



**REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, SPORT
AND YOUTH**



5 June 2020

“REBIRTH”

The return of 219 works of art from the Turkish Cypriot to the Greek Cypriot community

STATE GALLERY OF CONTEMPORARY ART – SPEL

(16 June – 1st August 2020)

The exhibition “REBIRTH” opens at the State Gallery of Contemporary Art – SPEL on Tuesday 16 June 2020, following its cancellation last March due to COVID-19.

The exhibition presents the 219 artworks returned, after a period of 46 years, by the Turkish Cypriot to the Greek Cypriot Community, as part of the agreed confidence-building measures. Correspondingly, in the framework of this agreement, the Turkish Cypriot community received from the Greek Cypriot community audio and visual archives of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC), from the pre-1963 period, which are related to the history of the Turkish Cypriot community.

The responsibility for the process of returning the artworks and archival material was entrusted to the Bi-communal Technical Committee on Culture. As is well known, this Committee was established in 2015 by the leaders of the two communities, with the main aim of promoting and facilitating the organization of cultural events that will bring the two main Cypriot communities closer together.

The artworks, including emblematic works of Greek Cypriot and Greek artists from the first decades of the 20th century until the early 1970s, had remained in the northern part of the island after 1974. They were later found in various homes and public places and were safeguarded by Turkish Cypriots. Sixty-seven of these works, together with audiovisual material, were recently presented for two days at Ledra Palace in Nicosia, for a limited number of visitors, under the auspices of the United Nations. The exhibition was inaugurated on 3 February 2020 at a special ceremony, in the presence of the two leaders, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Cyprus and Head of UNFICYP, members of the Technical Committee, diplomats, artists and their families. Subsequently, the works were officially handed over to the Republic of Cyprus, which undertook, via the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, to present them to the general public. At the same time,

the process of returning the works to the rightful beneficiaries is being activated through a special committee appointed by the Council of Ministers.

The exhibition at SPEL entitled "REBIRTH (ΞΑΝΑΓΕΝΝΗΣΗ)", which will be divided into sections depending on the speculated or confirmed origin of the works (e.g. Municipal Gallery of Famagusta), brings to light iconic works of historical Greek Cypriot artists such as George Pol. Georgiou, Giorgos Skotinos, Stelios Votsis, Christoforos Savva, Andreas Charalambides, Michael Kashialos, Ioannis Kisssonergis, Nikos Nikolaides, Rea Bailey, Adamantios Diamantis, Telemachos Kanthos and others. Works by prominent Greek artists such as Ioannis Tsarouchis, Ioannis Moralis, Nikos Hadjikyriakos-Ghika, Giorgos Gounaropoulos, Fotis Kontoglou and others, are also on display.

The exhibition is organized by the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth and is curated by Dr Yiannis Toumazis, art historian/theorist and Co-Vice President of the Technical Committee for Culture, who has conducted the relevant research, completing the initial process of identifying the works.

- *During the exhibition an information-collection point will be operating for the public, with the view to further assist the research on the history of the artworks.*
- *Various events such as presentations and tours will be announced.*

The exhibition is held under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Cyprus Mr Nicos Anastasiadis.

No inauguration event will take place. The reopening of the exhibition space will take place in compliance with the guidelines of the health protocols of the Ministry of Health.

Poster: Detail from the work of George Pol. Georgiou "The Rebirth of Cyprus"(gr. «Η Ξαναγέννηση της Κύπρου») (1960), oil on plywood, 180x90 cm. Provenance: Artist's workshop, Famagusta.

STATE GALLERY OF CONTEMPORARY ART – SPEL

73 Ammochostou Street, 1016 Nicosia

Duration

16 June – 1st August 2020

Opening hours

Tuesday – Friday 10:00-18:00, Saturday 11:00-19:00 (closed on public holidays)

Organiser

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth - Cultural Services

Information: Tel.: 22479600, Facebook / Instagram: spelstategallery