

MARIANNE STRAPATSAKIS



## Secrets Passages-Lavrion

In her work "Secrets Passages-Lavrion", **Marianne Strapatsakis** introduces us to the second part of a trilogy in the process of creation. In this, her most recent narrative in image form, the protagonists are the Earth and one of the places where it was exploited at a very early date: Lavrio. The tunnels dug out of the solid body of the earth, the pits which still gape in the surface, and the subterranean life which, chthonic but marvellous, evolves in hiding beneath our feet and under the sun make up the field over which her restless gaze has wandered.

The first part of the trilogy, in contrast, concerned the element of water and linked the act of creation to the physical space of Mediterranean civilisation the sea. In that reconstruction of a cosmogony using the media of video film, water, Plexiglas columns and stainless steel panels, all the components were concentrated in a construction in space. Materials, techniques, the image and the script were amalgamated with the central characters of that narrative: water, and the temple of Athena Aphaea on Aegina. In the strikingly sensitive reading of the work written in 1989 by art historian Andreas Ioannidis under the title "The Spectres of the Mediterranean, or, The Reflections of the Past", attention was drawn to the continuous shift in perception of the creative concept from the "overthrow" of the forms and their historical references to their "restoration". In Strapatsaki's work, the history and image of the ancient temple were rebaptised in the water of which the wider physical and cultural landscape consisted, thus generating a new narrative about the unity of Nature and Art.

