Space*.

In the final decade of Omiros' life, he embarked on a period of *Pure Abstraction* where he abandoned the figure entirely doing a full revolution around his artistic star. Whereas in the past, the abstract played a lyrical mise-en-scène to his periods, themes and series, the abstract now became the heart of his paintings. The paintings of this period reveal the full expression of Omiros' artistic journey and genius.

In spite of all of his remarkable contributions to modernist art, Omiros' views of his own work always remained courageously humble. Yet, in an unexpected guise, this humility became the unlikely characteristics that came together, producing a master of modernist painting.

Omiros departed this reality on the 29th of August 2010. He left a tremendous opus that will be exhibited at Atelier Omiros & La Galleria in changing exhibitions.





## EXHIBITIONS

- 1954 Frescoes in Nice and Cimiez, France, for the ceiling of a private estate.
- 1955 Omiros sets the premise of his "Free Space," with an Exhibition at Gallery One, Paris, France, which can be seen as the one of the first artistic expressions of the Minimalistic Movement in the Avant-Garde as well as the School of Paris.
- 1956 Minimalist Exhibition, Gallery Apollinaire, Milan.
- 1957 Minimalist Exhibition, Gallery Camille Renault, Paris.
- 1958 Minimalist Exhibition, Gallery New Vision, London.
- 1958 Minimalist Exhibition, Gallery Taptoe, Brussels (with Ascer Jorn and Ralph Rumny).
- 1959 Minimalist Exhibition, Gallery Iris Clert, Paris, as well as Gallery Camille Renault, Paris.
- 1959 Minimalist Exhibition, Gallery One, Paris and London.
- 1963 Abstraction Exhibition, Gallery du Haut Pavé, Paris.
- 1963 Two abstract murals in Sologne, France, for the private property of Madame Segard.
- 1963 Abstract Mural in Neuilly-sur-Seine, Paris, for the private property of the family Houzel.
- 1965 Abstract Exhibition, Gallery Le Carrefour des Arts, Sion, Switzerland.
- 1966 Mural in ceramic in Rue de Transvaal, Paris, for the private property of the family Roux.
- 1967 Two murals on cement in 38 and 44, Rue des Envierges, Paris, for the private property of the family Bernardin.
- 1968 One mural in ceramic in 21, Salonica, Greece, for Megalou Alexandrou.
- 1969 One mural in ceramic in Kolonaki, Athens, Greece, for the private property of the family Katas.
- 1969 Two ceramic murals and three stained glass windows in Vaucresson, 11, Allée des Genêts, France, on the property of art-dealer Remy Narboni.
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- 1970 One mural in ceramic for a college in Niort, Deux Sèvres, France. Commissioned by the City's Ministry of Cultural Services.
- 1970 Omiros starts exhibiting back and forth between New York and Paris.
- 1971 Decoration of a swimming pool 46 x 26 feet (14 x 8 meters) in Sands Point, Port Washington, New York.
- 1972 Byzantine Exhibition, McDonald Hall, Clifford Furnas College, Buffalo, New York.
- 1976 One ceramic mural, one stained-glass mural, one ceiling in glass, and one mural in plastic material; Union Turnpike and Springfield Boulevard, Flushing, New York. Commissioned by the City's Public Works Department.
- 1977 Byzantine Exhibition at the Press and Information Center, New York City.
- 1980 Genocides and Massacres of the 20th Century; exhibition at the Kavookdjian Hall, New York City.
- 1981 Byzantine Exhibition at the New York Athletic Club, New York City.
- 1981 Book publication of Byzantine Art: A Contemporary View, edited in three languages; 416 pages with 420 color illustrations.
- 1982 Show at Omiros Studio, 347 West 39th Street, New York, New York City.
- 1983 CBS - Half-hour television program with Omiros, "For Our Times."
- 1984 Show in the Omiros Union City studio, 380 Mountain Road, Union City, New Jersey.
- 1988 One-man show at his Paris studio, 45, rue de l'Echiquier, Paris.
- 1989 Entire decoration of Antipolis Cultural Center, Skhimatari, Beotia, Greece, including two ceramic murals and the decoration in handmade, hand-painted ceramics of a large swimming pool (66 x 33 feet [20 x 10 meters]), ceiling decoration, and a permanent display of 36 paintings.
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## EXHIBITIONS *Continued*

