

ILEANA ARNAOUTOU
&
ISMENE KING

portfolio

ILEANA ARNAOUTOU & ISMENE KING STATEMENT

The collaborative practice of Ileana Arnaoutou and Ismene King unfolds through the reactivation of industrial ruins and natural remnants, transforming discarded matter into sculptural forms that explore memory, care and resilience. Rooted in Greece's post-industrial and cultural landscape, their work engages with remnants such as destroyed wind turbine blades, aluminum factory scraps and abandoned vessels, investigating how these materials can be reimagined as repositories of grief and vessels of life.

Central to their work are gestures of care: wrapping, fastening, caressing, and weaving. These actions generate hybrid architectures at once rigid and tender, cold and intimate that hold together fragments of loss. Embraces, bundles, and containers recur as motifs, functioning both as structures of preservation and as metaphors for community, mourning, and kinship. Their sculptures hover between familiarity and estrangement: floral and mechanical, organic and industrial, echoing a posthuman sensibility where life persists in unexpected forms.

Arnaoutou and King extend their sculptural practice through attention to embodied modes of femininity and notions of loss, personal and collective. In projects such as salvaging wind turbine fragments and weaving their exposed fibers into organic compositions, the duo transforms industrial remnants into works that are both fragile and resilient. These interventions highlight the relational, commemorative, and community-building potential of artistic collaboration, positioning discarded matter not as waste but as a medium through which survival, recovery and imaginative futures can emerge.

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BIO

2019, Greece

Ileana Arnaoutou & Ismene King (b. Athens, 1994 and 1993, respectively) are a collaborative duo formed in 2019. They live and work in Athens, Greece. Ileana Arnaoutou is a painter and sculptor and a graduate of the BA Fine Art program at the Slade School of Fine Art and the MA History of Art at UCL, London, UK. Ismene King is a sculptor and ceramist and holds an MFA in Sculpture from the Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK.

They have held solo presentations such as *Lo que una vez fue, lo que perdura* at Artnueve (Project Space Ap1), Murcia, Spain (2025); *I will hold you forever. Or till everyone leaves the room* at Alkinois, Athens, Greece (2024); and *All the sticks, spears and swords, blades entwine*, part of the One Work Show Series at Callirrhoë, Athens, Greece (2024). Selected group exhibitions include *In Bright Green Field*, organized by DESTE Foundation and the New Museum, New York, at the Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece (2025); and *Wet Heart* at ATOPOS cvc, Athens, Greece (2023).

They have been awarded the 2022 G&A Mamidakis Foundation Art Prize, ARTWORKS-Stavros Niarchos Foundation Artist Fellowship, and more recently, and more recently, the 2026 Ducato Residency Award.

EDUCATION

Ileana Arnaoutou

2018 MA History of Art, University College London, UK

2017 BA Fine Art, Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK

Ismene King

2017 MFA in Sculpture, Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK

2014 BA Fine Art, University of Lancaster, UK

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025 *Lo que una vez fue, lo que perdura*, solo show, Artnueve (Project Space Api), Murcia, Spain

2023 *All the sticks, spears and swords, blades entwined*, solo show, One Work Show Series, Callirrhoë, Athens, Greece

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025** *In a bright green field*, DESTE Foundation & New Museum, in partnership with the Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece
Liquid Ports, ATOPOS cvc x Office of Hydrocommons x Art Explora, Piraeus, Greece
Ducato Finalist Exhibition, Palazzo Farnese, Piacenza, Italy
- 2023** *Wet Heart*, group show curated by Eleni Riga, Office of Hydrocommons, ATOPOS cvc, Athens, Greece

SELECTED SHOWS ILEANA ARNAOUTOU

- 2025** *Hyperhydrosis: Sweating Together*, Bath House of the Winds, Museum of Modern Greek Culture, Athens, Greece
- 2024** *Encore: New Greek Painting*, Municipal of the Municipality of Athens, Greece
- 2023** *21! New Greek Painting*, Archaeological Museum of Agios Nikolaos, Greece
- 2021** *Apotropaion*, Sotiris Felios Collection, Athens, Greece

SELECTED SHOWS ISMENE KING

- 2022** *True Love Leaves No Traces*, Galerist, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2021** *Encounters in wreath-knot-chain formations*, The Breeder Gallery, Athens, Greece
- 2017** *(dis)placement*, Off-Quay, London, United Kingdom
(dis)placement, Jacaranda, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 2016** *Backwards+Forwards*, Casa Dona Laura, Lisbon, Portugal