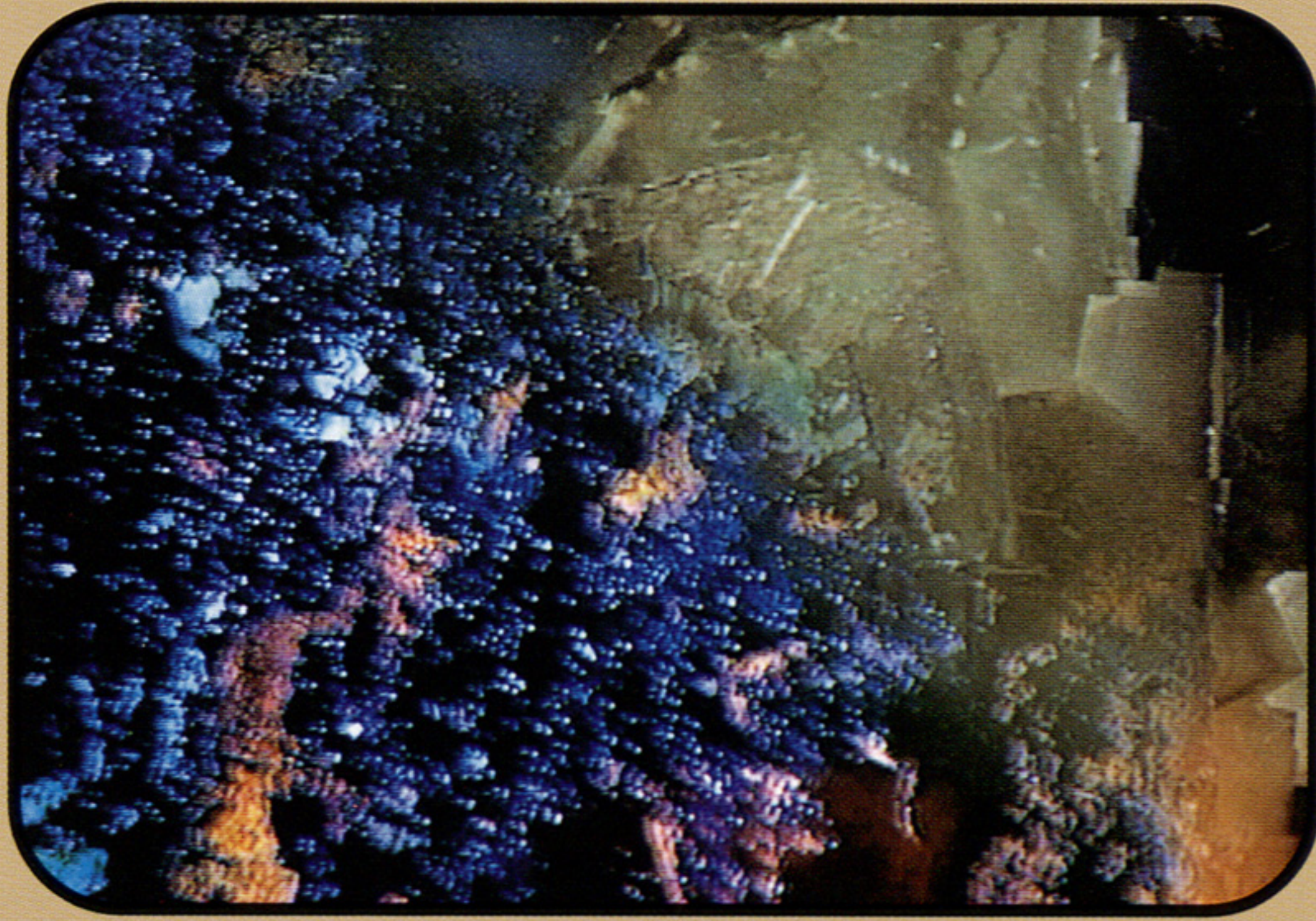
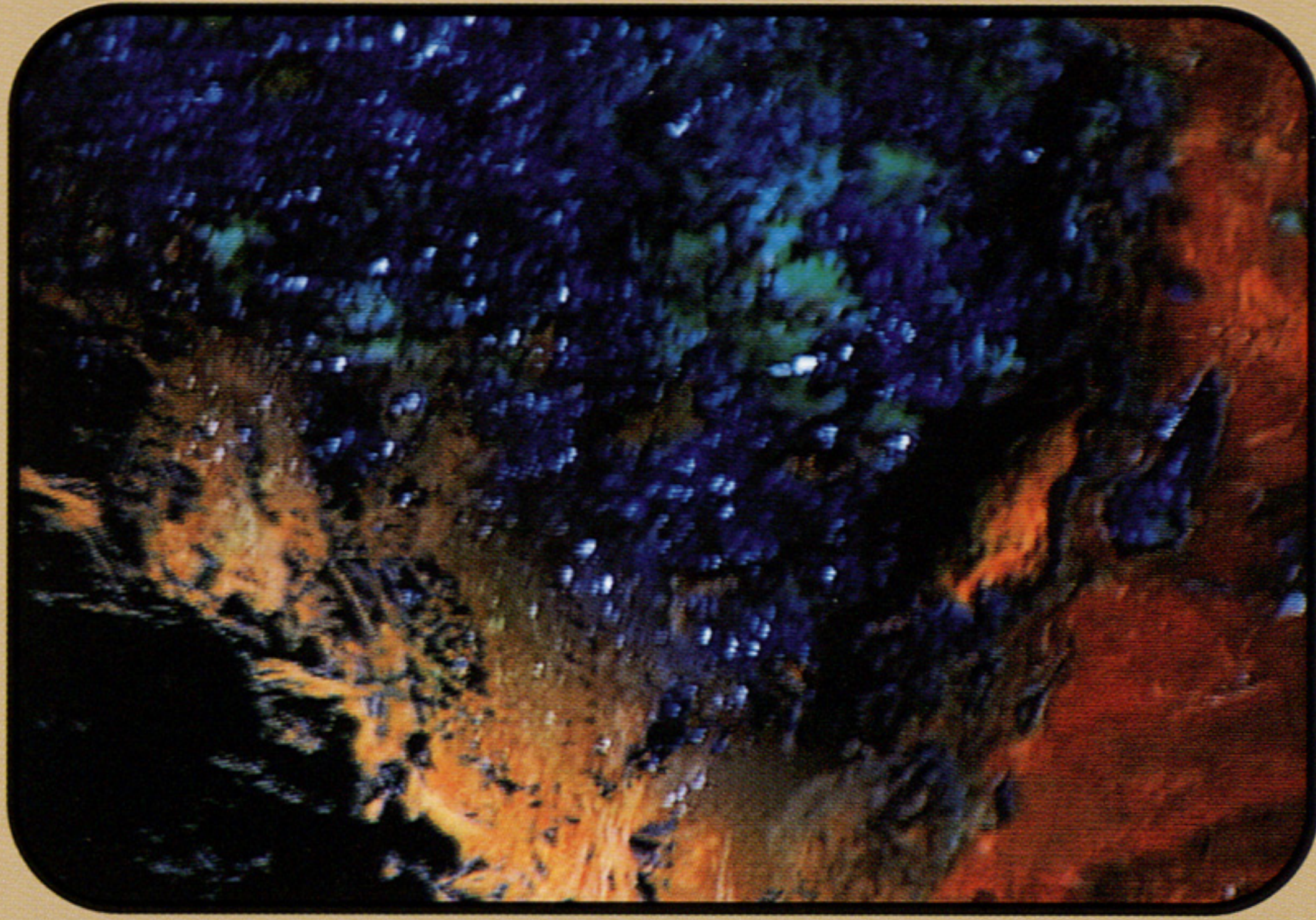
Today, Marianne Strapatsakis is still gazing at, and exploring, the same bipolar unity: Nature and Art. In the mineral world guarded within the womb of the Earth, the movement of water is reconstructed in a stabilised form. It is through this solid space that, centuries ago, man began to build the itineraries of an artificial cosmos which, later, opened up and consolidated the routes and firm structures of the industrial era, reaching the point of wasteful exploitation of the material wealth bestowed upon him by the Earth. At that point in history, Nature and Technology parted company. In this buried history, Strapatsaki walks once more between the elements of Nature and the remains of a mortified life -led on by a curiosity most closely resembling that of the explorer. Here, inevitably, the artist and her act of reconstruction intersect with certain other courses taken by the history of interpreting the world.

