

# RHYTHM,

# CITIZEN

## MARIA TOUMAZOU

### 24/09 – 11/12/2022

“It all started with a swinging bell,” she said.  
“I want the bell to crack.”

When a bell is struck, sign and time are given. For citizens to celebrate life in Old Town, for them to hide or worship, to lay off workers and to start again, to be reminded that life is finite, for the clearance sale to begin, for the photographer to rinse her exposed paper, a safelight blinking. Every time a bell is struck, it rings within. In this mutual implication of time and populace, *RHYTHM, CITIZEN* resounds.

*RHYTHM, CITIZEN* converges the brand names of two manufacturers of clocks and watches: Rhythm and Citizen. Found and coupled, they set the scene for an exhibition that unravels and complicates how the measures of time move and make move; how they give pulse to artifacts, their fictions, and patina; how their fleetingness tantalizes the making of an image.

*RHYTHM, CITIZEN* punctuates the Grazer Kunstverein by way of sculpture, photography, design, and situated interventions. It marks the instance when time is halted, frozen and encrusted, and then again set into motion. It wandered from the city of Nicosia, like a passage or a crossing, like a captor of time—eyes unfurled, then, again, shut.

*RHYTHM, CITIZEN* takes shape through the cadence of a poem, the periodicity of labor, the sliding of glass doors, the frequencies of life, the patterns of music, and the movement marked by a succession of strong and weak elements.

*RHYTHM, CITIZEN* gathers friends and collaborators, neighbors and facilitators: Felix Taylor (Platten Haus), Koula Savvidou, Tasos Lamnisis (x.y.pno), Stelios Ilchuk, Claudia Paschalides, Kyriakos Kyriakides, Marietta Mavrokordatou, and Photo Net.

*RHYTHM, CITIZEN* is an occasion for *EXHAUST [ΕΞΩΣΤ]*, an album by x.y.pno & steliosilchuk to be played aloud and alive, and for *Borrowed*, a publication by Maria Toumazou, Aristotelis Nikolas Mochloulis, Georgia Triantafyllidou, Maya Tounta, Koula Savvidou, and Evagoras Vanezis, to be launched.

*RHYTHM, CITIZEN* is accompanied by *R,C*, a publication that combines artist statement, photography, and Cypriot rap, with contributions by Koula Savvidou, Tasos Lamnisis (x.y.pno), Stelios Ilchuk, Maria Toumazou, Julie Peeters, and Tom Engels.

A bell is struck within her and keeps on ringing.  
A bell is struck and keeps on ringing.

1. Maria Toumazou & Photo Net, *Developing*, 2022  
Loaned bellow pumps (spare parts for Noritsu Minilab), wiring, stainless steel plinth

*Developing* displays a series of bellow pumps lent from Photo Net, Toumazou's local photography store in Nicosia. They are spares for Photo Net's Noritsu photochemical developing and printing systems, often found in retail stores to provide on-site photo finishing services. Hidden within these machines, pumps move up and down as they distribute the chemicals that are required by the photographic input. Here, undone of their shell and void of fluids, the in- and exhaling pumps set the scene for the images to come.

2. "Entrance to offices", "Caution", 2022  
Found and modified glass door, sliding door mechanism, motion sensor, wiring, dirt

"Entrance to offices" and "Caution" are part of a series of kinetic sculptures in which Toumazou repurposes glass doors formerly used in shops and offices. Accumulated layers of dirt, usage, and patina are contrasted with the striated nature of present-day commercial design. Usually opened and closed by pushing or pulling, the doors are attached to an automatized sliding door system, which sets the doors in motion upon impulses generated by the visitor's movements. Undone of their potentiality to move in- or outwards, the doors now move by feeling without touching.

3. *Graduals*, 2022  
Found (graduated) neutral-density photo filters, stained plywood, microphone stands, lights, wiring

By way of illuminating found photography filters placed in wooden panels, *Graduals* blends different principles from the history of photographic image-making. Mechanisms from the camera obscura are combined with square and round (graduated) neutral-density filters. Used in analog photography, such filters create variable and cadenced light transmission and an instant transformation of the photographic image. Unlike the photographic device, here, the image is not captured, but lingers in space. Silently, *Graduals* explores the intrinsic bind between the rhythmical and the visual, referring to the color organ, a historical device built to represent sound and accompany music in a visual medium.

