

Into the Pyre + Athens for Rent

This exhibition combines two bodies of artwork by Todd Lowery. Each series takes post-2008 socio-urban events in Athens, Greece, as its nucleus.

The first body of work, "Stin Pira" ("Into the Pyre", 2009-2011), is a series of paintings on paper that centers on the civil unrest that began in Greece in late 2008 as viewed through internet imagery, then filtered through painting.

In December of 2008, responding to the police shooting of 15 year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos in the Athens neighborhood of Exarcheia, the public took to the streets in protest across the Athens basin and throughout many cities in Greece. While the majority of the demonstrations were peaceful, the images that proliferated across social and news media emphasized the instances of police/protester collision and the drama of cars and buildings set aflame, burning at night. With physical and ideological location and context lost to a larger audience, in the darkness beyond the fire in the photos, the images became specters and spooks that seemed all the more threatening because they existed nowhere and everywhere all at once.

The second body of work, "Enoikiazetai" ("Athens for Rent", 2013), is a photographic series that focuses on the economic collapse and the impact it has had on the affluent seaside Athens suburb of Glyfada.

Glyfada is the heart and commercial hub of the southern part of Attica, the Athens metropolitan area. Even though it is one of the most reliably stable retail centers in Attica, the economic crisis afflicting Greece displayed itself in the empty storefronts of numerous closed businesses.

"Athens for Rent" is a project from summer 2013 documenting abject spaces of Glyfada. Each photo was taken through the front window of a different store bearing an "Enoikiazetai" sign. The images of these found, abandoned interiors are portraits of resonant space filled with the whimper of failed commerce, wraiths of ambition, and echoes of aspirational affluence's siren call.