After observing water and fluidity, which as a natural state is inherent in the body and is reflected in the human mental functions, the artist's eye has turned to the solid walls of the Earth's hinterland. This brought her hard up against the solidified structure of things-of thought, of the form of the word. Her wanderings in that place where Nature is to be read in its constant flow and also in the crystallised records of the flow itself inescapably leads our thoughts to the channels of the spirit as they opened up from Heraclitus to the Stoics. In the history of civilisation, those —and other— viewpoints on the world have been the fixed points of reference for many different approaches. For art, they have been in various periods the object of fresh interpretations. The artist, bringing his gaze to a standstill and focusing his attention on a single specific aspect of the cosmos, seeks to crystallise that aspect in a script of some kind, in a unambiguous structure and technique which —apart from their power of expression— will also convey a concept of the world correlated against a given historical point of view. For Marianne Strapatsakis, the work of art talks of the process of observation as if it were the act of mining a wealth of concepts and images lying somewhere in the depths, beneath all flat and linear forms of information. With spontaneous, almost erotic, passion, she penetrates into the elements of nature, into the sea, into the earth, into the structures of civilisation, into the image of art, helping us "retrieve our senses", as Susan Sontag so perceptively put it in 1964, in reference to the language of art and its reading in the culture of the present day.

That is why, before proclaiming the superiority of a "new" viewpoint on the world, of a "new" reading of art, we should examine whether we are able "to see more, to hear more, to feel more".\* The course taken by Marianne Strapatsakis stimulates our sensibility in the direction of such a quest. Faced with the direction she has taken, interpretation is truly superfluous, and sight and script regain their power as purely creative acts.

\* Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation*, 1964

\* Efi Strouza is a member of the Greek Department of the AICA



IMAGES FROM THE VIDEO "SECRETS PASSAGES-LAVRION " 1996



# MARIANNE STRAPATSAKIS

**1947** Born in Athens. **1967** Athens College of Tehcnology: Diploma in Interior Decoration. **1969** Academy of Athens, Grand for five years for further studies in painting, École Nationale Suprieure des Beaux Arts -Paris. **1972** École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts: diploma in Painting, course Pierre Matthey, PARIS-Certificate in design, course M. Gili. Ecole du Louvre: Certificate in History of Arts, PARIS. **1979** Université de Paris I, Sorbonne: Licence Arts Plastiques.

## INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITIONS:

**1975** Gallery "Maison des Beaux Arts", oil on canvas, Paris. **1980** "ART STUDIO" acrylics, music of G. Couroupos, Athens. 1981 Frenche Institut of Salonica. Acrylics. 1984 "MEDUSE ART GALLERY" steel and oil pastel, Athens. Goethe Institute of Athens, steel and oil pastel. **1985** Goethe Institute of Athens, "PRAXIS 85" festival, Video-Installation music of Th. Zlatanov. **1988** Southaestern's Metropolitan Center Athens Video. **1989** 10th International Festival of video in Montpellier, Video-installation France. Cave Dimière, Guebwiller, Video installation. **1990** "MEDUSE ART GALLERY" steel and oil pastel, Athens. French Institut of Athens. Video installation. French Institut of Salonica. Video installation. Municipal Gallery of Rhodes, Video installation. Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemopain de Nice. Video installation. **1991** "DIMITO" Gallery. Crete, Water colours. **1993** "Auberge de France", Rhodes. Video installation-sculpture. **1994** "BYZANTIUM". Corfu. Video installation. **1995** "BYZANTIUM", Museum of Modern Art, San Diego, Chile. **1997** "MEDUSE ART GALLERY", Athens. Video installation, Paintings. Foundation of Greek Culfur, Berlin. Video installation. "BYZANTIUM", Le Canet, France. Video installation. **1998** "BYZANTIUM", Salonika. Video installation.

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

**1971** Salon des artistes Francais, Paris. **1972** Exposition du groupe de l'atelier de Pierre Matthey, Paris **1973** 9eme Grand prix de Peinture de la Cote d'Azur. Special mention. Salon international Paris-Sud, Paris. **1975** Exposition du groupe des artistes Grecs in "Greek Education Center", Paris. **1976** Exposition de cinq artistes contemporains à la "Citè Internationale des arts" Paris. **1979** "FEMINIE DIALOGUE 1979" à l' UNESCO, Paris. **1981** Four Greeks artistes SYMVOLY gallery, Athens. **1984** "ART FAIR 84" Athens "Analyses morphologiques, accumulation", French institut of Athens. **1986** "Gallery F" 10 Document. Video-Art, Athens. Studio Videograph, Video-Art, Salonica. Foundation "Vafopoulio" Video-Art, Salonica. **1987** 28th Festival of Cinema and Video, Salonica. Art and enviroment" Heraklion. "Festival of video French Istitut of Athens. **1988** European Media Art Festival, Osnabruck. "17+1" Municipal Gallery and MEDUSE ART GALLERY, Athens. **1989** Center of Contemporary art Ileana Tounta. Athens. **1990** 1st international Meeting Festivals of Video. Athens. 2th Biennal of Instambul. **1992** "Metamorphoses of the modern", National Gallery of Athens. **1993** "Video Art" Heraklio. Galley of "ARIA" Cefallonia. Panorama Europeo del Video arte, Madrid. "Eurometriki", Athens. **1994** "Roma Europa Rome. **1996** "MEDUSE ART GALLERY", Paros. "Fournos GALLERY", Athens. **1997** Rethymnon Centre for Contemporary Art. **1998** "GREEK HORIZONS" York City Art Gallery. England. "GREEK HORIZONS" Tullie House City Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle England. **1999** London Institut Gallery, London. University of Kingston, Kingston.