Works in Public Space

2022 *Tender Shell Geophilia*, Sculpture Garden of Minos Beach art hotel, Agios Nikolaos, Crete, Greece

Awards and Fellowships

2025 Ducato Prize, Piacenza, Italy

2022 G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation Art Prize, Agios Nikolaos, Greece

2020/22 Both recipients of the ARTWORKS-Stavros Niarchos Foundation Artist Fellowship, Athens, Greece

2021 Room to Bloom, Ecofeminism & Postcolonial Feminism, Athens, Greece & Palermo, Italy

Press

2025 Nikolas Vamvouklis, *Move aside Basel, Hydra is where the art world lets its hair down*, Plaster Magazine

Belén Vera, *Art Nueve inaugura temporada con dos nuevas exposiciones*, NEO2

2023 Sarah Belmont, *Minos Beach Art Hotel, temple grec de la sculpture*, L'Eventail

2022 Despina Zefkili, *Σωτήρης Μπαχσετζής: Μέσα από εκθεσιακές προτάσεις, σαν και αυτή του Βραβείου Τέχνης Ιδρύματος Γ. & Α. Μαμιδάκη, θέλουμε εμμέσως να επιστήσουμε την προσοχή στην “ερημοποίηση” των τουριστικών περιοχών* [Sotiris Bachsetzis: Through exhibition proposals, such as the G & A Mamidakis Foundation Art Prize, we want to implicitly draw attention to the “desertification” of tourist areas, Athinorama (GR)]

SALTBODY CRAFT

2025

In *Saltbody Craft*, Ileana Arnaoutou & Ismene King extend their sculptural practice into a shared exploration of embodiment, femininity and loss on personal and collective level. Rooted in acts of reclaim, their collaboration transforms discarded materials into sculptural forms that speak to resilience, care and collective making. At the center of the work lies an abandoned lifeboat, retrieved from a landfill on the island of Aegina.

By rescuing the boat and installing it onto a metal platform that acts as a carrier, the artists draw attention to its angular, futuristic design and its original role as a vessel of survival. Suspended between obsolescence and renewal, the lifeboat becomes a metaphor for fluidity and transformation, echoing the port's shifting tides of layered histories of migration and trade. This gesture extends the duo's ongoing investigation into Aegina's unclassified burial cavities, linked to the warriors of the ancient battle of Salamis. These hallowed spaces, caught between presence and absence, inform the artists' approach to material and form. Across their practice, Arnaoutou and King trace the intersections of industrial and organic decay, exploring the afterlives of labor and matter.



Installation view of *Saltbody Craft*, 2025, polyester resin, mild steel, aluminium

CASES

2024-2025

Cases is a series of wall-based, square sculptures that function as condensed repositories of industrial remnants. These speculative fossils commemorate what is left behind—forming a contemporary archaeology of matter. Through processes of encasing, stacking, and assembling industrial debris, Arnaoutou and King transform discarded fragments into meaningful structures and mark-making gestures that visually record their ongoing practice of collecting industrial waste from the landscape. The resulting fragments become signifiers of the landscapes from which they originate; cavities, roads, drone images, maps, architectural structures and industrial sites. These locations evoke notions of loss, obsolete labor, and discontinued industry, constructing an anti-heroic narrative of the aftermath of human activity.





Case XII
2025
Polyester resin & galvanised steel



Case XIX
2025
Polyester resin & galvanised steel



Case IX
2025
Polyester resin & galvanised steel

CARRIER I-III

2024

Carrier series reimagines industrial debris through a sculptural practice that foregrounds affect memory within domestic and intimate contexts.

Natural forms reemerge, intertwined with the language of interiors and urban landscapes. Here, nature is not depicted but suggested a posthuman sensibility that blurs the lines between organic and synthetic. Urgently assembled discarded boats and wind turbine remnants hint at dystopian homes and makeshift apparatuses: a stiff embrace where cold intimacy and tenderness coexist.

Transitional spaces in the sculpture hold the echoes of care and collective grief serving as a container for our shared human condition. *Carrier* embodies both embrace and repository, holding space for fragile human entanglements. The embrace, a recurring motif, suggests warmth yet complexity, inviting the viewer to contemplate the delicate interconnections between human emotion, ecological ruin and the industrial residue that shapes our world.