4. *Found tongues (body)*, *Found tongues (city keys)*, *Found tongues (cyprus police emblems)*, 2022  
Nickelized bronze

*Found tongues* is a series of three composite sculptures that emerge through the coupling of the reproduction of church bells and newly constructed clappers, or tongues. Toumazou's local foundry stocks several bells, models, figures, and emblems, used for public purposes and that have been casted upon the request of public instances and authorities. Toumazou pairs these found figures and emblems with bells and recasts them anew. A body hangs upside down; ceremonial city keys dangle; a series of police emblems is overturned. In their union, the rhythm of bells suggestively resounds with the pulse that governs the public body.

5. Felix Taylor (for Platten Haus),  
*Banister Bed prototype*, 2022  
Aluminium, oak

A place for repose and dormancy, for posing and playing, for loving and parting, the bed is both function and trope of slowed down or intensified time. Designed by Felix Taylor (b. 1995, Australia) for Platten Haus, his small-scale design company, the *Banister Bed* prototype resides amongst *Graduals* and *Found tongues*. The aluminium structure is finished with oak sides, resembling banisters, which are held or touched when climbing or descending a staircase. Fusing the rigidity and hardness of the aluminium with the warm touch of banisters, the piece mediates by way of design how time shifts from striated regimes into the flow of things, how the movement of many enters the confines of the bed.

6. Marietta Mavrokordatou, *Thalia 1-24*, 2022  
Claudia Paschalides, *Mahmoud/Istanbul, February - August 2022*, 2022  
Kyriakos Kyriakides, *lanas fan/lana home invasion*, 2022  
Photographic series, found binder

In the belly of the bed reside three photo books commissioned by Toumazou to three young Cypriot photographers. Using the found photo album as a format, Toumazou invited Mavrokordatou (b. 1996, Cyprus), Paschalides (b. 1993, Cyprus), and Kyriakides (b. 1996, Cyprus) to compose visual essays sourced from their own photographic archives. Each book focuses on individuals in their domestic and urban settings, dwelling and unwinding.

7. Koula Savvidou, *Borrowed time*, 2008–9  
Inkjet photo prints on rice and inkjet paper

*Borrowed time* is a series of photographs by the Cypriot artist Koula Savvidou (b. 1956, UK) printed at home on rice and inkjet paper. Taken while attending to her husband over the course of two years, the photographs document his hospital bedroom. Instead of focusing on the subject cared for, the pictures reveal the room's infrastructure. Bed, chair, and a bouquet of peonies form the scenography of the moment when time is stretched, slowed down, and coming to a standstill, while modes of care, attention, waiting, and hope unfold. In this very moment, she chooses to frame the mundane and considers furniture as an opportunity for composition, thus revealing life's quiet but incessant beat.

8. *Door (beat)*, 2022  
Photographic print

Part of a series of photographs, *Door (beat)* depicts the steel frame of a residential door located on an avenue close to Toumazou's studio. Serving both as an ornament and security measure, the structure renders a pattern of peaks and lows, reminiscent of the visualizations produced by a cardiogram or heart rate monitor. By now uncommon, the pattern of this 1950s door design unintentionally hosts the reading of a heartbeat pattern. Simultaneously, this imagined image of the heartbeat is also a constructed visualization of bodily movement. Here, retro design, image projection, and visualization techniques of physical movement lean into each other and produce an imaginative horizon for the movement of a body which is then projected onto the door and that allows for its passage.