## PRINCIPLE PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

**1973** Newspaper "Nice Matin". Newspaper "Cannes Midi". 1975 Newspaper "TaNea". **1978** Greek Painter's dictionary, edition of "MELISSA" t. 4, p. 505, 506, 415. **1980** Television "ERT II". Television "ERT I" emission of M. Karavia. Radio "ERT II". **1981** Radio "ERT II" Newspaper "Salonica". **1981** Magazine "VIPS". **1984** Newspaper "TO BHMA" M. Katsanopoulou. Magazine of art "IKASTIKA" A. Ioannidis. Magazine of art "IKASTIKA" K. Stavropoulos. Television "ERT I" emission of M. Karavia. Texte for the catalogue for the exposition at the French Institut from M. Mavromatis. **1985** Newspaper "KATHIMERINI" D. Iliopoulou-Rogan Magazine "POLITIA" Ath Schina. Magazine "TACHIDROMOS". Magazine "GYNECA". Television ERT II emission PERISCOPIO Radio ERT II emission P. Rigopoulou. **1986** Newspaper "REG/ART" Marie France Avril Newspaper "MIDI LIBRE" Lise Ott Newspaper "LA CROIX DU MIDI" Newspaper "Dernières nouvelles d'Alsace" Serge Hartmann Newspaper "TO BHMA." Newspaper "LA GAZETTE" Jocelyne-G. Noller Magazines "TACHIDROMOS" Frida Bioubi Magazines "ENA" Nick Stathoulis. **1990** Newspapers "TO BHMA" "TA NEA" Charis Kabouridis "TA NEA" P. Katimertzi "ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ" Maria Maragou "Η ΕΠΟΧΗ" Athina Shina "KATHIMERINI" Dora Iliopoulou -Rogan "ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑ" Sophia Kazazi Magazines "ELLE" Maria Maragou "TACHIDROMOS" P. Kounenaki. "GYNAIKA" K. Papageorgiou "The Athenian" "ΚΑΙΚ" "ΑΝΤΙ" Alexnadre Xidis "TO TRAM" Sophia Kazazi Television ET2 Babis Plaitakis ET2 The Colors. **1993** Magazine "Videocamera" Ch. Braoulis Television TV4 Rhodes Hel. Moravia Television TV4 Rhodes Th. Theodorou New Radio Rhodes S. Diamantis Newspaper "Η δημοκρατική της Ρόδου" Ar. Miaoulis Newspaper "Η Ροδιακή" P. Parasos Newspaper "Η Ροδιακή" P. Parasos Television ET2 "Kaledoscope". **1994** Newspapers "TA NEA" P. Katimertzi "ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ". **1995** Newspapers "TA NEA" P. Katimertzi, "ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ", Maria Maragou, "ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ" Magazines "Votre Beauré" Maria Efremidi, "Στιγμές", 50 artistes from Creta". **1996** Magazine "ARTI" No 31. **1997** Newspapers: "ΚΕΡΔΟΣ" Em. Mavromatis, "ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ", Maria Maragou, "ΕΠΕΝΔΥΤΗΣ" Helene Mahera, "TA NEA" P. Katimertzi, Magazines "ΕΨΙΛΟΝ" Michel Pekrides, "Marie Claire" Takis Mavrotas, "The Athenian" Mary Miha, Video-Magazine "ARTOS". **1998** "TA NEA" P. Katimertzi, "ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ", G. Karouzakis, "The news of Art".

## MAJOR PRIZES, GRANTS AND COMMISSIONS:

**1969-1974** Grand by ATHEN'S ACADEMY for five years studies in painting in E.N.S.B.A. in Paris. **1973** "Mention d'honneur" in the exhibition "9eme Grand Prix de Peinture de la Cote d'Azur". **1984** Invitaion from Friedrich Nauman Foundation in Berlin. **1986** Commission from the Museum of Moderne Art of V. and E. Goulandry, for a permanent big sculpture. **1993** Commission from the French Government for an exhibition with video-installation and sculptures in Rhodes, as the official French participation for the "2400 years of Rhodes. **1994** Commission from the Greek Ministry of Culture for an exhibition with video-installation and paintings, for the Greek presidency of the European Union 1994.

Her works there are in Greece, in the Nationale Pinacothèque of Athens, in the Ministry of Culture, in the Museum of Moderne Art f V. and E. Goulandry, in the collections in France, in Switzerland and in the private collection of T. Karavias in New York, in the municipal Gallery of Rhodes, in the Center of Contemporary Art in Rethymnon, Municipal Gallery of Rhodes, in the Minicipality of Rhodes, Macedonian Museum of Modern Art.

Lives and works in Athens and in Paris.

## Adress:

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20, rue Henri Barbusse, 75005 PARIS, FRANCE tel. (01) 4329 5390.

