

Yannis Tsarouchis: Dancing in Real Life

First U.S. Exhibition of Great Greek 20th-Century Artist
Opens May 7 at Chicago’s Wrightwood 659



WHAT	<i>Yannis Tsarouchis: Dancing in Real Life</i>
WHERE	Wrightwood 659, 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614
WHEN	Fridays and Saturdays, May 7 – July 31, 2021

(CHICAGO, IL – April 2, 2021) – Wrightwood 659 is pleased to host the first U.S. exhibition devoted to the work of Yannis Tsarouchis (1910–1989), widely regarded as one of the greatest Greek painters of the 20th century. On view May 7–July 31, 2021, the exhibition will feature some 200 works, including paintings and works on paper from public and private collections in Greece and internationally. Together, these span the entire arc of the artist’s career, showing how he absorbed and transformed influences including Ancient Greek and Early Christian art; Byzantine mosaics, frescoes, and icon painting; Greek vernacular traditions: costume, ornament and shadow theater Karaghiozis; and also the new languages of modern art: Fauvism, Cubism, and Surrealism. During the military junta rule in Greece between 1967 and 1974, Tsarouchis worked in self-exile in Paris; in 1981 he established the Yannis Tsarouchis Foundation in Athens, which is to this day dedicated to the preservation and advancement of his work.

The exhibition is organized around several recurring subjects and structural devices present in Tsarouchis’s art: the exploration and staging of the Other Self in portraiture; the invention of new

allegories; theater as a machine of image production; dance as an embodiment of realness; landscape as introspection; and difference and repetition.

Yannis Tsarouchis: Dancing in Real Life is curated by Androniki Gripari, Chair of the Yannis Tsarouchis Foundation in Athens, and Adam Szymczyk, former Artistic Director of Documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel (2013–2017). The exhibition is made possible by the Alphawood Foundation Chicago.

Tsarouchis

While today Tsarouchis remains relatively little-known outside of Greece, he is unanimously recognized in his native country as one of its most important painters of the twentieth century. Born in 1910 in the Greek port city of Piraeus and educated at the School of Fine Arts in Athens, he began painting at an early age and earned his living as a set and costume designer for the theater. In 1935 Tsarouchis went to Paris for the first time, where he encountered the work of Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst and other artists of the Avant-garde. In 1938, at the age of 28, he had his first solo exhibition in Athens. After serving in the Greek army on the Albanian front in the Second World War, he returned to painting and working in the theater, gaining an international reputation. During Greece's military dictatorship (1967–1974), Tsarouchis went into exile in Paris to then return to Athens, where he lived until his death in 1989.

Hours of Operation

Fridays and Saturdays, May 7–July 31, 2021

Fridays 12–7:30pm

Saturdays 10am–5:30pm

Tickets

Tickets for the exhibition are \$15 and available online only, beginning April 19 at www.tickets.wrightwood659.org/events. Please note, admission is by advance ticket only and walk-ups are not permitted.

COVID-19 Response

For the presentation of *Yannis Tsarouchis: Dancing in Real Life*, Wrightwood 659 will adopt the universally recommended practices of required face masks and appropriate social distancing. Among other precautions, we have installed a state-of-the-art air filtration system and will continue to regularly sanitize public spaces. Admissions will be limited to ensure visitor and staff safety.

Publication

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated, 400-page publication that will be available for purchase at Wrightwood 659.

About Wrightwood 659

Established in 2018, Wrightwood 659 is a private, non-collecting institution devoted to socially engaged

art and architecture. Located at 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, the intimate space officially opened in late 2018 and presents two public exhibitions annually. Wrightwood 659 was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, who transformed a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light.

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For additional information: <https://wrightwood659.org>

Image captions Left to Right:

Yannis Tsarouchis. *Angels: The Winds Caecias and Zephyrus*, 1966. Private collection

Yannis Tsarouchis. *Military Policeman Arresting the Spirit*. 1965. Watercolour and pencil on paper. © Yannis Tsarouchis Foundation

Yannis Tsarouchis. *Nude zeimbekikodancer*. 1974. Gauche on paper. © Yannis Tsarouchis Foundation