

**PRESS RELEASE**

**DOMESTIC GODS AND MUSHROOM HEROES**

**Opening party 6.00pm -11pm 3d December 09 at Hackney Empire**

**Guest Live Performance by Stained Glass Heroes**

**D J appearance by Prima Volta and performance by Duncan Ward**

**Christina Mitrentse** investigates the esoteric qualities of myth through possessing a dexterity of techniques, including painting, handcrafted sculpture, drawing, installation and conceptual appropriation. At Hackney Empire she presents two of her on going series entitled '*Iconic Fungi Portraits*' and '*12 Domestic Gods*'.

The humorous portraits encapsulate curious and symbolic fungi, creating poetic ensembles that are inspired by residents of Hackney. Mitrentse's interest lay in the contemporary use of "iconic", the perhaps deliberate aspiration to invest things and people with properties, which render them miraculous and superhuman, magical and godlike. The works question the contemporary man that has turned into something literally 'picturesque'. Fungi's parasitical nature appears to live off their hosts in the iconography, while it is suggestive of the certainty of decay, the absurdity of mortality, and a new divine beauty born from mutation.

The '*12 Domestic Gods*' is a photographic installation, which deals with notions of western socio-cultural identity by remapping it within a historical perspective. The re-presentation of statues based on the 12 Olympian Greek Gods, juxtaposes parallels of 'high art', antiquity and the contemporary domestic life. This contextual transmission from the banal to the monumental is counter-balanced with the allegory of the imagery, in which the performative narratives function as reconstructions of the primary "narrations" of beauty.

Mitrentse is a Greek visual artist and art educator based in Hackney. She holds an MA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design. Her artworks are included in both private and public collections in Europe and the United States. Selected shows include: Solo-Building My Library, NO:IDgallery '09, Brench/Absorb, Oblong gallery 09, In/Flux HTAP, London 09, Brussels Art Fair '09 The Apartment Gallery Athens. Impromptu, Schwartz Gallery London '09. Public Project Commission, Greenwich Foot Tunnel 08-09 London. 'Time' Stephen Lawrence Gallery Greenwich 08. The End of the Earth' at NDSM- Amsterdam 08. 'Emerging Artists Explore Cinema' Griechische Kulturstiftung Berlin 06. The Secret School Solo show in a bomb shelter, London 05. An Outing, Contemporary Art from Beltsios Collection Athens 06. She also co-curates international shows in London and Greece, most noticeably 'Celestial Contract' Schwartz gallery 12/11/09. 'Who Cares About Greek Art?' Athens 06, and 'The Flat Pack' Deptford London 06.

Mitrentse's artworks can also be found at Lola Nikolaou Gallery & NO:ID gallery London, Greece.

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