- 1991 One-man show at the Omiros Union City Studio, 380 Mountain Road, Union City, New Jersey.
- 1995 Decoration in handmade, hand-painted ceramics of large swimming pool (92 x 33 feet [28 x 10 meters]) for private condominium at 380, Mountain Road, Union City, New Jersey.
- 1995 The Byzantine. exhibition at The National Museum of Catholic Art and History, Olympic Tower, Fifth Avenue, New York City.
- 1995 Show with changing themes and periods at AMEROPA ABELA, Edenhaus Gallery, Berlin, Germany.
- 1996 Show at Duo Automobile Salon Ku-Damm, Formula 1 paintings, Berlin, Germany.
- 1996 Three-month show at Coupé 77, The Dances and Fashion paintings, Berlin, Germany.
- 1996 One-man show of diverse periods at the ArtTrust Gallery Gallery, 1375 Main Street, Sarasota, Florida.
- 1996 One-man show of diverse periods at the Cultural Center of Casa Lamm Gallery, Alvaro Obregon No.99, Mexico City.
- 1996 One-man show of diverse periods at the Modern Art Café, Coconut Grove, Miami, Florida.
- 1998 One-man show of diverse periods at ArtTrust Gallery, 501 Brickell Avenue Lobby, Miami, Florida.
- 1999 One-man show of diverse periods at ArtTrust Gallery, Falkenstrasse 4, CH-8008 Zürich, Switzerland.
- 1999 One-man show of Fashion at Erik Schaix Gallery, Paris.
- 2000 Show at ArtTrust Gallery, Abstract, Nürnberger Str. 8, Berlin, Germany.
- 2001 Book publication of Abstract and Beyond, edited in English; 500 pages, with 430 color illustrations.
- 2008 One-man show (June to August) of The Byzantine at The Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, Greece.
- 2008 Publication of second book, Byzantine Art, A Contemporary View #2, edited in English; 480 pages, with 435 color illustrations.
- 2008 Book publication of Olympics Games and Beyond, edited in English; 290 pages, with 248 color illustrations.
- 2008 Installation at the Omiros Creative Center (OCC), Bayonne, New Jersey. The exhibit included three rotating OMIROS murals (8.5 x 33 feet each), as well as a fourth mural (24 x 12 feet) as a waterfall—all in ceramic OMIROS art tiles. Also featured were four round stained-glass OMIROS windows, five feet in diameter, rotating in front of a single five-foot window.
- 2009 Greek Mythology Exhibition at Altos Del Mar Sculpture Park, Miami Beach, Florida.
- 2010 Abstract and Beyond Exhibition at ArtTrust Gallery EU Center, Berlin, Germany.
- 2010 Book publication of Mythologism: The Art of Omiros, edited in English; 290 pages, with 248 color illustrations.
- 2010 Show at ArtTrust Gallery EU Center, Formula 1, Berlin, Germany.

### POSTHUMOUS

- 2011 Show at Ameropa Art Forum at the Lietzensee, Pure Abstraction, Charlottenburg, Berlin, Germany.
- 2012 Show at ArtTrust Gallery Atelier 72, Greek Mythology, Miami, Florida.
- 2012 Opening of the Omiros Art Building with a permanent exhibition of OMIROS artworks from different periods, Bayonne, New Jersey.
- 2013 Show at ArtTrust Gallery - Atelier 72, Greek Mythology, Leda and the Swan, Miami, Florida.
- 2014 Comparison show at ArtTrust Gallery Ocean Gallery, Omiros and Paul Gauguin, Miami Beach, Florida.
- 2015 Christmas Show at ArtTrust Gallery, The Byzantine, Nürnberger Str. 8, Berlin, Germany.
- 2017 One Man Show at ArtTrust Gallery Ocean Gallery, Mythologism, Miami Beach, Florida.
- 2018 The Byzantine, Atelier Omiros & La Galleria, Bedford, New York.
- 2019 :a WHOLE wOrLd:, Atelier Omiros & La Galleria, Bedford, New York.



# John Elow a: OMIROS



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