

ESCAPE
ROOM

ANDREAS
ANGELIDAKIS

Curated by
George Bekirakis

ESCAPE ROOM

ΑΦΥΓΗ ΑΠΟΔΡΑΧΗ

The Greek Pavilion at the
61st International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia
9 May – 22 November 2026
Preview: 6, 7, 8 May
Venue: Giardini, Venice, Italy



La Biennale di Venezia

61. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

The Ministry of Culture has selected artist Andreas Angelidakis (b. 1968, Athens) to represent Greece at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia in 2026, with the presentation of an extensive installation at the Greek Pavilion. The project is curated by George Bekirakis, with the Metropolitan Organisation of Museums of Visual Arts of Thessaloniki (MOMUS) serving as National Commissioner. With a long-standing and distinguished presence on both the Greek and international art scenes, Athens-based Andreas Angelidakis has forged a hybrid, research-driven practice that brings architecture into vivid dialogue with the visual arts and digital media. His work touches upon the notions of ruin and historicity, articulated through narratives that resist linearity and challenge entrenched binaries such as the imaginary and the real, the physical and the virtual, the authentic and the copy. His installations approach history through the strategies of displacement, distortion, inversion, and humour, staging alternative frameworks for reading reality, identity, and cultural memory anew. Fiction lies at the core of his methodology as a primary narrative tool, while through processes of queering and the destabilisation of the mechanisms that underpin truth and authenticity, his work probes the architecture of perception, culture in the making, and the construction of selfhood.

For the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, Angelidakis presents *Escape Room*, transforming the Greek Pavilion into a present-day Platonic Cave. Plato's seminal text is reimagined as an immersive, inhabitable environment, situated within the current era of post-truth and rising nationalist populism. In Angelidakis's hands, the Platonic allegory becomes a malleable instrument for probing the present, in which the world of images is saturated with digital illusions and cultural replicas. Shifting the focus to the history of the Greek Pavilion itself, the installation assembles elements presented as contested, constructed truths, illuminating both the complex nature of historical knowledge and its entanglement with nationalism and propaganda.

Recast as an escape room, the Pavilion embodies a reality structured like a game, while symbolically confronting the paradox of a building attempting to escape its own "self" and, therefore, its history. Through a plunge into its troubled past, the Greek Pavilion happens upon a "bathroom mirror selfie", frozen permanently in Year Zero (1934): the year the Nazis began the persecution of homosexuals, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini met for the first time in Venice following their sweeping electoral victories, and the Greek and Austrian Pavilions were officially inaugurated.

Angelidakis notes: "The National Pavilions of the Giardini were designed as vessels to communicate the political agendas of the governments that erected them at that particular historical moment. Today, they stand as Frozen Fascist and Colonial Caves, trapped within the Giardini, now a site for examining political choices, their consequences, and their transformation into art. Each Pavilion functions as a truth-generating mechanism, akin to the mechanisms in Plato's allegory of the cave, yet today recalling a Phantasmagoria of Global Trumpism: if we replace the Cave with the Screen, what remains is every manifestation of MAGA as a staging of fascism in 2025."

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ARTIST BIO

Andreas Angelidakis (b. 1968, Athens) is an architect and artist based in Athens. He studied architecture at the Southern California Institute of Architecture in Los Angeles and subsequently at Columbia University in New York. His artistic practice is informed by a vibrant interdisciplinary engagement spanning architecture, publications, writing, design, and exhibition-making. His work materialises at the threshold between the real and the virtual, historical memory and fiction, sincerity and humour, constructing new narrative environments as modes of experiencing and inhabiting the contemporary cultural and digital condition. In his conceptual cosmos, architecture operates more broadly as a vehicle for exploring identity, while Athens and the notion of the ruin – ancient, modern, or digital – recur as constant and critical motifs throughout his artistic output. From installation to essays, each work distils his ongoing inquiry into the relationship between viewer and artwork, while simultaneously foregrounding the interplay of power, space, and infrastructure through idiosyncratic visual systems that privilege embodied experiences within digital states.

His work has been presented in Greece and internationally at prominent institutions and exhibitions, including: National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens (EMST), Athens; Onassis Foundation, Athens; documenta 14, Athens and Kassel; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Galeria Municipal do Porto; Espace Niemeyer, Paris; Hayward Gallery, London; ETH, Zurich; and the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk. His works are held in prominent public and private collections worldwide.

Greece's national participation in the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia is primarily funded by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, with the Metropolitan Organisation of Museums of Visual Arts of Thessaloniki (MOMus) serving as National Commissioner. Strategic support is provided by Onassis Culture. Additional supporters include the EKKOMED Hellenic Film and Audiovisual Center, the Qualco Group, the Qualco Foundation, the National Bank of Greece, Ioannis and Maya Martinos, and Ioanna Martinou. The project is further realised with the generous support of the Irene Y. Panagopoulos Collection, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA), Anastasia Tsourea Saracaki, the NEON Organization for Culture and Development, the Perianth Hotel, Aliki Martinou, George Petrocheilos and Diamantis Xylas, Irini Laimou, the Thessaloniki Film Festival, the "The Art of Life" company, ARCH, the Polygreen Culture & Art Initiative (PCAI), Eleni Martinou and Andreas Melas.



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