

Duarte Sequeira

Text by Despoina Tzanou

O R A C L E : a site of historical memory and projection of future possibilities; an assemblage of mythological, historical, and speculative beings that channel divine wisdom; or an artefact of language, offering cryptic messages open to interpretation.

Oracle examines how narratives of progress, identity, and survival are shaped by both natural forces and human actions. It presents a cyclic perspective of history, where past, present, and future converge, suggesting that narratives resurface in new forms rooted in our collective consciousness. Drawing on the potential of ruins, Petros Moris explores how fragments of history can serve as foundations for alternative futures, transforming remnants into symbols of renewal. Taking place in the subterranean gallery space of Duarte Sequeira, *Oracle* embodies the buried histories of geological spaces, using their (in)tense atmosphere as a metaphor for collapsing timelines. The exhibition weaves geological, industrial, and historical narratives, reflecting the processes of extraction and their psychosocial impacts. By applying the concept of the oracle, Moris addresses contemporary uncertainties related to technological, socioeconomic, and environmental shifts, revealing parallels between these narratives and the complex realities of resource extraction.

Here, Moris presents two bodies of works: *Oracle (Generation)* and *Oracle (Membrane)*.

Oracle (Generation) includes four wall sculptures that combine marbles sourced from Greek quarries. Formed through geological pressures, marble embodies the relationship between earth's transformations and human histories, unveiling layers of meaning within material and cultural realms. The work looks at how language emerges through (and because of) anthropomorphic interpretations in the search for meaning, revealing its influence on our understanding of time and the cognitive patterns humans use to assign significance. These language-constructs reconfigure perceptions of meaning, materiality, and time through algorithmic processes reminiscent of ancient oracular practices.

In *Oracle (Membrane)*, Moris presents six face-like sculptures made from nickel-plated copper, combining archaeological scans with 3D forms sourced online to create chimeric masks that incorporate human and non-human features. Transfigured through digital fabrication and traditional techniques, these sculptures exist between ritual masks and haunting species. Their metallic surfaces reflect their geological origins and the mineral foundations of technological infrastructures. Their reflections shift as viewers move, emphasising the fluidity of identity and perception. By questioning distinctions between the more-than-human, the mythical, and the machinic, this series explores how identity and agency emerge from both biological and cultural elements, emphasising their relationship in shaping our understanding of the world.

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The oracle smiles,
but has no mouth

Time weaves its roots in the earth
a cradle of collapsing timelines

Arising from the depths of the earth
a faint image of you

A face I half-remember / half-have-forgotten

Beneath layers of stone
waiting to be unearthed

The oracle holds its breath

Listen! Something is moving beneath

Look! Faces emerge

I cannot trace it anymore