## "MEDUSE ART GALLERY"

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Tel. 7244 552 Fax: 7223 605

## Collaborators for the video

Realization: Marianne Strapatsakis

Cameraman: Kostas Deligiannis

Music: Haris Xandoudakis

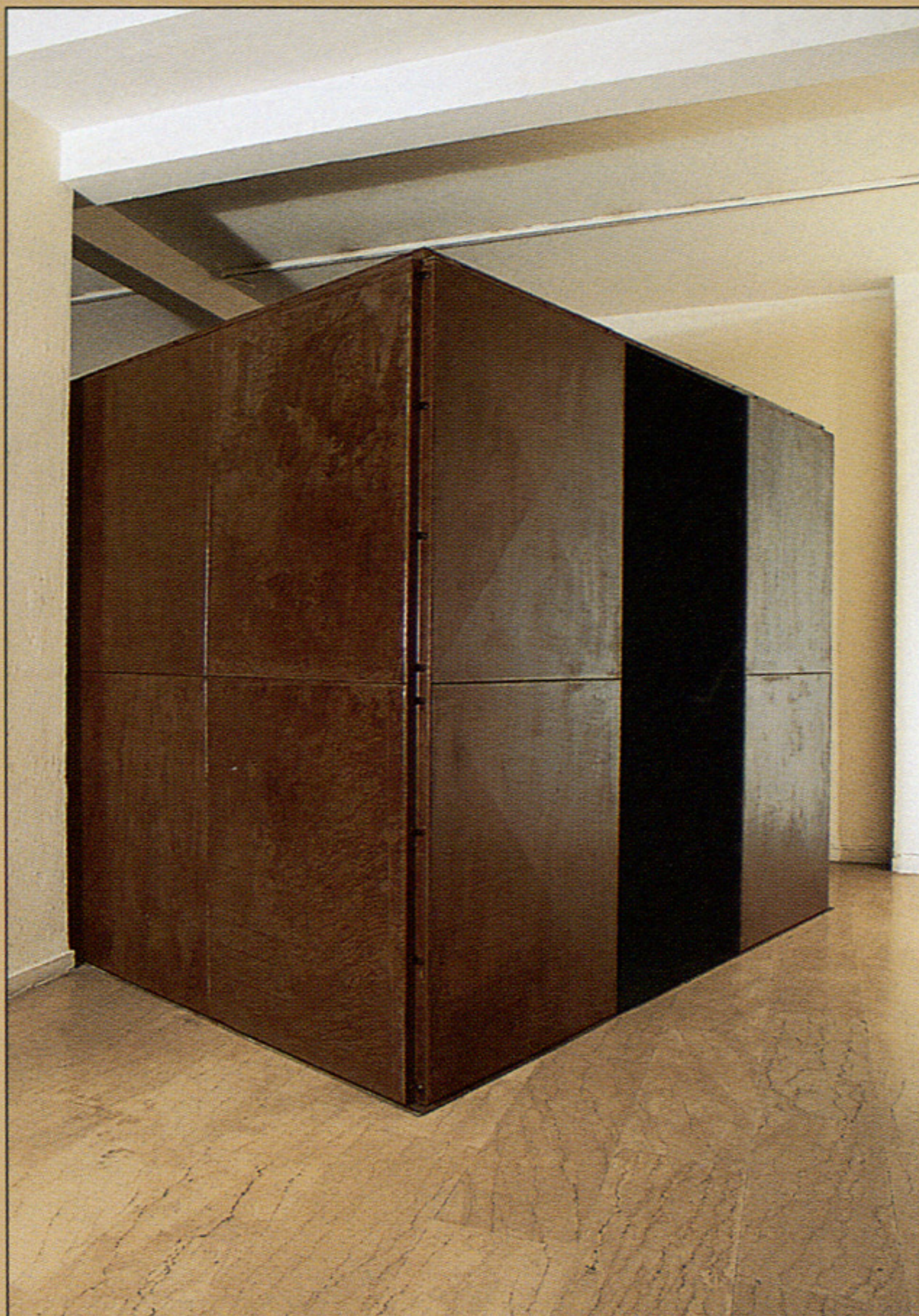
Montage-Specials effects: Makis Faros

**Co-Production:** Marianne Strapatsakis, Studio EIKONA, Kostas Deligiannis,

© Marianne Strapatsakis, Athens 1996.

