



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Art Rug Projects by Soutzoglou x Philippos Theodorides**

#### *Thread Variations*

Soutzoglou Showrooms: 2 Skoufa St., Athens

For its launch, Art Rug Projects by Soutzoglou collaborates with visual artist Philippos Theodorides, presenting five art rug works in the solo exhibition *Thread Variations*.



Detail of *Jazz Note*, 2021

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Opening reception: Thursday, December 2, 2021, 5pm–9pm

Exhibition Duration: February 19, 2022

Art Rug Projects by Soutzoglou is pleased to present *Thread Variations*, an exhibition in collaboration with visual artist Philippos Theodorides. This is the first in a series of projects with contemporary artists, through which they are invited to create new artworks using the handmade carpet as a creative and expressive artistic medium.

Electra Soutzoglou, the founder of this initiative and third generation co-owner of TEN Carpets by Soutzoglou, states:

“Art Rug Projects brings together handmade carpets and visual art, weaving contemporary creativity into our family’s 120-years-long tradition. Through the centuries, the carpet has not only been a handicraft, but has also been in close dialogue with both art and history. Carpet-making is linked with the tradition of the past, whereas contemporary art is an

expression of the present. The combination of the two opens up an interesting field for exploring innovative artistic ideas.

In this context, every collaboration is an opportunity for the artist to discover a new medium, to expand their practice in new ways. For example, our collaboration with Philippos came about after I visited his studio; when I viewed his paintings and ceramics from up close, I could immediately see how his work could be translated into a carpet. The carpets created through these collaborations are not merely functional objects, but works of art in their own right, which are available as either limited editions or unique works."

Philippos Theodorides's paintings combine abstract expressionist and formalist influences with a particular sensitivity in gesture and the layering of color on the canvas. In recent years, his work acquires more and more clarity in form and compositional maturity, achieving a simplicity that remains nonetheless rich, all the while being in dialogue with the order and lucidity that characterizes modernism.

At the same time, it incorporates elements of rhythmicality, repetition and transformation borrowed from the world of music, for which the artist harbors a heartfelt love.

For *Thread Variations*, Philippos Theodorides selects five of his recent paintings which are then translated into handmade carpets. The works are rendered in silk and wool, woven knot by knot on the loom by experienced artisans. Just like in music, where every performance of the same work differs, each handmade carpet maintains its own uniqueness, revealing new, fascinating aspects of the work – thanks to the luster, the texture and the color properties inherent in the materiality and the artisanal detail of the handmade carpet.

Two out of the five artworks are located on the first floor, while the remaining three are exhibited at TEN Carpets, on the ground floor of the same building.

*Visitors are required to present a valid Covid-19 vaccination or recovery certificate (up to 6 months) or proof of a PCR / Rapid Test (48 hours), as well as an identity card.*

*Wearing face masks indoors will be mandatory.*

**Philippos Theodorides** was born in Cyprus in 1978. He began his studies in London (University of Surrey, Roehampton, 1999-2002) where he studied Art for the Community and continued at the School of Fine Arts in Athens, in the workshop of Jannis Psychopedis (2003-2008). As an illustrator, he has been awarded with the State Illustration Award for Children Literature in 2014 and an EBGE prize for the illustration of an advertisement by Bold Ogilvy & Mather, in 2016. He has presented solo exhibitions in Greece and Cyprus and has participated in several group exhibitions in Greece and abroad. He lives and works in Athens.

**Art Rug Projects by Soutzoglou** is the culmination of Soutzoglou family's 120 years of experience in the trade and manufacturing of handmade carpets that stand out for their high quality and aesthetic value. This new project was initiated by Electra Soutzoglou, who joined the family business in 2019 after a 10-year career in the contemporary art world in the USA and Britain – holding posts at the Guggenheim, MoMA, David Zwirner Gallery and Frieze Art Fair. As Global Head of VIP Relations at Frieze, Electra was responsible for the coordination of all VIP departments of Frieze fairs in London, New York and Los Angeles. Her passion and knowledge for contemporary art, combined with her love for tradition and innovation in the field of handmade carpets, sparked the creation of Art Rug Projects in 2020. Through collaborations with artists from Greece and abroad, Art Rug Projects bridges traditional methods of weaving with a contemporary approach to art.

### **Contact details**

Electra Soutoglou  
+30 6972800072  
electra@tencarpets.com

+30 210 3607779  
+30 210 3613123  
info@tencarpets.com

Website: [www.tencarpets.com/artrugprojects](http://www.tencarpets.com/artrugprojects)  
Instagram: [www.instagram.com/ten\\_carpet](http://www.instagram.com/ten_carpet)