

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Exhibit New Paintings by Hilary Pecis and Lily Stockman in Athens

Nostos, Inspired by Emily Wilson's Translation of the *Odyssey*, Opens on November 9, 2023



Left: Hilary Pecis, *Fishing Village*, 2023, acrylic on linen, 54 × 44 inches (137.2 × 111.8 cm) © Hilary Pecis.
Right: Lily Stockman, *Aegean*, 2023, oil on linen, 48 × 36 inches (121.9 × 91.4 cm) © Lily Stockman

[Download Press Images](#)

ATHENS, October 19, 2023—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Nostos*, a two-person exhibition of new paintings by Hilary Pecis and Lily Stockman, opening at the gallery in Athens on November 9, 2023.

Nostos is loosely inspired by Emily Wilson's 2018 translation of the *Odyssey* in iambic pentameter, which restores the story's original vivacity while imposing a new formal structure on its verse. Just as Brice Marden employed Gary Snyder's translation of Hanshan's Tang dynasty poetry to help organize his ideas about the natural and spiritual worlds in the *Cold Mountain* series (1991), so Pecis and Stockman have borrowed formal aspects of Wilson's translation to build a contextual framework for their paintings.

The exhibition's title is a Greek word, derived from Odysseus's ten-year journey back home after the Trojan War, which denotes a hero's return by sea. (The English word *nostalgia* originates in the conjoining of *nostos* and *algos*, a longing for the past.) *Nostos* is in part a meditation on the idea of returning home, and while Pecis depicts the physical space of home in still lifes and landscapes, Stockman approaches it in a more abstract manner, returning to the birthplace of the great story that ignited her nascent imagination.

Stockman's father read Homer, Ovid, and Virgil to her and her sisters as children; she later translated, line by line, the opening of the *Odyssey*. Working with a medieval Latin translation of the ancient Greek original—a translation of a translation—she came to regard the refractive process as a perfect metaphor for painting's tendency to get closer to a truth by moving further away from an original. In Athens, Stockman's large-scale, vividly colored paintings have been installed in subtle groupings that echo, visually, the rhythm of the human heart.

Painting from intuition and drawing on her physical and psychological experience of nature, Stockman orchestrates near-symmetrical compositions in which shapes appear to vibrate with vital energy. In *First Child* (2023), a talismanic pyramidal form in golden yellow and orange stands out against a pale, moonlike disk, while in *Packet of Violets* (2023), the almost amoebic shape of the titular bloom hovers in front of a lilac backdrop, the space around it fizzing with mysterious power. *Aegean* (2023) is a symphony in blue, its soft and enfolded central form enclosed by a graphic frame-within-a-frame, the oceanic quality of its alternating tonal values resonating with the Homeric allusion of its title.

Pecis, for her part, renders subtly distorted vignettes based on photographs of her daily life and environs, producing compositions in which it feels as though every chair and decoration, painting and book holds a key to its owner's identity (and to that of the artist). In *The Fruit of Forgetfulness* (2023), she depicts a tablecloth-covered surface with wine bottles, glasses, plates, and flowers, all of which mingle in a riot of color and pattern. The work's party-aftermath scenario, and its title, refer to book nine of Homer's text, in which Odysseus and his crew land on the island of the Lotus Eaters. The lotus fruit causes those who consume it to forget about their voyage home, preferring instead to remain drowsily on the island. While such scenes are outwardly very different from Stockman's charged geometric-biomorphic abstractions, Pecis, too, approaches the essence of a painting by maintaining a distance from its source material. Just as Wilson's lyrical translation remains embossed with Homer's sensibility, the hands of Pecis and Stockman are evident in their works, while *Nostos* makes use of both the rich historical and literary context of Athens and the intimate neoclassical space of the gallery.

Hilary Pecis was born in 1979 in Fullerton, California, and lives and works in Los Angeles. Solo exhibitions include *The Space In Between*, Crisp Ellert Art Museum, Flagler College, St. Augustine, Florida (2020); *Art in Focus*, Art Production Fund, Rockefeller Center, New York (2021); and *Orbiting*, TAG Art Museum, Qingdao, China (2023). Group exhibitions include *Present Generations: Creating the Scantland Collection of the Columbus Museum of Art*, Columbus Museum of Art (2021–22); *Artists Inspired by Music: Interscope Reimagined*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2022); *13 Women*, Orange County Museum of Art, Costa Mesa, California (2022); and *The Interior Life: Recent Acquisitions*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (2023).

Lily Stockman was born in 1982 in Providence, Rhode Island, and lives and works in Los Angeles and Yucca Valley, California. Group exhibitions include *Departure*, Harvard Monday Gallery, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (2014); *My Kid Could Do That*, Underground Museum, Los Angeles (2018); *California Biennial: Pacific Gold*, Orange County Museum of Art, Costa Mesa, California (2022); and *Mythopoetics: Symbols and Stories*, Palm Springs Art Museum, California (2023).

#HilaryPecis
#LilyStockman

HILARY PECIS AND LILY STOCKMAN

Nostos

Opening reception: Thursday, November 9, 6–9pm

November 9, 2023–January 27, 2024

22 Anapiron Polemou Street, Athens

Press

Gagosian | press@gagosian.com

Toby Kidd | tkidd@gagosian.com | +44 20 7495 1500

Vasso Papagiannakopoulou | vassopap@gagosian.com | +30 693 748 5660