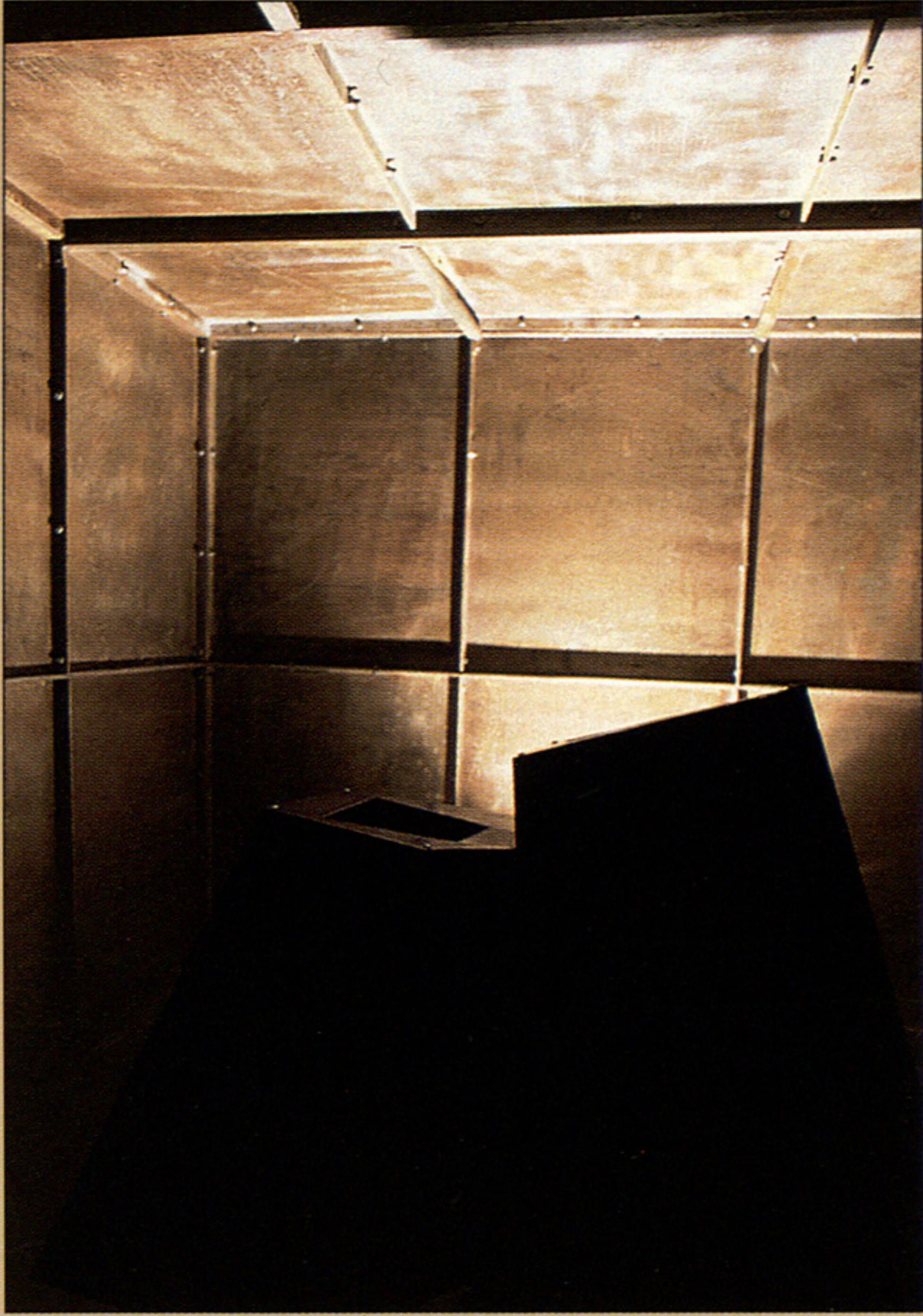
**I am thankful for there cotribution:** Anna Lambraki, Andra Ioannidi, Efi Strouza, Kosta Poga, Dimitri Moroglou, Yangelis Apergi, Yianni Lasithiotakis, Theodore Georgato. The filming of the minerals took place at the Mineral Museum of Lavrion.

**Sponsors of the catalogue and the poster:** TEXT & COLOR ΕΠ.Ε., LINORA ΕΠ.Ε.



"SECRETS PASSAGES-LAVRION" 1997 VIDEO-INSTALLATION, 2.20 x 2.70 x 2.70





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