Carrier III, 2024, Polyester resin



Carrier I, 2024, Polyester resin, fiberglass, aluminium, plastic straps, inox

I WILL HOLD YOU FOREVER. OR TILL EVERYONE LEAVES THE ROOM

2024

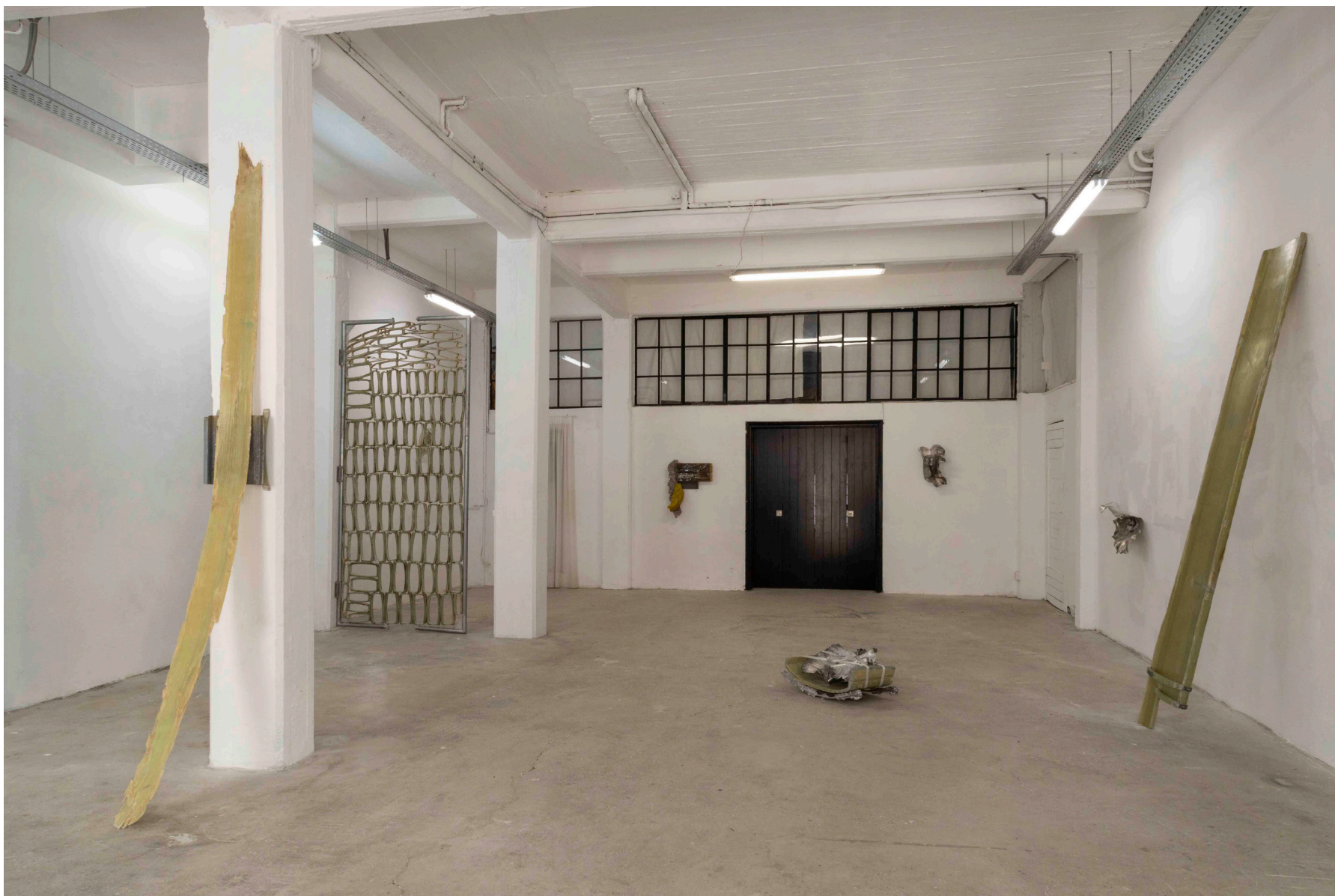
In the wake of multiple destructive events and alterations to a wind turbine blade's material, a narrative unfolds that diverges from the traditional notion of mortality. Within this context, Ileana Arnaoutou and Ismene King envision a series of objects and spatial scenarios that propose alternative systems of commemorative gestures. These imaginative spaces materialize as dystopian homes and apparatuses, temporarily familiar and intimate through the incorporation of gestures and objects. Flowers, talismans, personal effects, and rituals of daily routines merge to create a rich tapestry of significance.