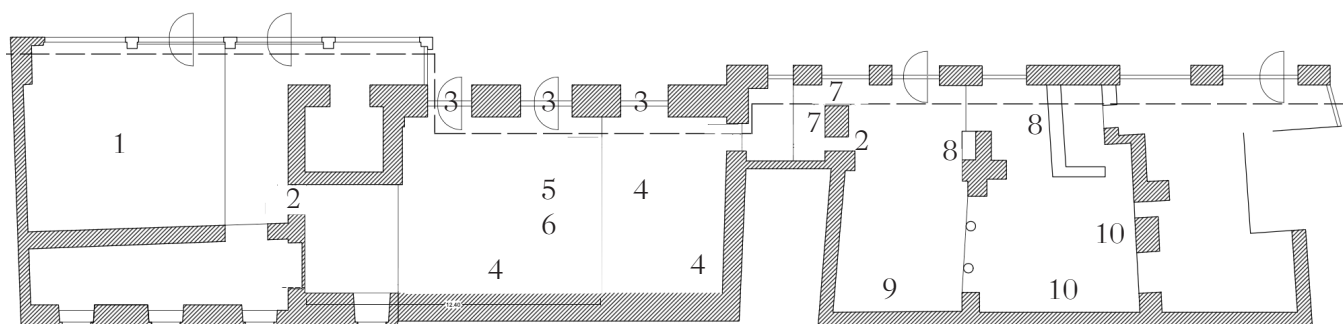
9. *Untitled*, 2022  
Fabric (Tecno 401 bronzo), fan parts, motor, wiring

*Untitled* is a kinetic sculpture in the shape of a giant bell tongue made from a bronze curtain fabric sourced from a home textile retailer in Nicosia. Slowly pivoting around its axis, the tongue is undone from its typical function and movement. Bodily draped, the curtain whirls incessantly and unnecessarily. Echoing the materiality of the church bells through its color, *Untitled* fleshes out the desire to seek softness in and as time, away from the deafening strike of a bell, into a pliable everlasting spin.

10. *RHYTHM (Flowers on white)*,  
*RHYTHM (Roman)*,  
*RHYTHM (Bell pendulum)*,  
*RHYTHM (Linear)*,  
*RHYTHM (One piece)*,  
*RHYTHM (Clear)*,  
*RHYTHM (Oval)*,  
*CITIZEN (Circle on circle)*,  
*CITIZEN (Blue)*, 2022  
Nickel bronze

Together, *RHYTHM* and *CITIZEN* make up a series of 9 sculptures, which lend their name to the exhibition's title. The sculptures are cast from a series of commode clocks produced by the Japanese manufacturers, Rhythm and Citizen. Initially sourced from rundown shops for Metafora, Toumazou's furniture retailer focused on postmodern design, she undid the clocks of their moving parts and reproduced their shell by way of bronze casting. Immobile and petrified, these domestic timekeepers glisten like curious artifacts, their design halted in time.

MARIA TOUMAZOU (b. 1989, Cyprus) is an artist and publisher based in Nicosia. Recent solo presentations include *SCRAP B*, Point Centre for Contemporary Art at Moufflon Bookshop, Nicosia (2022); *Coil*, Hot Wheels Athens (2021); and *Fair-face Elysée*, Thkio Ppalies, Nicosia (2019), among others. Toumazou has participated in group exhibitions including *SISTERHOOD*, *Streaming voices unifying energies*, Angelo Plessas and P.E.T. Projects, Nicosia (2021); *Touch Release*, Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden (2021); *Hypersurfacing*, NiMAC, Nicosia (2019); *Soft stone documents*, Municipal Arts Centre, Limassol (2017), among others. Neoterismoï Toumazou (Toumazou's former collective with Orestis Lazouras and Marina Xenofontos) was invited as a special guest to the Cyprus Pavilion at Biennale Arte 2017, Venice, curated by Jan Verwoert. Toumazou is the (co-)founder of Neoterismoï Toumazou, Maria Editions, and Metafora. She was a guest student at Städelschule, Frankfurt, after completing her studies at Goldsmiths College, London, and the Glasgow School of Art. *RHYTHM*, *CITIZEN* is her first institutional solo presentation.



Curated by  
Tom Engels

General Manager  
Tanja Gurke

Production Assistant  
Ahmad Darkhabani

Technical Support  
Henrik Klug

Graphic Design  
Julie Peeters

Texts  
Tom Engels

Internship  
Vanessa Bednarek

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