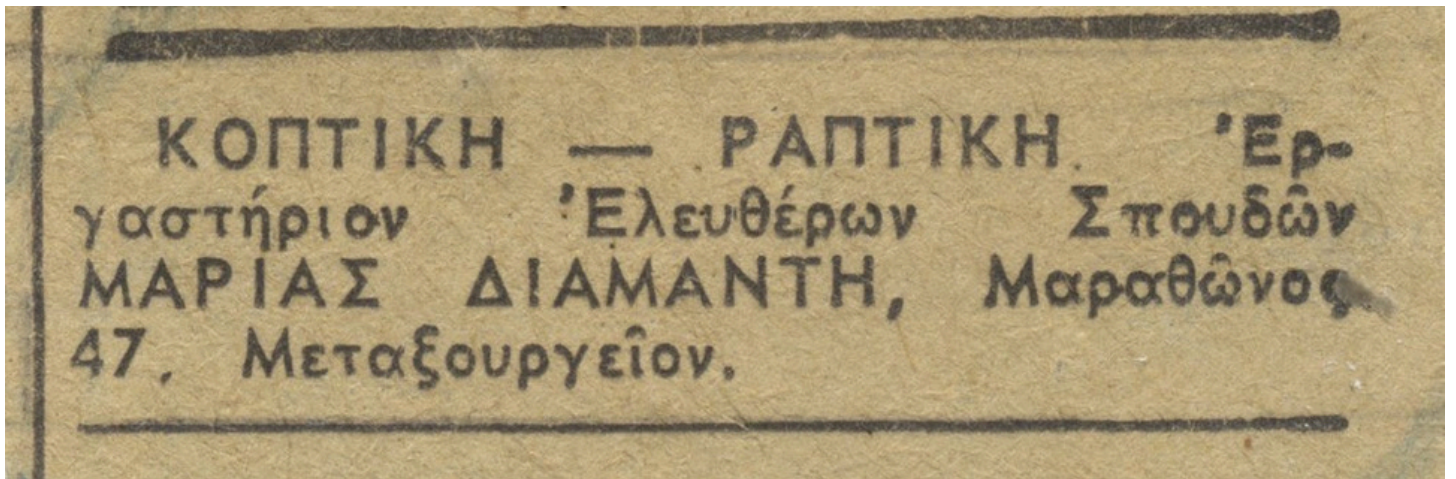


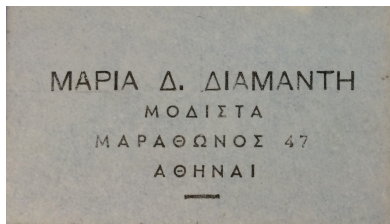
FACES : Maria Diamandi on courage , craft and creations as she steps into her major exhibition.





A Journey Through Fashion: An Interview with a Renowned Designer

Fashion is more than just clothing; it's an art form that tells stories and captures the essence of cultures, emotions, and individuality. In this exclusive interview, we delve into the creative world of a celebrated fashion designer whose roots and inspirations trace back to the rich history of Greek couture.



Origins and Inspirations

What inspired you to become a fashion designer?

Growing up in one of the oldest families involved in fashion in Greece, the designer was surrounded by the art of sewing from an early age. With a grandmother who ran one of Athens's oldest fashion ateliers and sewing schools, and an aunt who continued the legacy, fashion was woven into the fabric of their life. These grand seamstresses were pioneers in their time, bringing international patterns to Greece and setting the stage for what would become modern fashion design. This rich heritage and the influence of these inspiring women naturally led the designer into the world of fashion.

The Designer's Unique Style

Describe your design style.

The designer's style is a blend of three seemingly disparate elements: the past, the future, and philosophy. Through advanced haute couture techniques, they honor the past, while pushing boundaries to create forward-looking pieces like their renowned woven sculptures (#yfantika_glypta). This fusion creates a visual narrative that examines and comments on human existence, making each garment a piece of art.



Materials and Tools

Favorite material to work with?

The designer's creative journey has led her to experiment with unconventional materials. From embroidering tulle with sewing pins to crafting dresses from dried rose leaves submerged in liquid glass, each project showcases their ability to transform unexpected materials into wearable art. These innovative approaches redefine what materials can be used in fashion, making each piece unique and thought-provoking.



The tool you can't live without in your atelier?

Interestingly, the most indispensable tools are not physical but intellectual: the internet and literature on art, fashion, and philosophy. These resources provide a window to inspiration, enabling the designer to communicate her work, conduct research, and connect with the world.



Admiration and Influence

A designer you admire deeply?

The designer holds their grandmother in the highest regard, a trailblazer in a time when female emancipation was a dream. Beyond familial admiration, she draw inspiration from figures like Martin Margiela, Helmut Lang, and Rei Kawakubo, who have used fashion as a gateway to art. Influences also include artists such as Bill Viola and Yayoi Kusama, whose explorations of life and creativity resonate deeply.

Sources of Inspiration

Your sources of inspiration?

Art, poetry, philosophy, and personal experiences shape the designer's creative vision. Museums, travel, and meaningful conversations with inspiring individuals fuel her drive to dream big and push boundaries.

Memorable Projects

Favorite project you've ever worked on?

Highlights include a tribute to Global Greek Designers at the Benaki Museum and the ongoing woven sculptures (#yfantika_glypta) project. Additionally, the upcoming Pioneering Women in Fashion History exhibition honors the atelier's rich legacy, making it a significant milestone in the designer's career.



Future Aspirations

If you could dress someone you admire, who would it be?

As the designer's creations evolve into art pieces rather than wearable garments, the focus shifts to exhibiting in museums. However, if there were one person to see wearing her work, it would be the performance artist Marina Abramović.

Finding Inspiration in Athens

Favorite place in Athens for inspiration?

The designer finds solace and inspiration in the National Garden, a place for personal and artistic reflection. In London, the Victoria & Albert Museum and other cultural institutions serve as sources of creative energy.

Philosophy and Advice

What is happiness?

Happiness is discovering oneself in unexpected places, realizing that anything is possible. For the designer, happiness also lies in her child.

Advice for future designers?

The key to success is to stop worrying about how to achieve it. Instead, focus on doing the work. Dreams should be vast and limitless, as only then will the universe conspire to fulfill them.



Biography

The Diamandi Family Legacy

The Diamandi family atelier, a cornerstone of Greek fashion, first opened its doors in 1930 in Kerameikos. Founded by Maria Diamandi the elder, it began as a classic seamstress shop known for creating clothes and hats. Her passion for sharing her expertise led to the establishment of the Maria Diamandi School of Sewing, nurturing numerous fashion students.

Continuing the Tradition

Maria Diamandi the younger, born and raised in Athens, grew up immersed in this vibrant fashion environment. Her studies in fashion design and theatrical costume, along with teaching stints in Greek fashion schools, laid a strong foundation for her career. In 2011, she launched her own atelier on Marathonos Street, reviving her grandmother's legacy by offering bespoke garments and "fashion lessons."

Innovating with Tradition

Her creativity and innovation shine through her unique woven sculptures (#yfantika_glypta). Maria expanded her influence in 2017 by offering online fashion courses, connecting with students worldwide and adding an international dimension to her atelier. Notably, her students have participated in her acclaimed exhibitions such as *180 Minutes for 18 Ideas* (2014), *#fashionrewindproject* (2017), and *#Ode_Couture* (2019 at the Benaki Museum).

For more information:

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