

EXHIBITION TEXT – LONG VERSION

DIMITRA CHARAMANDAS
OF GRIDS AND SERPENTINE LINES

OCTOBER 9 – NOVEMBER 20, 2026

OPENING | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 6-9 PM

The road trip emerges in Dimitra Charamandas' solo show *Of Grids and Serpentine Lines* both as subject matter and as method: a way of moving through uncertainty, uncanniness, strangeness and encounter. It belongs to a broader constellation of practices, including walking and other embodied techniques, through which the artist approaches landscapes in their sensory as well as sociopolitical dimensions. Her recent on-going research trips, including *Volcânes, Mujeres y sus Amistades* in Latin America in 2024 and *KEEPERS – and the Weaving of Bonds* in Greece as well as the Balkans in 2026, build upon and further shape these concerns, informing the exhibition and the broader development of her work.

The road trip as a methodology is particularly evident in *Serpentine Road, Invisible Moon*, a large-scale painting that draws on the phenomenon of motion parallax. In motion parallax, objects closer to an observer or camera appear to shift across the field of vision more rapidly than objects further away when the observer is moving. As a result, the phenomenon produces a continuously changing relationship with the landscape, making perception inseparable from movement. In this sense, the movement here becomes a means of tending to a place.

Charamandas translates this perceptual condition into painting through serpentine or tilted lines, a recurring formal language in her work. The composition evokes the perceptual condition of moving through a landscape, with patterns appearing to come together only to dissolve again. The sense of motion extends beyond the pictorial frame, as if the landscape were continuing to unfold outside the limits of the canvas, further blurring the inside and the outside.

With this movement comes instability: a sense of strangeness, uncanniness, even a form of *ecognosis*¹, an intuition that one is embedded within systems that exceed conscious knowledge. In this sense, it connects the physical experience of the road trip to a broader artistic methodology in which uncertainty is a condition of encounter. We are asked to sit behind the wheel with the artist. What lies beyond the next corner remains unknown, we need to trust the process.

This is also where the road can be understood as a kind of strange loop, particularly in relation to time. It does not remain still but bends,² twists and may even tilt while different temporalities coexist. This strangeness is intensified by artificial light and the intensity of green color. Because the work emerges from the experience of driving at night, light and colour acquire a particular psychological intensity. The odd green seems to transform the landscape, heightening feelings of anxiety while simultaneously opening onto a sense of

¹ Paraphrasing Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology*, 2018, Columbia University Press.

² Ibid.

connection with other, less tangible energies. The colour contributes to a thinning of the boundaries between different realms both the physical and the metaphysical, the earthly and unearthly, the artificial and the organic, the visible and the sensed.

This porousness resonates with ecological thought that challenges the separation of human life from the more-than-human world. In the work of British literary theorist Timothy Morton, *dark ecology* is a form of ecological awareness that involves confronting the intimate entanglement of human existence with systems and beings from which modern thought has often attempted to distance itself. Similarly, the German biologist Dr. Katrin Böhning-Gaese's research on biodiversity and human relationships to other species points towards the consequences of treating humanity as somehow separate from the ecological fabric of which it is a part. As biodiversity is lost, the weave begins to loosen, leaving the ecological and, by extension, social fabric less densely woven.

This tension between connection and separation is materialised in the carpet. To move through a landscape is to encounter what is already in motion, but also what has been displaced or abandoned. A carpet, an object associated with the domestic and intimate, appears on the side of the road. Its floral patterns mimic nature while remaining unmistakably artificial. It occupies the unstable territory of *natureculture*³ which the distinction between the organic and the manufactured becomes difficult to sustain.

The carpet's displacement also unsettles the spatial relations it conventionally implies: the interior is exposed to the exterior, the private enters the public and what was once a surface of comfort becomes a trace of vulnerability. At the same time, the carpet's woven floral motifs and their translation into painting allow the artist to hold nature and culture together without collapsing one into the other. Weaving and painting become parallel acts of making: both construct images of the world while reminding us that our relationship to the world is itself constructed, mediated and material.