Visualizing the wind turbine fragments as deconstructed bouquets—relics transformed into bouquets of memories—the duo creates hybrid holding systems involving fastening and wrapping, forming an embrace that delicately reconstructs the remnants. Within these transitional spaces, a stiff embrace and cold intimacy coexist, contrasting with the warmth of recollection.

The exhibition continues the presentation within the One Work Show Series at Callirrhoë in Athens (October 2024) and marks a collaboration between the artists and the exhibition spaces Alkinois and Callirrhoë. Delving into the interplay between the turbine's structure and its surrounding landscape, Arnaoutou and King trace an uncanny fusion of natural elements and technological remains, a dystopic dance where the turbine becomes a futuristic floral creation, blurring the boundaries between nature and machine.

Central to their inquiry is the concept of the bundle, a method of weaving together disparate elements, offering support and preservation. It is both embrace and repository, carrying connotations of celebration and grief. The bundle, borrowing from industrial fastening systems, becomes a 'cold embrace': devoid of tenderness yet fiercely binding. This architecture of holding allows fragments of flora, bone, and discarded materials to coalesce, suggesting a hybrid state of passage.

Within these sculptures, remnants find new life, repositories of collective mourning and resilience, revealing that amidst loss, there is never an end to holding.



Installation view of *I will hold you forever. Or till everyone leaves the room*, 2024



Partition 1, 2024, Polyester resin, fiberglass, galvanized steel, aluminium



Bundle I, 2024, Polyester resin, fiberglass, galvanized steel, aluminium, plastic

FLOWER

2024- ONGOING

Flower is a series of aluminum sculptures that resemble elements of nature, yet their figures are ambiguous interpreted as flowers or perhaps unknown beings that inhabit our surroundings, evoking the uncanny.

These works do not simply represent nature; they articulate a new sensibility, one where the human hand is both embedded in and entangled with the environment, preserving and reimagining the material world in response to today's pressing ecological concerns.

It is part of their ongoing work on industrial remnants starting with collected fragments from a wind turbine that was destroyed during a storm by a lightning strike.



ALL THE STICKS, SPEARS AND SWORDS, BLADES ENTWINED

2023

Arnaoutou and King collected fragments from a wind turbine that was destroyed during a storm by a lightning strike. The broken turbine parts were discovered and carefully chosen at the Perme recycling site in Ritsona, Greece. Arnaoutou and King were particularly interested in fragments that showcased both the aerodynamic shape and the industrial character of the firm structures.

When observing these selected structures, one can interpret them as a dichotomy of materiality. The material has been alienated from its natural state, and it is only through artistic practice that it is retranslated into an organic form. Once solid and heavy, Arnaoutou and King bend the wind turbine structures, weaving them together much like organic fibers. This transformation of visible shapes symbolizes notions of regeneration. Ileana Arnaoutou and Ismene King embark on an artistic odyssey that transcends the boundaries between recycling, regeneration, and the profound transformative power inherent in found objects.

Their collaboration serves as a seamless extension of their personal artistic practices, born from an urgent need to explore nuanced themes such as embodied femininity and loss. These themes, seen as potent and permeable situations, are intricately woven into the fabric of their collaborative work.





Reposit I

2023

Natural fibers, resin, plastic, metal fixings (found parts of a destroyed wing of a wind turbine)



All the sticks, spears and swords, blades entwined,

2023

Polyester, resins, fiberglass, rubber, plastic, found metal, inox, natural fibers (found parts of a destroyed wing of a wind turbine)

A CONSERVATION OF WATER-WRITINGS

2023

The creation of the site-specific sculpture *A Conservation of Water – Writings* is informed by sustained encounters around the well at ATOPOS cvc in Metaxourgio, foregrounding an alternative, experiential relationship with both the well and the history of water in this site. The artists' practice begins with careful observation and intuitive listening to the spaces where water once moved, tracing the subtle erosions in stone, the damp hollows left by past flow, and the pulley recesses where bryophytes have established. These material traces act as a map of the well's hydrological memory, guiding the artists' gestures of engagement.

