

# Tasos Gkaintatzis

## KONAKI

Sylvia Kouvali, *Piraeus*

22 December 2024 – 15 February 2025

It's been said innumerable times that people disguise behind cameras.

The protecting layer it adds on someone's face allows for the flow of thoughts that translate into frames and angles a painter is hardly allowed to perform, with some great exceptions.

The eye sees through a round angled window, to possible eternity in the making.

The black sleek so-called apparatus is a weapon, a tool, and depending on the user it can become an instrument.

For Tasos Gkaintatzis, the masking photographic machine turns into an instrument, a key to enter the circular rhythmic dance {a chorus and a troop}, and with it attached to the user's face, it partakes in the making of some of the world's oldest surviving stories, like burials or the cycle from darkness to light.

Gkaintatzis put his documenting mask on and travelled in the northern part of Greece, around Serres and Drama; what people here no longer call it, but it is, the Balkans.

He was granted access to rituals he was discovering as he was going and created thorough research whose character is ethnographic as it is Dionysiac.

Ecstatic religious dances and processes, chthonic ceremonies of the underworld that occur with the passage of time, in days like these, past the winter solstice and leading up to St. John's Day, a mix of all systems of faith that result in this ever-repeating archetype - moon, sun, darkness, light.

This travelling exploration through sound, dance and storytelling, always with masks on, results in a very well classified synesthetic abstraction, a collective memoir of a peoples through Gkaintatzis' singular lens. Each of the eleven locations uses its very own words to talk about its magic. Volakas, Pagoneri, Petrousa, Kali Vrysi, Flampouro, Naoussa, Sochos, Vamvakofyto, Xiropotamos, Monastiraki, Pyrgoi.

The breathing of his Fuji polaroid, sucking light, sound and time and exhaling hairy stitched tribal couture, where the creatures that these garments used to be reincarnate frozen on iodoquinine sulphate embedded in a transparent nitrocellulose polymer film.

These polaroids contain sound, hard to hear while being looked at, engraved in the light, stuck on the furs waiting for the next year to get animated, again.

This exhibition presents a tiny fragment of this series. It will appear in the months to follow in a catalogue, supported by Onassis like the research itself.

The sound version will appear in the form of a vinyl record soon.

This research was developed with the support of Onassis Foundation.

**Bio**

Tasos Gkaintatzis (b.1980 in Thessaloniki), lives and works in Athens.

His solo exhibitions include: *There Was a Proof of Indecipherable Absence*, Hot Wheels Athens, Athens (2020).

His group exhibitions include: *On The Level Or The Man Who Fell Out Of Bed*, Krinzinger Projekte, Vienna (2021).

Part of his photographic documentation (FUJIFILM instax) from the making of Jannis Varelas' *Anima I* has been exhibited at the Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece, 2019.