From this collapse of spatial and ontological distinctions, a constellation of works emerges in which intimacy can also contain subtle forms of violence. A jackal found as roadkill, a child's ribcage, a tortoiseshell: each introduces a different relation between the body and its surroundings, between what shelters and what is exposed. Life and death, protection and vulnerability, growth and decay coexist. The works seem to inhabit a world in which familiar boundaries have become porous, without necessarily suggesting that this porosity is either liberating or catastrophic. Instead, they ask what it means to remain within the ambiguity of these relationships, *to surround ourselves with the possibilities of being otherwise*⁴.

Perhaps we can attribute some of this instability to the ambiguous presence of the two suns. The image is informed by the phenomenon known as an inferior mirage, which occurs when the ground or water surface is much warmer than the air above it, producing an inverted reflection of the sun directly beneath the real one as it sets. The two suns suggest a perceptual world in which reality is doubled, displaced or made uncertain. The motif also carries a much longer cultural history. Two suns appear across myth, literature and science,

³ The term *natureculture* (or *naturecultures*) was coined by American feminist and science-and-technology studies scholar Donna Haraway in 2003, featured prominently in her work *The Companion Species Manifesto*.

⁴ Elisabeth Grosz, *The Future of Feminist Theory: Dreams for New Knowledge*, *Revista Eco-Pós*, 2010, v. 13, n. 3, pp 42

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where they can signify altered states of consciousness, excess, catastrophe and multiplicity. In this sense, the two suns do not necessarily point to another world but a deeper commitment to the one we have.

To acknowledge the extent of the damage is also to acknowledge our entanglement in it, and therefore the difficulty of imagining ourselves as outside or above the conditions we have helped produce. The task might be less to resolve this uncertainty than to stay with it: to remain proximate to a damaged and changing world, while still attending to its capacity to sustain life beyond the biological, a form of entangled *gestationality*⁵.

Posthuman gestationality suggests another type of motherhood, but perhaps also sisterhood or even grand-motherhood, extending care beyond the biological womb. In Charamandas's practice, it describes a way of attending to the places, lives and encounters that enter her work, allowing them to retain their complexity rather than resolving them into fixed meanings. Her works move between tangible conditions and more existential questions, following relations as they continuously turn, twist, bend and tilt. What emerges, then, is a persistent question of how to belong: how to remain alive in a world that is dying; how to care in the midst of its dying; how to save someone who might also kill you; how to live with what you do not know, knowing that it is impossible to fully know. In this sense, *response-ability*⁶ is not a matter of finding an adequate response, but of remaining open and courageous to an ever-changing entangled world.

Eleni Riga

Dimitra Charamandas (*1988 Solothurn, Switzerland, lives and works between Solothurn and Athens) completed an MA in Fine Arts at the Institute Art Gender Nature, Basel in 2022. She previously studied at the Lucerne School of Art and Design (BA of Arts, 2013).

Her most recent solo exhibitions include *Aphe*, Musée des beaux-arts de La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland (2025), *Keepers*, Livie Gallery, Zurich (2024), *Tides*, Kunstmuseum Solothurn (2023), *Little inlets*, Helvetia Art Foyer, Basel (2023), *Body of Water*, *Body of Stone*, Gypsum Gallery, Cairo (2022), *Do not take me for granite*, Ann Mazzotti Gallery, Basel (2022), *Bassa Marea*, Museo Castello San Materno, Ascona (2022). Her work was included in several group shows at Kunsthhaus Baselland, Muttens, Switzerland; Graphisches Kabinett Kunstmuseum Solothurn, Switzerland, Kunstmuseum Olten, Switzerland; Christoph Merian Stiftung, Münchenstein, Switzerland; Kunsthalle Luzern, Switzerland; Kunsthhaus Grenchen, Switzerland; Project Space Sfera, Athens, Greece; Kasko Basel, Switzerland; and Forum Stadtpark Graz, Austria. Dimitra Charamandas's has presented solo and duo booth at Art Basel 2025, ARCO Madrid 2024 and 2025, and Frieze London 2024. Her work was also presented at the Swiss Art Awards in Basel in 2024. Dimitra Charamandas' works can be found in private and institutional collections such as Kunstmuseum Solothurn, Helvetia Art Collection, Mobil-iar, Post, Julius Bär and Berner Kantonalbank collection.

Opening hours: Wednesday to Friday | 11 am to 6 pm, Saturday | 12 – 5 pm, and by appointment

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⁵ Astrida Neimanis, *Bodies of Water: Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology*, 2017, Bloomsbury Academic, p.68

⁶ Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, 2016, Duke University, p. 28