

# STELLA VOULGARAKI FLORILEGIUM

In the works of Voulgaraki, the flowers—arguably one of the most enduring motifs in the history of art—are transformed into means of material exploration of the third dimension and gestural expression. Her repeated use of a schematic floral form, across the surface of the canvas creates a kind of visual mantra: a meditative engagement with the subject of still life that simultaneously honours and subverts its traditions. These are not botanical studies in the conventional sense, but flowers distilled to their essential curves and spirals, evoking more the idea of a bloom than its mimetic representation.

Voulgaraki works primarily in stucco and acrylic, a combination that allows her to sculpt the surface of her canvases as much as paint them. The thick stucco gives rise to a highly tactile, almost architectural relief, in which the repetition of floral marks becomes a choreography of gestures. Each sequence of spiral motifs demands an unbroken continuity of movement, as the artist must complete the composition in a single, sustained session before the rapid-drying acrylic begins to set—a process that renders interruption impossible. This necessity imparts a visceral gesturality to the surfaces, where each mark testifies to the immediacy of bodily exertion and the choreography of the hand, arm, and entire body engaged in rhythmic, repetitive motion across the canvas.

Colour, too, plays a complex role. In many compositions, chromatic distinctions dissolve into one another, creating soft transitions. Elsewhere, colours remain more distinct, yet always integrated into the materiality of the medium—never simply laid atop the surface but embedded within its depth. This merging evokes a kind of atmospheric stillness as Voulgaraki's forms resist decay through their sculptural permanence.

The exhibition's title, Florilegium, underscores the following duality—at once a literal “gathering of flowers” and a conceptual anthology of painterly gestures. Just as medieval florilegia compiled fragments of sacred and poetic texts, so too does Voulgaraki's practice assemble a tactile vocabulary of floral forms, accumulated through repetition, variation, and embodied intensity. Set against the long history of floral still life, Voulgaraki's works emerge as a contemporary meditation on one of art's oldest and most intimate subjects with the aim of raising awareness about the environment and the planet.

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