Central to their approach is what they describe as a “gesture of caress”: a deliberate, sensitive hand touch that communicates care and attention. This practice draws on haptonomy, the “science of sensitivity” developed by Dutch healer Frans Veldman in the 1960s, which in prenatal contexts uses targeted tactile gestures to strengthen emotional bonds between parent and child. Here, the artists extend this logic to water, performing a relational attentiveness that seeks to retrieve and inhabit its history without instrumentalizing it.

Through this practice, the well becomes a site of generative listening, where absence and presence coexist, and the flow of water is experienced as both material and affective. The caress functions as a mode of care that acknowledges the porous, relational quality of the environment, resonating with broader ideas of “gestationality” (Neimanis 2017) and inclusive kinship (The Care Collective 2020). In observing the echoes of water's movement, the artists not only document its traces but also cultivate an ongoing, responsive dialogue with the site, creating a sculpture that embodies memory, care, and the subtle traces of life sustained by water.





A Conservation of Water-Writings, 2023, Galvanized steel, aluminium, plastic, stoneware clay

TENDER SHELL GEOPHILIA

2022

Tender shell Geophilia is an in-situ installation composed of concave sculptural forms, positioned across the shoreline rocks and partially submerged in the sea of Minos Beach art hotel, Agios Nikolaos, Crete, Greece in the context of the G. & A. Mamidakis Art Prize. Cast directly from the surrounding terrain, the forms echo the coastal topography, extending into the seabed where water flows in and out with the tide. Smooth, waxlike surfaces create hollowed pockets reminiscent of organic shells, offering spaces of rest and passage that invite both land- and sea-based approaches.

The work establishes a sculptural system of “containing spaces” that reconfigures the notion of the container, presenting it not as fixed or closed but as active, porous, and in constant relation with its environment. Resonating with the image of a half-sunken vessel or an artificial gulf, the installation suggests a hybrid extension of the landscape, simultaneously natural and constructed. In doing so, it reflects on the relationship between technology, design and the body, engaging a libidinal dimension of form that links industrial structures with sensuous, corporeal experiences.

Framed within a “geophilic” approach, Tender shell geophilia aligns with practices of Land Art while foregrounding an embodied reciprocity with the landscape. The installation situates the human body as an active participant in a state of relatedness with nature, developing a sculptural vocabulary tied to cycles of ebb and flow, absence and presence. This fluidity resonates with feminist phenomenology, where knowledge emerges through embodied interaction and reciprocal encounter.

It also carries a deeply personal and cultural dimension. Drawing on their Mediterranean context, it evokes a “safe geography” rooted in the archipelagic experience where land and sea remain in dialogue, fostering proximity, security, and kinship. The sculptures become “safety topographies,” supporting the formation of expanded communities through embodied communication and shared presence.



Tender shell geophilia, 2022, Polyester, fiberglass, inox metal



Tender shell geophilia, 2022, Polyester, fiberglass, inox metal

LAKEBED

2021

Lakebed unfolds as a hybrid containing space, a sculptural form that draws on the ebb and flow of water to explore absence, presence, and mourning as porous conditions of relation. The work situates itself between solidity and fluidity, holding traces of what once moved through it—an echo of tides, gestures, and bodies that have since withdrawn. In this sense, the lakebed becomes both vessel and void, a site where memory sediments and erodes in equal measure.

Oscillating between the image of a dried-out pool and that of an anthropomorphic boat, *Lakebed* inhabits a transitional zone—at once evoking loss and emptiness while offering the possibility of containment and repair. Its hollow form suggests a body turned inside out, a container that no longer holds but remembers holding. This ambiguity—between object and body, ruin and refuge—invites the viewer to consider how spaces of depletion might also hold the potential for renewal.

The surface of the sculpture, textured like cracked earth or weathered skin, amplifies the tension between resilience and fragility. It gestures toward water's absence yet implies its inevitable return, echoing ecological cycles of drought and replenishment as well as emotional rhythms of grief and healing. Lakebed thus becomes a kind of threshold—a geography of feeling where emptiness does not signify finality but transformation.

By invoking the visual and tactile language of water's retreat, the work meditates on what remains after loss, on the forms that emerge when presence dissolves. It suggests that mourning itself might be a fluid process: one that fills, drains, and refills the contours of our relational landscapes. In this way, Lakebed holds space for both disappearance and reemergence, tracing the subtle choreography between holding on and letting go.



Lakebed, 2021 Mild steel, copper glazed and stained stoneware clay, fiberglass, polyester, grout